

A WHEEL WITHIN A WHEEL

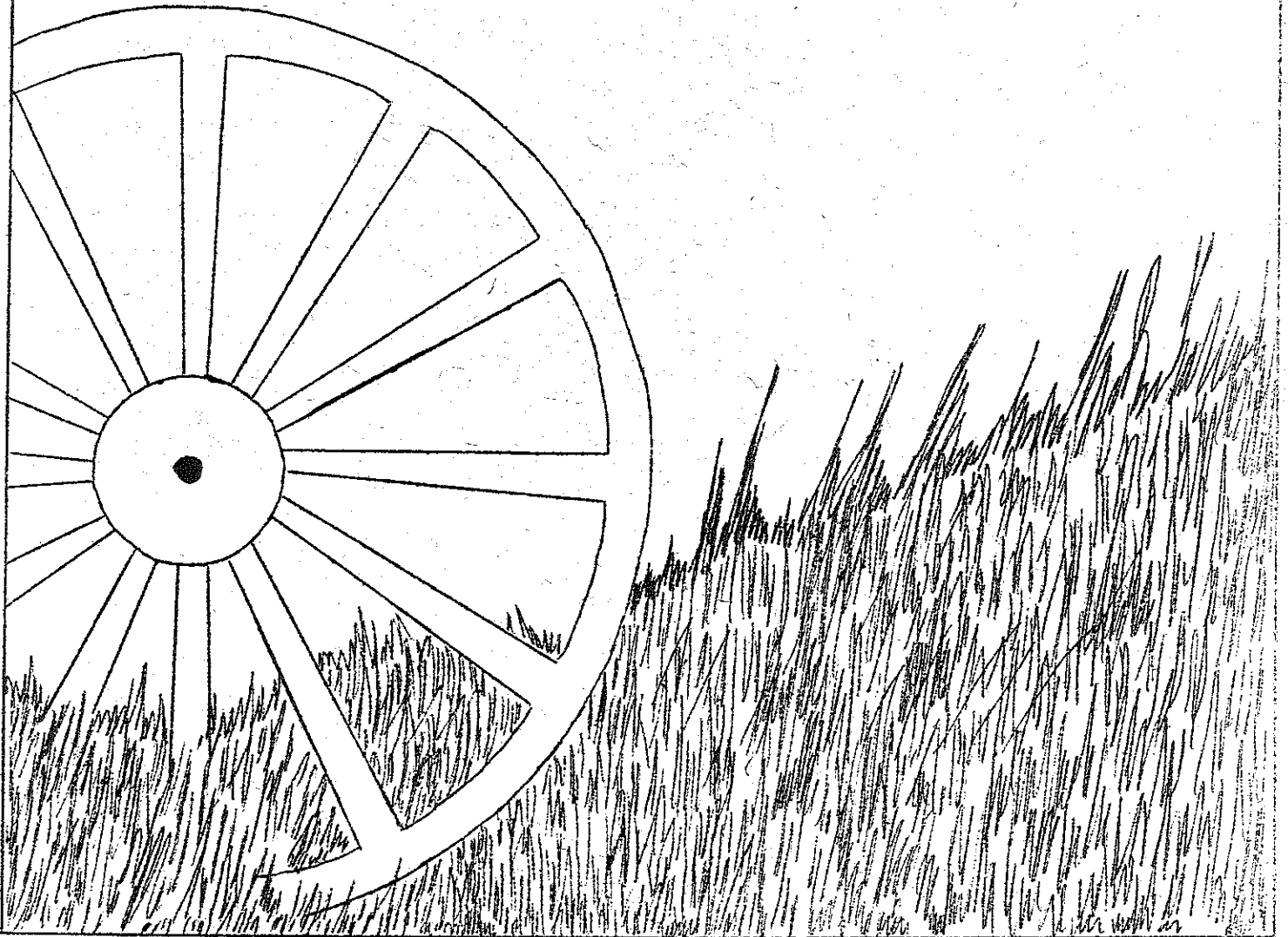
THE LIFE STORY OF THE

REV. HENRY M. SPRINGER

Pioneer Minister in South Dakota

by

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"A Wheel Within a Wheel"
the Rev. Henry Martyn Springer
Dakota Territory and South Dakota 1883-1900

Part I
A Builder of Churches

Henry Martyn Springer, born December 19, ^{1842*} ~~1872~~ ^{Illinois*} in Monroe County, Wisconsin, was one of three sons of Elihu and Martha S. Springer. He inherited the great motivating influence of his life as a minister from his mother, his father, and grandparents.

When his mother was a small girl, her father was appointed by the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as a missionary to the Indians north of Chicago. Enroute with his family to the new home, Isaac Scarrett spent a week at Old Fort Dearborn. At an impromptu church service on Sunday, he preached his first sermon, which was history making, as stated in the "Preacher's Magazine of the Chicago Ministers' Meeting", for it was also the first sermon ever preached at Fort Dearborn. Martha Scarrett, the daughter, was greatly influenced by this experience and it made a lasting impression upon her life. When she married Elihu Springer, she dedicated her sons to the Lord, praying that at least one would become a missionary to Africa. Henry Martyn was named after a missionary in India. The father, Elihu Springer, died from cholera.

