

## The Bible Advocate Celebrates 125th Year

*The Bible Advocate*, published by the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) celebrated the end of its 125th year of publication last month.

The first issue, under the name *The Hope of Israel*, was published on Monday, August 10, 1963, in Hartford, VanBuren County, Michigan; the annual subscription was 75¢. Enos Easton was listed as the resident editor, Gilbert Cranmer and John Reed as corresponding editors. Published twice monthly, the four-page publication went to about 40 readers in Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin. With the second issue Easton

and H. S. Dille were listed as editors. Although the Michigan conference of the Church of God voted to publish the paper, they had trouble paying for it; so it was largely through his own personal sacrifice that Dille kept the paper going for two years and saw circulation increase to 336 in 18 states and Canada. However, times were very hard at the end of the Civil War, and the October 18, 1865 issue, number 13 of volume 2, was the last to be printed in Michigan. In May of 1865, the paper was revived in Marion, Iowa, published by the Christian Publishing Association under the editorship of W. H.



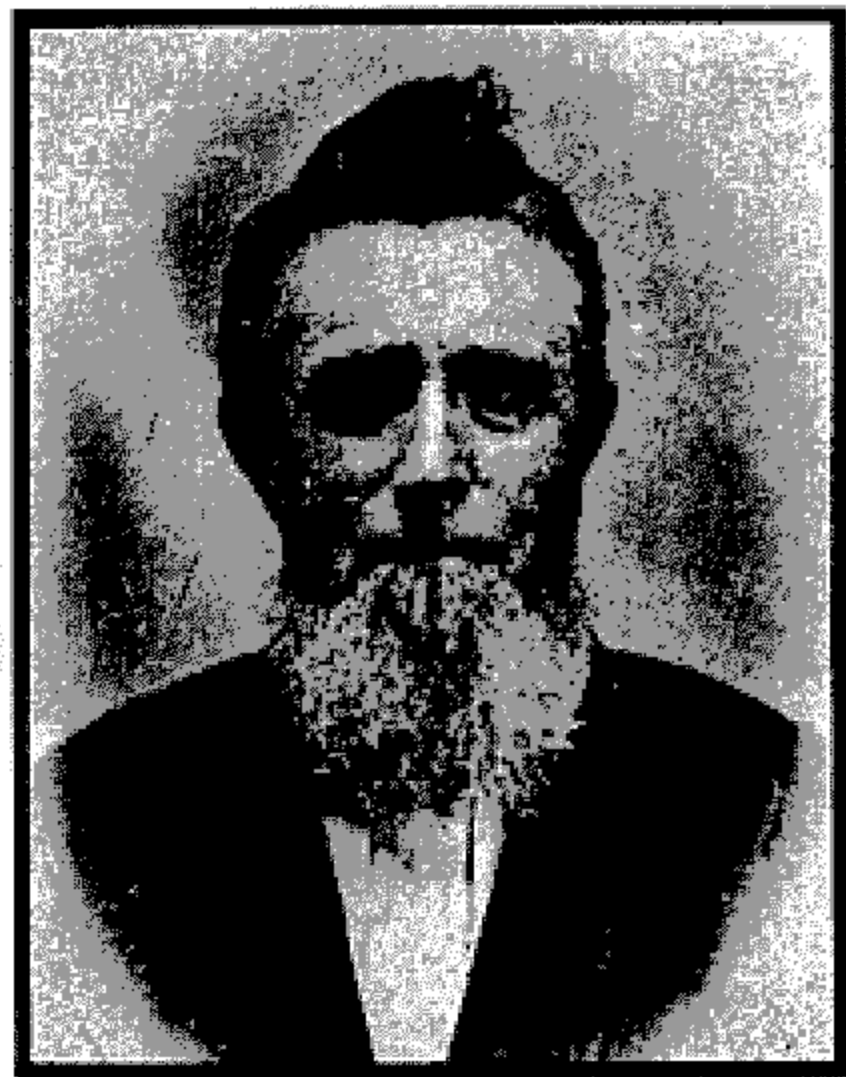
Seven editors of *The Bible Advocate* assembled at the General Conference meeting of the Church of God (Seventh Day) in 1987: Jerry Griffin, 1981-present; Archie B. Craig, 1942-44;

Ray E. Benight, 1950-53; Stanley J. Kauer, 1935-42; Floyd A. Turner, 1970-81; John Kiesz, 1931-33; Max Morrow, 1959-64. Photo by All Walls.

