

## PAUL MILHOUSE '32

Collated and edited by Michael G. Cartwright  
with assistance from Mary Hauswald and David Milhouse



In retrospect, it is hard to imagine a better choice. Bishop Paul Milhouse '32 was to offer the prayer at the Founder's Day observance on October 6, 2002. In addition to the fact that he was a graduate of Indiana Central College, Bishop Milhouse (1910–2005) was both a student of

church history and a biographer of the founder of the United Brethren in Christ Church. Indeed, had he chosen to do so, Bishop Milhouse easily could have named most if not all of the founders of the University as well as identify the names of the 10 United Brethren in Christ bishops for whom the streets in the University Heights neighborhood were to be named.

Bishop Paul Milhouse also had lived through the changes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that would shape the church and the University. In that respect he knew as well as anyone how to measure the significance of the fact that the University that was founded in 1902 not only had survived its early years of struggle—and two denominational mergers—but it was also thriving in the midst of the tumultuous world of American higher education.

Almost three years later, when members of his family and friends gathered at the memorial service held at the Chapel of Franklin United Methodist Community in March 2005, Paul Milhouse's life was celebrated in the context of retelling the saga of the Evangelical United Brethren tradition of Christianity. (See Robert Frey's article on page 12, republished with permission of *The Religious Telescope*, for an overview of his life of service from the perspective of those who cherish the heritage of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.)

We are grateful to Bishop Milhouse's family for their permission to use this material and for their active cooperation in creating this "profile in service." He is survived by his wife, Mary Frances Noblitt Milhouse '31, whom he married in 1932; two daughters, Mary Catherine Hauswald '56 and Pauline Joyce Vermillion '61; a son, Paul David Milhouse '63; one sister, Dorothy Jacobs; seven grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren. His grandson Brian is an instructor in the Department of Earth-Space and Environmental Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Indianapolis.

Bishop Milhouse's connections with this University were extensive, and he was a loyal alumnus and friend across the years. At times he played different roles in relation to his alma mater. As he recalled, there was even a conversation in the 1950s about the prospect that Milhouse would become a member of the staff at Indiana Central, but in the end he disagreed with President Esch's vision of what he would be doing, and declined the invitation. We were blessed that he served as Bishop-in-Residence at UIndy (1991–1998) after he and his wife moved back to Indiana from Oklahoma where he had served as Bishop.

In the wake of Paul Milhouse's death, we have determined that the best way to tell the story of his life is to present his own words as much as possible. I have inserted editorial remarks only where needed to guide the reader through this series of excerpts from Milhouse's retrospective reflections written at different times in the latter years of his life. We have also included two prayers written by Bishop Milhouse and an excerpt from *At Life's Crossroads* (1959), his book about what it means to make decisions in response to God's call, which we gratefully acknowledge that we are using by permission of Warner Press.

As the graduate of a university that emphasized Christian character, Paul Milhouse understood the significance of affirming God's "call" in one's life, and he addressed several different aspects of Christian vocation in this book, which he conceived as a "guide to the study of major crossroad experiences in the lives of a few well-known Bible people." Milhouse believed that such a study would help contemporary American Christians as they faced similar situations in their lives, and that interest served as the principal criterion for choosing the biblical characters.

- Abraham at Mt. Moriah
- Jacob at Bethel
- Moses at Mt. Horeb
- Herod at his birthday banquet
- The public official who interviewed Jesus
- Paul on the road to Damascus

Near the end of the preface of *At Life's Crossroads*, Paul Milhouse summarized what he thought could be gleaned from the six chapters of the book. "Reflection and meditation on the experiences of these men should help to prepare us for facing crossroad experiences in our lives by (1) giving us a better understanding of God's will and his ways of working in our world, and (2) demonstrating ways and means of bringing life under the immediate influence and control of God so that it can be lived as God intends."

**EXCERPT FROM  
AT LIFE'S  
CROSSROADS  
BY PAUL  
MILHOUSE**

*In the Preface to this book of sermons about discerning God's call in one's life, Paul Milhouse wrote:*

"Every time we come to an intersection of highways in our travels, we are confronted with making a decision. We may continue on the road we are traveling or turn on to one of the intersecting highways. The choice we make will determine the direction and the conditions of our travel for the next several miles. Choices made at major crossroads will determine, to a very large degree, our final destination."

"During the course of a lifetime, we face many situations which can best be described as crossroad experiences. Some are of minor importance because the required choices deal with secondary matters. Many decisions in the course of an ordinary day have only minor or incidental effects upon the general course and character of life. Now and then, however, one faces a major crossroad situation. Choices and decisions made at that time will determine the course and character of life for years to come. Such occasions become turning points in life. They are moments that determine character."