At the age of nineteen, Henry M. Springer crossed the plains to Colorado and there joined the army. At the beginning of the Civil War, his regiment was hard service in a wide area of combat, where the engagements were often severe. When he was mustered out, he had served his country more than three years. Following the war, Henry spent two years traveling over the Mid-West, then returned to Carthage, Illinois. After much consideration as to his future, he finally decided to learn the printer's trade, feeling that would make a suitable occupation. While at Carthage, he met Mary Ann Durant, who became his wife. This fine talented girl had all the sterling qualities necessary to be a suitable companion for him.

Henry worked as a printer and was also licensed as an exhorter of the Methodist Episcopal Church and then became a local preacher. He was admitted on trial at the Annual Conference of Western Wisconsin in September of 1867. While taking the Conference Course of Study, he preached at several churches, and was ordained deacon in 1870 at LaCrosse, Wisconsin.

In October, 1872, the Rev Henry Martyn Springer was ordained elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Annual Conference meeting in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. During the next ten years he served churches at Bloomer, Cataract, Little Villa, and Lee Center. In 1882, he was left without appointment to attend Northwestern University and Garrett Biblical Seminary, but instead he went to Scales Mound in the Rock River Conference, until the Annual Meeting, then was transferred to Dakota Territory and appointed to Brookings and Aurora.

The Rev. and Mrs. Springer, with their family of several children, entrained with other immigrants of Aurora, Dakota Territory. Instead of going directly to Brookings and Aurora, Rev. Springer continued to the northwestern part of Hamlin County, and filed claim to a quarter section, one hundred and sixty acres, southeast of what is now Hazel. His mother, Martha Worth Springer, had come with the family, and also filed on a quarter section, adjoining her son's property. They built a home on the section line, so that each would live on his own land, yet

* Corrections from great-grandniece Alice Byrnes

be in the same house. With the Springer family consisting of seven living children, Mary Ann proved her ability as a family physician, a community nurse, as well as a leader of church women; with some knowledge of soil conservation from her life on a farm in her youth. She also was a blessing to her family during the years of food shortage in the home. Rev. Springer, acting as his own "water witch" selected a spot where he thought there was water, and started digging a well. About four feet down he struck a spring of clear sparkling water, enough to supply the family and farm needs for years.

The only neighbor in that section of Hamlin County was Robert Dixon, who filed on land in the fall of 1882, and built a large sod house, 24 x 28 feet. In the spring of 1883, he returned to Illinois and brought his family, a wife and seven children.

The Dixons and Springers soon became acquainted, and when Mr. Springer began church services, Robert Dixon offered his house for the meetings. It was so used until the government built a schoolhouse which was called "The Dixon School", for the children of the many immigrants now in the county. The first Methodist Church Society was organized in the Dixon home. The first person received into membership, besides the Springer family, was Carl H. M. Anderson. As new people continued to come into the territory, they were pleased to find a church organization waiting for them. A man said, "Here is a Methodist preacher before I get my wagons unloaded." This statement could have been repeated in many localities.

In other parts of Hamlin County, congregations had been started. Estelline had a German-Methodist Society. In the Allen Schoolhouse, services were being held, and a preacher-teacher combination was in operation in the Kellerton township. The Smith Schoolhouse was the center of another preaching point. Mr. C. W. Warren preached for Rev. H. M. Springer at the Dixon Schoolhouse. In the fall of 1883, Mr. Springer went to his appointment at Brookings and Aurora, to which he had been transferred from Scales Mound, Illinois. He rode on horseback as far as Oakland the first day, then on to Brookings. The following letter was sent for the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Brookings Church.

Hartford, Vermont
December 16, 1904

George Hepline
Brookings, South Dakota

Rev. and Dear Brother:

Your kind letter of the second, inviting me to the dedication of the new church on Monday the 18th came to hand in due time, but it was almost a miracle. We had a contract for carrying children to school, and to bring back our mail in the evening. The wagon needed repairing and so we sent it to the shop in the morning, the blacksmith found your letter frozen to the tire.

I would have answered earlier, but have been in bed with grippe, and the matter had passed out of mind until I finished dressing just now for the first time. I greatly regret the inability to be with you on this blessed occasion, to rejoice with you over what the Lord hath wrought. It would be such a contrast to the first meeting I had with the Brookings people when I preached to six persons. The house was

seated with two dozen chairs, and when I suggested that we fill the room with chairs, the quick response came, "We will fill these first". Although, I could preach in Brookings but once on Sunday, before the year was over we had the church filled with chairs and people.