Brinkerhoff. It was 8 pages and was published semi-monthly. That the subscription price of \$1.50 was a major obstacle for some readers is indicated by the following letter sent along with \$1. "Tis with trembling hand. . .that I attempt to write because I have not sent the [\$1] sooner. I have had it three months, hoping to get an opportunity to get the other 50 cents and go to the post office myself with the letter. My health is poor—we have no team and live four miles from Middleville [Michigan] on a new timbered land farm, and our circumstances are quite limited, therefore I shall have to be under the painful necessity of giving up taking the "Hope" or rely much on the mercy of others—It does seem as though I could not live without it. I do receive so much good instruction by reading it. . .Nancy R. Moore."

The editor responded that the magazine would continue to go to the Moores and with an appeal to someone ". . .who would esteem it a pleasure to send us \$1.50 for the paper in behalf of this sister" and with an assurance that "none shall do without the paper who appreciate it, if we can help it."

In 1871, Edler Jacob Brinkerhoff, brother of W. H., became editor. The next year the name was changed to *The Advent and Sabbath Advocate, and Hope of Israel*; however, soon thereafter *The Hope of Israel* was dropped. In 1874, Christian Publishing Assn. was forced to sell the printing equipment at public auction to satisfy the mortgage. The editor stepped forward to purchase it, using money he and his wife had saved for a home. Fully aware of the risks of his actions, he wrote in the March editorial: "Our undertaking will require much sacrifice and rigid economy. . .But we trust in Him who has said, 'My grace shall be sufficient for thee,' and we pray for grace



Gilbert Cranmer, an early pioneer of the Church of God who raised up churches in southwestern Michigan during the 1850s 60s. He was instrumental in the birth of *The Hope of Israel* and served as editor for a short time in 1964 and '65. Early issues were printed in a room in his house.

to sustain us in our labor, and for wisdom to enable us to fill our station." Brinkerhoff was supported by his wife, who wrote many articles and did the typesetting; she was instrumental in starting a Sabbath school paper for children in 1885. In 1881 *The Advent and Sabbath Advocate* became a weekly; and in 1885 it was announced that the paper would be published by The General Conference of the Church of God, with printing continuing in Marion, Iowa, under Brinkerhoff's direction. Three years later, Elder W. C. Long became editor, purchased the printing equipment and moved it to his hometown of Stanberry, Missouri. The name was changed slightly to *Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Advent*.



In 1892 the paper was printed using steam power for the first time. In December 1900, the General Conference change the name to *The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom* and appointed Elder N. A. Wells as editor. During the early decades of the 20th century, the editors were A. F. Dugger and, for a second time, Elder Jacob Brinkerhoff, from 1907 to 1914. Altogether he served for 23 years, the longest of any editor. During this period, December 20, 1907, the building housing the presses were severely damaged by fire. Most of the printing type and cases were carried to the street and escaped the fire. Though it was quite a blow, the dedication of the publishers was such that only one issue was missed. In 1914, when Elder Jacob Brinkerhoff had to retire because of ill health, A. N. Dugger took over the editorial responsibilities and continued until 1932, when his ministry took him to Palestine.

Subsequent editors will include

names recognized by readers: Elder John Kiesz, currently a director of The Bible Sabbath Association, served as office editor from 1931 to 1933; Editors during mid century included Roy Dailey, W. C. Rodgers, Stanley J. Kauer, Roy Davison, Elder Archie B. Craig, office editor during WW II. A. S. Christenson, Ray E. Benight, Burt F. Marrs, Edler Max Morrow, Noah H. Camero, Floyd A. Turner, 1970-81, and, finally, Jerry Griffin, 1981 to present. In 1972 the publishing operation was moved from Missouri to the offices of the General Conference in Denver, Colorado, and the name was shortened to *The Bible Advocate*.

In 1970, the subscription price was dropped, making it a free publication supported by the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) and by the donations of readers. An increasing circulation currently stands at more than 12,000.



The old publishing house in Stanberry, Missouri, as it appeared in the 1890s. Among the individuals identified by numbers

are 2) W. C. Long (editor 1888 to 1905); and 3) A. F. Dugger, Sr. (editor 1903-1909). Photos courtesy Bible Advocate Press.