*Across the nine decades of his life, Paul Milhouse embodied many different roles—father, husband, student, pastor, author, editor, bishop—in which he tried to be responsive to God's call in his life. Some of the "crossroads" that he faced were uncommon, such as the time when he was the person responsible for making the announcement of the results of a special ballot to elect a new bishop, and discovered that he had been elected to that office! Other "crossroad decisions" were comparatively ordinary as he himself would have been the first to acknowledge.*

*We have chosen to let the story of Paul Milhouse's "profile in service" be written "In His Own Words" in order to give readers the opportunity to see some of the ways in which Bishop Milhouse practiced what he preached.*

**I. "REFLECTING ON MY RELIGIOUS HERITAGE" BY PAUL W. MILHOUSE**

*Bishop Paul W. Milhouse was the last remaining bishop elected by the former Evangelical United Brethren Church and actually grew up at a time when the denominational identity was "United Brethren in Christ." The following reflection describes Paul Milhouse's United Brethren religious experience.*

Reflecting upon my religious heritage has made me more aware that God has spoken to me and guided me many times through other people. To those many people who have touched my life for good, I shall forever be indebted. To God

whose providence has surrounded me with forgiving love and mercy, I shall be eternally grateful.

My religious heritage came to me, first, through my parents and the congregation to which they belonged—the United Brethren Church in St. Francisville, Illinois. As I push back my memory to those early years, I cannot remember a time when I did not think of myself as a part of that congregation.

I can see myself once again sitting on the little red chair, listening to a Bible story. The teacher is a small lady, with snow-white hair. She sits on a little red chair just like the one I am sitting on. She is holding a large picture card, and the picture on the card represents the Bible story she is telling. When the story is finished and the Sunday school class is dismissed with a short prayer, she gives each of us a small picture card just like the one she held in her hands. A summary of the Bible story is printed on the back of the card, and we are told that we can take the picture card home.

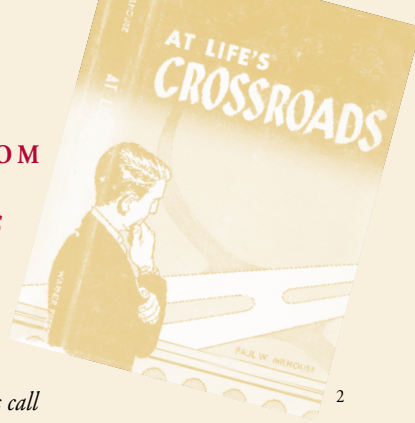
Our class met in the large room just off the auditorium [the name that was used to identify what we usually call "the sanctuary" today]. Several classes of the Sunday school met in this large room, which was called the Sunday School Room. It was separated from the rest of the church by an elevation of the floor and doors that rolled up and down like our window shades at home. When I was older, I was permitted to sit with other boys and girls on the ledge of that room, when the crowds at our revival services filled the auditorium to capacity.

I do not remember much that took place in those church services, and probably did not understand much of it, but I was there. I can now understand that just being there left a lasting impression upon my life.

The church building itself had an important place in my religious heritage. It was a sacred place because my father and mother treated it as a sacred place. People went to church to spend some special time with God. It was a place where they could forget the daily cares of life and think about God. It was like dropping a veil to shut out the world for a while. Many times, as we entered the sanctuary, I have seen my father sit down in the pew, lean his head over on the seat in front of him, close his eyes, and spend a few moments in prayer.

I recall a lot of noisy visiting going on before services, but when Reverend W. O. Albert came to the platform at the front of the church and knelt beside his chair in prayer, the congregation became quiet. There was no more visiting during the service. As a little boy sitting in the midst of many adults, I was strangely aware that I was in the presence of God, and in a place dedicated for the worship of God.

The very architecture of the church building set it apart from the houses and store buildings in our town. It was a white frame building with large picture windows of colored glass that showed scenes from the Bible. Other buildings were white, but Bible picture windows belonged in church buildings.





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The church building had a steeple. It was not a tall steeple, but one that pointed upward. As far as I was concerned, it was there to remind me of God. I do not know that I thought of God as being up in the sky so much as being above human beings in general, in charge of the whole universe. The steeple on my church was there as a reminder to remember God.