I was the fourth pastor appointed to this charge in eighteen months. I found the people angry and disgusted, some of the members had declared they would never pay another cent for the support of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They recovered, however, and became some of my best contributors. My presiding elder, the Rev. William Fielder, had not dared reveal to me the condition of affairs, fearing I would become discouraged and refuse to go.

I shall never forget the first Sunday: I had stopped over night at Oakland; Sunday morning as I ascended a small hill that brought Brookings into full view, I was taken with a chill. My teeth actually chattered, not from cold, but from a dread of what I should find.

I did not dare have my salary estimated before the last of the quarter; the brethren could see only two hundred dollars on a tight squeeze, but at the end of three months I succeeded in getting an estimate of \$400.00 Brother William Brooks told me it took him just two and one half hours to secure \$440.00 for my support.

During the winter, I preached at Brookings in the morning, at Sherman at 2:30 sixteen miles away, four miles east, and south of what is now White, South Dakota. During the summer, I reversed the order by going to Brookings for an 8:00 pm in the evening, to Sherman at 10:30 am; Aurora at 2:30, and at Hanson's at 5:00 pm.

Have I not a right to rejoice with you in the marvelous advancement made by Methodism in that city and country? Many of the old standbys have moved out, some gone to other parts of the world, and some to heaven; to those who remain, kindly extend my love and gratitude for the assistance they rendered me.

We have a pleasant home here; we are well received by the people, preaching occasionally, and always trying to be a model layman. Praying the blessing of God to rest and abide upon you and the people, I remain,

Your brother in Christ,
Henry M. Springer

One cannot fail to agree it was a divine act that sent Rev. H. M. Springer to Brookings, November of 1883 to help save the Brookings Methodist Church.

In the fall of 1884, Rev. Springer was appointed to the Henry and Dixon congregations where he was pleased to be in home territory. Two other preachers had preceded him. The work was organized by Rev. James Waldron in 1882 with 16 members. The Rev. S. F. Cushman was appointed to Henry in 1883. When Mr. Springer arrived he was delighted to discover that the task confronting him was the erection of a new church building. This was accomplished at a cost of \$2,000. This neat, attractive edifice had an outreach, with two local preachers, several Methodist Societies, and Sunday Schools, besides a circuit which became the Garden City Church.

Excitement over the territorial boom, the coming of railroads and the establishment of many new congregations in Dakota Territory reached the ears of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church and this body at once authorized the Dakota Mission Conference to become an Annual Dakota Conference at its next meeting. Rev. H. M. Springer had shared in bringing the Methodist Church into eastern Dakota Territory and also was one of the committee who brought in this resolution to the (last) Annual Dakota Mission Conference at Blunt in 1885.

The resolution reads as follows: "Whereas the last General Conference authorized the Dakota Mission Conference to organize into the Dakota Annual Conference, and believing the time has come, therefore, be it resolved that we respectfully request Bishop Cyrus Foss to organize the Dakota Annual Conference". On motion and by standing vote the resolution was adopted by a vote of 31 to 2. Signed: Ira N. Pardee, A. B. Traveller, Wm. McCready, Henry Springer and C. E. Hager.

At the 1885 Annual Conference, the Rev. H. M. Springer was returned to Brookings on request of the Brookings and Aurora churches. His two pastorates of one year each were separated by a year's service of Rev. Craven. Much was accomplished in laying lasting foundations in organizational work, besides enlarging the membership of the church. He continued seeking new places for other Methodist societies. The church at White came into existence, being part of the Aurora charge. In 1886-87, he moved from Brookings, reporting seventy-three active members and twelve on probation, with a salary of \$800.00, quite a contrast to the Brookings church of November 1883.

In October 1886, the Dakota Annual Conference was held in Watertown. H. M. Springer was chairman of an important committee that presented a petition for strengthening the Marriage Laws of the Territory. He also formed part of the committee which did the spade work for founding the Conference Claimants Fund. This later developed into the Pension Fund for Ministers.

At the reading of appointments in 1886, H. M. Springer was appointed to Clark, nearer his home in Hamlin County. This same year his mother, Martha Scarrett Worth Springer, passed away. She was buried on her land. They had no cemetery until several years later, when the remains were moved to a cemetery northeast of Vienna, South Dakota. The last person she talked to was her grandson, John M. Springer. Doubtless she spoke of his entering Christian work, and to consider missionary work, especially Africa.

When Rev. Clark began his pastorate in Clark he found a new Methodist Church, that was built in 1883 costing \$2,500. The church had a membership of fifty-eight and seventeen probationers, ready and anxious to continue their training work. It was hard to realize that this church started with only five members, Mr. and Mrs. Washington Mead, S. H. Elrod (who became the governor of South Dakota), Mrs. E. A. Parmenter, and S. S. Farrington. Services had been in different parts of the town. This group was organized by a local preacher, J. H. Waldron in 1880. That winter and the following summer church services were conducted by the Doland minister, Rev. William Clark, who came every two weeks alternating with Rev. Lacky, authorized by the Presiding Elder, Rev. L. Hartsough. Under the leadership of Rev. Clark, the church was built and dedicated March 13, 1883 by Rev. William Fielder.

During the first nineteen years of its existence thirteen ministers were appointed to serve the Clark Church. Yet the church grew and flourished, made possible by the growth of the town, from pastors going into country schools and houses to conduct Sunday School and church services. There was a Clark County Circuit named "Vandervoort". This work was started by Rev. J. F. Kemper and the minister served five preaching points.

During the period that H. M. Springer was at Clark, 1886-87, he visited and brought people into the church from Raymond, Logan Township, Moore's Sunday School, the Julian Sunday School, Mount Pleasant School, Concord School, Concord Township, Bailey Lake, altogether seventy-one people joined the church from these Sunday Schools and preaching points on the Clark County Circuit.

The preacher had many evils to combat in the town, as well as country. Northwest of town a set of buildings, including a large house, barn and granary all disappeared one night. Buildings were not the only things stolen but horses, cattle, sheep, poultry, and grain of all kinds. So Springer preached many sermons on "Do unto others, as you would have others do unto you".

January 1888 was the year of the BIG BLIZZARD. This news item appeared in the old "Public Opinion" of Watertown in the February twenty-fourth paper: "The Rev. H. M. Springer of Clark, the "Blizzard killed preacher" was in the city this week, a living example of the resurrection story. What a great sport he must have had, reading his numerous memoirs published in the eastern newspapers."

In 1888-1889, Rev. Springer was appointed to the Kampeska Church which had been dedicated November 6, 1887, by the Presiding Elder Rev. A. D. Traveller of the Watertown District. Kampeska was platted by the Pacific Railroad, part of the Great Northern system in 1884 and named "Vera" by S. S. Parks, after August Vera, an Italian philosopher. Several Dakota Territorial legal documents about plots of land, for the use of the Methodist work were made out to the town of "Vera". The community did not approve the name and chose one that was more suitable. The name Kampeska means "Bright and shining shell of glass" a name that was possibly that of a Sisseton Sioux, a signer of the agreement with the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Indians in 1872.

Kampeska was located near two lakes, with rich farm land and plenty of moisture in the soil. It grew rapidly into a thriving community with settlers and schools occupying every available space. With the Kampeska Methodist Church, was a farm to cultivate, for the use of the church, which gave work to Mr. Springer's sons, especially John, growing into manhood, and anxious to have an education, and start on his life's work. Rev. Springer not only worked at the task, but the laymen also shared the responsibility. This doubtless, was one of the early successful "God's Acre Projects". In the May 10, 1889 issue of the Watertown "Public Opinion" appears this news item: "The Praying Hands" of the Methodists from Clark will hold services at Kampeska church Saturday and Sunday of this week, again on June 14, 15, and 16, the third Quarterly Conference, which includes Dixon, Oxford, Smith's Schoolhouse, and others will be held at Smith's Schoolhouse with the Lord's Supper to be served in the afternoon."

When the town of Hazel was founded the Dixon congregation moved to that location. It was in 1889 that a new grading was started on the railway roadbed to Huron and reached the site for a town where the work crews were camped, on land owned by Martin Bowley. The Western Land Company platted the townsite and helped sell lots. The first name suggested was Hazeldale, combining the names of the two Bowley children, Hazel and Dale, but the first name of Hazel was finally chosen. The new town of Hazel soon became a thriving business place, serving a large trade area. The first store was built by Edgar Kellogg, who had joined the Dixon Methodist congregation, and moved to the business center. When Church services were held, one person a month joined the organization. They were held in vacant buildings, one was a hall over Bush's store, and another was a building that had even been used as a saloon. Hazel was not a saloon town.

On March 28, 1889, a meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Charles Kellogg to organize a Ladies Aid Society for the first Methodist Episcopal Church of Hazel.

The object of the organization was to assist in helping raise funds for the building, and maintain a Methodist Church in Hazel. These ladies set up their constitution in such a manner that it could have served as guidelines for all Ladies Aids during that period of the church. Under the by-laws it was voted that they were to meet every two weeks, and the officers to be elected every six months. In Article Five, was a statement adopted that was rather humorous, in that it was called rules regarding refreshments: "There shall be a restricted lunch consisting of bread and butter, one kind of cake, one kind of sauce, a slice of cheese and pickles. A fine of one dollar shall be paid by any member going beyond the articles named." The following officers were elected. All members paid twenty-five cents dues.