There was a bell in the belfry, just below the steeple. The bell was rung to call us to worship and to Sunday school—a half hour before services began to remind us to change into our Sunday clothes, and again at the beginning of the services. The bell was tolled when a member of the church died, one toll for each year of age. Since most people knew one another in our town, my parents could tell who had died as soon as the bell stopped tolling, and it would not be long until I would see the black “dead” wagon go by with the body. The bell would be rung again on the day of the funeral. It seemed to me that the town almost lived by the ringing of the church bells in our town.

The floor in our church sloped toward the platform in the northwest corner of the auditorium. There was a curved rail in front of the platform, which was called the “altar.” On the platform was a speaker’s desk which the people called “the pulpit.” At Christmas time, this platform was cleared and it became a stage for the telling of the Christmas story in tableaux.

Just before the tableaux, the church was in total darkness. I could hear some movement on the platform, but no matter how I strained my eyes, I could see nothing. Then there was a flash, and a pink light appeared showing the holy family at the manger. Those tableaux pictures of the Christmas story are as real to me today as when I first saw them as a boy. They were burned into my memory, never to be forgotten.

As I reflect upon the religious heritage that has come to me from those early days, the church building itself was an important part of that heritage, because it served as the transfer point where much of my Christian faith took root. And it was in this same building, which no longer stands, where that faith was nurtured through my boyhood.

Reflecting on my religious heritage calls to mind many people and events that nurtured my Christian faith during my earlier years. Without them, my faith may have gradually evaporated or remained stunted, instead of growing and maturing as I grew older.

Every Sunday morning, on the other side of the street, a couple walked by our house. They were neighbors of ours, on their way to church. At church, they occupied the end of the second pew from the front, on the left side of the sanctuary. Every Sunday, they were there. It was the same on Sunday evening, and during revival services.

I never recall being in their home. I had difficulty understanding them when they spoke, because they had a heavy German accent. I do not remember them ever speaking to me about my Christian faith. But I saw them walking to church each Sunday morning, as long as they were able. I saw them in their pew every Sunday. Their actions spoke to me louder than any words they could have spoken.

I discovered early in my childhood that actions rated high in the life of my parents, as well as others I came to know. I do not remember a lot of discussion about religion at our house, but religious faith was evident in the way my parents lived. They did not talk much about prayer—we prayed. I have watched my father call back a customer to receive forgotten change or a forgotten package. I have overheard him and mother discuss giving groceries to some destitute family, or “marking off” a grocery bill for some family while the father was out of work. I can still see him studying Sunday’s lesson before going to Sunday school. I have never forgotten words of tribute spoken by the pastor at my father’s funeral, when he quoted a simple poem: “I’d rather see a sermon than hear one any day.”

From my parents and from neighbors, and from others in our community, my religious heritage contained a heavy dose of the importance of life’s silent witness to one’s faith, a reminder that faith, and works consistent with that faith, belong together.

There was a Sunday school teacher who gave more than Sunday mornings to his class of boys. There were overnight camping trips before church camps were popular, homemade ice cream at his home, the gift of a pin that carried the initials “B.B.C.” (Boys’ Bible Class), and Sunday morning when Bible stories became living events to challenge the decisions of our boyhood minds.

There was a Sunday school superintendent who conducted the “opening exercises” for Sunday school. I do not remember what he said in his “opening remarks,” but I remember that he was always there on Sunday mornings, faithful in his leadership.

Pastors had significant roles in shaping my early faith. I do not remember what they said, but I remember them as being there when needed, faithful in their ministry to the congregation, giving leadership to community projects, preaching sermons that challenged me to be my best and reminding me of what others expected of me as a Christian.

In ways beyond my comprehension, the Holy Spirit of God was working through many people and events of my childhood and youth, to nurture me in the Christian faith and the responsibilities that come with commitment of life to the lordship of Jesus Christ.



## II. REFLECTIONS ON THE 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION BY PAUL W. MILHOUSE

*This reflection, which was written in the fall of 2001, chronicles the first ten years of Paul Milhouse's ministry as a United Brethren in Christ pastor.*

I was ordained to the Gospel Ministry in the United Brethren Church by Bishop H. H. Fout at Casey, Illinois, seventy years ago, in September, 1931. This is 2001.

I grew up in St. Francisville, Illinois, attended the public schools there, and finished my fourth year of high school in Lawrenceville because we only had three years of high school in St. Francisville. I was elected president of our school class.

I attended the United Brethren Church in St. Francisville from the time I sat on the small red chairs in the kindergarten room. As I became older, I passed out the song books. I was elected secretary of the Sunday school, was a member of the Boy's Bible Class, and later was asked to teach a class of boys and young men. We met in the furnace room in the basement, the only space available.