Mrs. Mary Ann Springer - President
 Rev. H. M. Springer - Honorary Member
 Miss Fannie Jones - Special Honorary Member
 Mrs. Abbie Jones - Chairman of the Executive Committee
 Mrs. Addie Wentworth - Member of the Executive Committee
 Mrs. Minnie Kellogg - Member of the Executive Committee
 Mrs. Hattie Vandervoort - Secretary
 Mrs. Ida Wentworth - Treasurer
 Mrs. Emily Stryker - Member
 Mrs. Martie Stryker - Member
 Mrs. Isabel Anderson - Member
 Mrs. Lizzie Hoover - Member

In December 1890 after Rev. Springer had been appointed to the White Methodist Church, the Ladies Aid, sent twenty-five dollars to him, to apply on back salary still due in 1889. At White, he was again in the Brookings-Aurora territory, with a \$3000 new church, a membership of 140 adults and a class of probationers eager and anxious for instructions. The White Church was one of the first preaching points, which Rev. Springer had served while at Brookings.

At the Annual Conference held in Madison 1892, H. M. Springer took the supernumerary relation and spent much of this time at his home southeast of Hazel. The Rev. J. E. Dibble was appointed as pastor for Kampeska and Hazel, while Rev. Springer did some work with the Dixon and Oxford congregations.

In the summer of 1892, work began on the church building at Hazel. The location was good. The land had been given by Mr. and Mrs. Bowley on April 10, while they were living in Illinois. They gave the lots, and deed with this specification, "It is hereby understood that this deed is void, and of no value unless a church building is started on the property within a year from the date here of".

Later in the year, the church was dedicated. Mrs. Elizabeth McLaulin and father, Adam Gedelman, who had joined the Dixon Congregation in 1885, sang special songs for the occasion. This was a happy day, especially for Rev. Springer who had built the church after several years working toward this goal. With the dedication of the church, the majority of the Dixon membership joined the new church, including the Springer family, and John, the son who became the Bishop of Africa, the first and only missionary bishop. His membership was in the Hazel church until he entered the ministry.

At the Annual Conference of 1894, H. M. Springer was again appointed to Clark. Susan, the youngest daughter, a vivacious girl, worked in the Epworth League, as secretary. She was an outstanding girl, much like her father, popular and ever in demand among the young people. Rev. Springer promoted new and more effective methods to aid and instruct new members coming into the church fellowship, not forgetful of people in the country, still holding Sunday School and services in school houses.

During that year the Concord Sunday School brought twenty-four into membership. Bailey's Lake brought twelve children and babies for baptism, with two adult members received into active church membership. They were from a Quaker family.

In the fall of 1895 after Rev. H. M. Springer had been appointed as Watertown District Presiding Elder, his successor, Rev. Hample, received twelve adults from Bailey's Lake into the Clark membership. Seven adult members from Concord, all doubtless influenced by services and instruction work conducted by Springer. This continued until the majority of the small preaching stations over that part of Clark County came into the Methodist Church, which helped to make it a strong center of Methodism.

One of the missionaries enlisted during Springer's term of service was Ona Parmenter, a nurse to Africa, who worked under Bishop Springer in Mutumbara and old Umtali, Africa. Another girl was Jennie Lee Dean, a graduate of Dakota Wesleyan University, who was sent to Malaya under the Women's Foreign Missionary Society.

A story was told to me by Mrs. Chester Smith, Ona Parmenter's sister, in Clark about how methodical Rev. Springer was even in his calling methods. Her parents were always prepared to have dinner ready a certain day every three months for Mr. Springer. Although he lived only two and a half blocks away, he made it a point to come to her mother's place for dinner. On one occasion, the Junior Epworth League was waiting for their meeting, yet he excused himself, saying to wait because he had to call at the Parmenter's home. The children played upon the church lawn while Rev. Springer went to break bread in fellowship with his good neighbors.

Again, Annual Conference made a change in his mode of life. As usual, he had to bring in reports for several committees. One was "The Trier of Appeals". One man's case was too difficult for the committee to make any decision; so Rev. Springer asked the Bishop C. W. Joyce for permission to refer the individual back to the Presiding Elder of the man's district. Probably this action, as much as any other, showing the compassionate feeling for his fellowman, helped toward his appointment as Presiding Elder of the Watertown District.

Part II
 "A Wheel Within a Wheel"
 (Ezek. 1:16b)

A new door opened for Rev. Springer as he faced new opportunities and seemingly unsurmountable obstacles. But he had many handicaps, for he suffered especially with health problems. He went forward into the future by enlarging the rim of the wheel into a giant circle. The family moved to Watertown where the District Headquarters were located. The family became affiliated with the church and son, Harry B., (who appears on the membership records as Henry B.,) and Wilbur Springer became members of the church the second year. Susan was not only active in church work, but became associated with other youth work that gave her added interest in worthwhile activity that was church centered.

H. M. Springer, the new Presiding Elder, was deeply involved in the Lord's business of the District. It consisted of twenty-two preaching locations where regular services were conducted (not counting special Sunday Schools and preaching places in the country). As an example, Watertown had five outside locations to be supplied by the minister or by local preachers. Florence, Rauville, (now Rauville Township Hall) also Waverly, were on circuit for awhile, and two school houses with Sunday School and preaching as ministers could find supplies.

At the end of the conference year, Rev. H. M. Springer did not have a written report, but he had secured men for the eight charges left to be supplied when he came into office. All resulted in many new members added to the membership rolls of the district. Special services were conducted, new Epworth Leagues organized, others revived and Sunday Schools increased. During this period, people endured the blizzards and deep snows of the winter, and droughts in the summer. Many proved up on homestead claims and returned east and elsewhere. The greatest encouraging feature was that regardless of the trial and discomforts suffered, the salaries of the preachers increased thirty percent per church, a great stride forward.

In 1897, H. M. Springer found it necessary to go to Chicago to a specialist for treatments for an ulcer condition. He was away from the district eight weeks, but returned seemingly improved and thankful for the rejuvenation of body and soul. He gave great praise to his ministers and co-workers of the Watertown District for the spiritual awakening and ingathering of new converts through their efforts of revivals and other special methods of work. Some ministers had accomplished much. Worthy of special mention was Rev. James Harkness reared at Waverly, who had Rauville as his first church. (This is another story.) Rev. Springer in telling the story of the improvements of church property said the preachers must have had a bargain offered on white paint, that they mixed themselves. Eight churches had been painted outside and many inside. These little white churches dotted the landscape and in the sunshine their clean white appearance was a welcome sight. Many congregations paid on church debts by raising grain, wheat, flax, and others donated labor. The ladies enjoyed their share of the work, in a "painting bee". Inside, the colors were usually dark golden yellow, or gray. The pulpit floor was covered with turkey red carpet, or a floral design of green. This gave a colorful, cheerful appearance, and to people who could not afford paint or carpeting in the homes, it gave a most worshipful setting for their spiritual growth.

The Rev. H. M. Springer was a man known as a builder, a man neat in personal appearance, who kept his churches in the same condition. He often reminded his congregation, this is "God's House", to which we come to praise and worship Him. During the year our "Wheel Within a Wheel" preached 179 sermons, baptized thirty-five adults, and ten infants. He administered Holy Communion eighty-eight times. Two churches were in the process of building, the one at Sisseton worth \$1500 and the Oxford Church on the Kampeska Charge in Hamlin County. This was near the Springer home farm. Much gratitude was expressed to the Rev. A. D. Traveller and Rev. Hanson for the successful program launched at Big Stone Camp Meeting during the summer. Acknowledgement was extended to the Epworth Leagues for the progress made on the district.

At the Annual Conference in 1897, Presiding Elder Springer of the Watertown District began his annual report with these words: "It is with gratitude to the Heavenly Father that I present this report, that shows the seed sown and watered by the brethren has realized an increase throughout the district. We report thirty-one appointments with new places combined with others, for instance, besides Elkton, Henry-Garden City, Clark, Castlewood-Bruce (Oakland) Vienna-Trenton, Webster-Wheatland, Willow Lake-Twin Lakes, Lake Preston-Gary, Hazel-Oxford".

Hazel started out alone, but the Oxford church was finished during the year, and joined forces with the nearest church. The Rev. C. R. Anderson carried through the building of the Oxford church until its completion. This made twenty-six churches with pastors, many of the members tithing Christians, with much of the money assigned for missionary work at home or in foreign countries.

At the 1898 Annual Conference, the Rev. H. M. Springer's return of suffering from stomach ulcer became so great that he asked to be relieved from work as the District Presiding Elder. He was appointed back to Hazel, his home church. In 1900 because of failing health, Mr. Springer retired at the Annual Conference held in Sioux Falls, October 10-15. He had served only seventeen years in the ministry of pioneer work in Dakota Territory, and South Dakota but so great was the service rendered, that it is felt even today. He sold his farm and home to his son, Thomas Martyn Springer, and retired to Vermont until he went to his eternal reward on January 24, 1913.

Susan the youngest daughter, married Alvin Arnold in 1901. They made their home in the Hazel area where to this union were born five children, (living are Arnold at Erwin, South Dakota; Clarence Arnold, Marion, Iowa; Robert, Aberdeen, Washington; Marjorie, a teacher in Portland, Oregon; Glenna Poland, Badger, South Dakota or Washington State). Susan was buried in the Hazel cemetery in 1932.

In 1903 when Henry Springer left Dakota Conference for White River Junction, Vermont, his son, John, now in Africa was called to give evidence before the South Africa Native Affairs Commission of 1903-1905 Conference that he was ordained Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church under the missionary rule. In 1904, as the father's light began to flicker, son, Rev. John M. Springer, attended the first session of the South Africa General Missionary Conference at Johannesburg. "God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform". "You never can tell when you do an act, just what the result will be. But with every deed you are sowing a seed, although it's harvest you may not see."

The Oxford Township Society outgrew the Dixon School House and the first Methodist Episcopal Church was built in northwest Hamlin County. Warren Green and his wife, Elizabeth Jane Parliament, were members of this congregation. He later became a noted Governor of the state. The Green family were first members of the Oxford Church, then when it was moved to Thomas, they moved their membership to the Thomas Methodist Episcopal Church, with their son, Edison and wife. Now Mrs. Warren Green and son and wife belong to Hazel Methodist Church. Daughter, Mildred, lived many years in Chicago, but she and her husband, Ted Ness, live now in Watertown and are members of another church.

The Thomas Methodist Church, formerly the Oxford Church, was located in the logical place for a country parish. The people were congenial, cooperative and ready for suggestions to help toward the development of a Christian community. A series of special religious services were conducted that resulted in many new additions into the church membership of staunch, wholesome, open-minded people ready for action. Various organizations were started for all age levels.

Many members of this church made contributions to its success and their names are on other honor rolls not made by man. I'll mention only those who have answered the call to full time Christian Service.

John Hunter - Pastor of the Wesleyan Church, Watertown, South Dakota. He has served many local churches over the northwest. Prior to coming back home, the Rev. John Hunter was a successful State Superintendent of the Wesleyan Church with headquarters at Rapid City.

Julia Hunter - John's sister was working in the Faith Home at Mitchell attending school, preparing to enter Foreign Missionary work, when she contracted tuberculosis and died, age twenty-one years at Sanator, South Dakota, 1932.

Gordon Jaffies - Felt the call to the ministry while at Thomas, and took his training with the Evangelical United Brethren Church and selected his place of work for Kingdom Building in the state of Oregon. The last several years, he has been located at Portland.

Gerald Jaffies - A brother of Gordon, prepared for the Methodist ministry and gave some time to the work, but owing to a health problem had to retire. He is living in Seattle, Washington.

Dwane Voas - During the drought years, he decided to attend school with his friend, John Hunter, in Marion, Indiana, but in trying to "hitch hike" during the dry hot days, rides were few and far between, so he returned home. Later, he went to college at Lemars, Iowa. From there he entered the ministry, after working in several churches, he has been pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Fort Dodge, Iowa for nineteen years.

Kenneth Voas - Kenneth, a brother of Dwane, attended the Thomas Church and Sunday School until he went to high school and college. At the age of twelve years, he made his decision to become a Christian in back of what had been the old Thomas Church barn. While attending college at Huron, he was torn between two opinions, that of entering the ministry and becoming a school teacher. He did teach four years and during the fourth year at Clark, made the commitment of his life to the ministry. Under his leadership, many people have been lead to the Lord. He has served the Clark First United Methodist Church for twelve years. (1972) Kenneth was also influential in promoting the building of one of the most beautiful worshipful churches in the South Dakota Conference at Clark.

Dwayne Knight - The son of Hattie and Floyd Knight was a talented piano student and had prepared for life as a concert pianist, when he heard the Master's call "Follow Me". He served several charges, "some included Conde, Miller-Green Leaf, Brookings" Methodist Churches. Dwayne was pastor of the First United Methodist at Mitchell several years, while there he did a tremendous work with the youth at Dakota Wesleyan University, besides the people of the city. He sponsored a rebuilding program of the fine church that needed more space and improvements to meet the needs of a city in a University Center. The last three years, Dr. Knight has served the Aberdeen Methodist Church, another large church that appeals to a large state college. This man is a beloved pastor, sympathetic and understanding.

Walter Parliament - A local preacher of the Methodist Church of Hazel served eight years as pastor at Hazel, Kampeska, Thomas, and Castlewood. So great was the empathy for his ministry that one of the final actions taken during the ministry of Dr. Marcus Chase (after his retirement) was to approve the purchase of a large memorial bible and other altar replacements, directing the dedication of such to the Hazel Church as a token of appreciation. Walter's widow lives in Hazel. She refuses to accept a "widow's pension" from the Methodist Board of Pensions, because she has her home, and a small income, and declared, "Other widows need the money more than I, this way I can do my bit of helping."

Barbara Waite - Married the Rev. Dean Watson, a minister of the Wesleyan Church. Rev. Watson recently succeeded the Rev. John Hunter as State Superintendent of the Wesleyan Church, with his office in Rapid City. Barbara has fulfilled all requirements of being a help mate and a good minister's wife.

Hattie Knight - Mother of Dwayne is still a loyal church school worker, especially in the adult class of the First United Methodist Church of Watertown. She also acts as a part time receptionist-treasurer and assistant administrator of Jenkins Methodist Home.

The Thomas church was always served by a pastor who had a circuit of three churches. Hazel was the home church, from there a minister went to Henry at the start, then Kampeska, Castlewood, and Thomas. That church looked for its leadership from the faithful Christians, "Who worked for a Master Builder", who fostered the spirit of ecumenicity before the word was known to our vocabulary.

The Thomas church has been discontinued. The building was sold to another group that moved it five miles south and one mile east of Watertown. On the Thomas corner, conference ground, cared for by the Hazel church, stand tall pine trees, a reminder that this a hallowed ground, upon which should be erected a memorial to those who may have said, "Spirit of the Living God, Fall afresh on me, Melt me, mold me, Fill me, Use me. Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me".

In 1884-85, Rev. H. M. Springer, was pastor of the Henry Circuit, Dixon, and the newly named Garden City Society. Garden City was started by a local preacher, J. H. Waldron, (the same who started the work at Clark in 1880 and at Henry in 1882), in Eden Township, in July of 1883 at the R. S. Carpenter home. In 1883-84, the Rev. S. F. Cushman of the Vermont Conference was appointed to the Henry-Garden City Circuit. When he preached at the Carpenter home he brought his wife's melodeon, and, Mrs. Frank Steer, teacher of the Mt. Pleasant School, played for the services which added much to the worship hour. Often the Carpenters went to their granary and filled bags with grain for the preacher to take and use as needed, because the people could not give anything as salary.

Both Waldron and Cashman had homesteads in Eden and Maydell townships, so Rev. Springer left much of the local work to these men to help start a circuit, which in time became Elrod, Mt. Pleasant, and Dexter. The pastor and congregation were working toward the time when Garden City would have a church, and not need to hold services in the Stacy School House. That time came in 1888 and the church was dedicated by Governor Elrod, November 11, 1906.

Springer and his assistant, Timothy Donahue, explored new opportunities, for the Henry area and started work at Willow Lake, Vienna, and Dixon. From these came other churches later at Florence, Graceland, Bradley, and Nicholson Lake. The Henry "Methodist Young People's Association" worked in many different areas, through "Christian Work", "Mercy and Help", "Literary Department", "Entertainments", and "Finance". This helped to create a missionary atmosphere, so when the Centenary Drive was launched in 1919-23, sixty-one people pledged from three-dollars to five hundred dollars each to the world call for missions, reaching a grand total of \$8,650.

Kampeska town will long be remembered as the pioneer town from whence came the First Methodist Episcopal Bishop, John M. Springer, of the South Dakota Conference. He lived and worked on the one-hundred and sixty acres of land now owned by the conference, and that is farmed each year by the Methodist Men of the First United Methodist Church of Watertown. The profit goes for religious work in the Jenkins Methodist Home for senior citizens, and various kinds of youth work in the church.

In the Watertown Public Opinion appeared the proposition that the city of Watertown should extend its limits southeast to include Kampeska town in the program of "Building for the Future". Looking into the future, as our city expands one can almost see how this property could be used as a "Springer Chapel" with perhaps a revolving altar to serve people of other faiths.

Hazel, the last church visited by Bishop Springer, was his home church where he had his membership, and the center of his early religious life. It has through the years been "the hub" of the wheel for many other churches that were shared by Hazel pastors. The town is not as large as formerly, yet a clean, well kept community, they still have plenty of "Vim, Vigor, and Vitality". With such a spirit the church will not be listed as an abandoned church soon. Outstanding laymen worked with Mr. Lyle Singery, the postmaster, the district commission chairman for the work of the United Methodist Board of Laity on the Heifer Project, and he was sent with the animals to the British Honduras for the Livestock Project. Lyle took pictures of the boys in Honduras as they received a heifer to raise as cows. When they had calves, the boys kept the calf as their own, and passed the cow on to another boy.

A reporter for the New York Times, Archibald MacLeish, gave a good description of our relation to the earth. When one of our space ships was racing toward the moon, 100,000 miles out in space, the question came to one man's mind: "Is it inhabited?" The second question he asked: "Is there life on that little floating planet, that tiny raft in the enormous empty night?"

So we make comparisons. If permitted a flight in space to look back at Brookings, Watertown, Hazel, Henry, Clark and 23 other churches and Methodist societies in N.E. South Dakota during 1883-1900, we doubtless would ask "Is it possible that such a tiny region as this had something to do with spreading the Gospel to far-off Africa?" Yes, the answer would come back, "It was through the influence of Henry M. Springer that lives were touched to enter foreign service carrying the message of Christ. Especially was this true for John Springer in the strategic African Congo, in China, Malaya and Central America.

This brief biography of the Springers opens a window for us to see the world as it truly is, small and beautiful in the eternal silence where it floats; to see ourselves as riders on that world all together. This universal vision is well expressed by Tennyson in these words:

"Not in vain the distance beckons forward, forward, let no range-
Let the great world spin forever, down the ranging groves of change.

Through the shadow of the globe, one sweep ahead, to heights sublime
We, the heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time.

Yes, we dip into the future, far as human eye can see
See, the vision of the world, and all the wonders that shall be.

Hear the war drums throb no longer, see the battle flags all furled
In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World."

Grace Whiteside
Watertown, South Dakota
June 5, 1972