I was elected president of Christian Endeavor, the young people's group, when it was organized. I attended my first state Christian Endeavor Convention on the college campus at Galesburg, Illinois. Roy Burkhart, our denominational director of Christian Endeavor, was the chief speaker. I played a tuba in the church orchestra and often played the piano for prayer meetings on Wednesday night. I was active in interdenominational district meetings and served as treasurer of the county Sunday School Association.

I preached my first sermon on January 1, 1928, at Birds, about 25 miles north of my hometown. The pastor was to be away on that Sunday and drove down to my father's store in St. Francisville to ask me to preach for him. I was working for my father as a clerk in the store at the time. I had been recommended for a preacher's license by the congregation, but I did not have a license to preach. The St. Francisville Quarterly Conference approved the recommendation of the St. Francisville United Brethren congregation and issued me a

Quarterly Conference License to Preach on January 31, 1928. Dr. M. B. Leach was the Conference Superintendent. He signed the certificate.

During the summer, when I was helping a group of young people decorate the church for the annual Children's Day service, I was called to the parsonage phone next door and asked to serve the Birds Circuit for the summer, because they were without a pastor. I agreed to serve. During the summer, I decided to do the conference study course outlined in the [Book of] Discipline and joined the 1928 Illinois Conference that fall. I completed the four-year conference studies and was ordained.

I completed my college studies at Indiana Central College in 1932 and was married to Mary Frances Noblitt on June 29, 1932, in the Ogilville United Brethren Church by Bishop H. H. Fout of the United Brethren Church.

We planned to spend July and August at my home and take a church at the fall conference. Reverend Ed Vanwey, district leader of the United Brethren Church and pastor of the Flora congregation, came to visit me and asked us to take charge of the Mt. Vernon Circuit, consisting of the Mt. Vernon church and two in the country. I was pastor of the three churches until the September meeting of the annual conference. The congregation furnished a parsonage for us in the Sunday school room of the Mt. Vernon Church.

The 1932 United Brethren Church Annual Conference was held at the Lawrenceville church. Bishop H. H. Fout presided. We were assigned to the Elliott church. We had to inquire where it was. We had to be there the Sunday following conference.

We went to Elliott on Saturday and stayed at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gregg. I preached twice on Sunday and announced a board meeting for that night. I discovered that the board members were about evenly divided. About half of the people wanted the former pastor and half wanted a change. The former pastor, J. A. Smith, was in the board meeting. I was not hired. That was the time we had to do our own hiring and contract for salary.

I called the conference superintendent, Dr. G. W. Bonebrake, about the situation. He told me to stay if I could, it would be good for me, try again. I went home for the week and returned the next weekend. I was hired and promised a salary of \$1,000. We had to take most of the salary in produce. The local bank was closed. I gave people credit for every chicken, every pound of butter, and every gallon of milk. We received about six or seven hundred dollars in cash and produce combined.

I don't think our salary ever reached a thousand dollars. I asked the superintendent every year to move me. His answer was always the same. "I can move you to a better place, but I think you should stay at Elliott. It will be good for you." I stayed. . . . We remained there for five years, about the longest of any pastorate, and could have stayed longer.

Our next pastorate in Illinois was in Olney. We followed M. B. Leach, who had been superintendent of Southern Illinois Conference, and who gave me my first assignment to Birds Circuit. It was at Olney that I had my first experience of working with pastors of other denominations in the summer community Bible school. . . .

We were assigned to First Church in Decatur, at the 1941 Annual Conference. This was, I think, the largest church in the conference. The assignment came unexpectedly. I was secretary of the Illinois Conference and was staying at the parsonage of First Church. My roommate was Dr. G. W. Bonebrake, Superintendent of the Illinois Conference. He told me the first evening we were together that he wanted me to go to First Church in Decatur. The next morning, he said to me, "Paul, you didn't sleep very well last night, did you?" When the assignment was read on Sunday morning, the delegate of First Church came to me and said, "We don't want you at First Church!" (She later became one of our good friends).



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### III. REFLECTIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

*Throughout his life, education was important to Paul Milhouse. He earned his undergraduate degree from Indiana Central College, Indianapolis, which later granted him a doctor of divinity degree in 1950. He earned his Doctor of Theology degree from American Theological Seminary in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1945.*

A lesson in tolerance and respect for honest Christian faith that was different from mine was demonstrated for me day after day at a period when I probably needed it most. I was in the eighth grade of public school. My teacher was a lady of the Roman Catholic faith, so far as I remember the only Catholic teacher in the school. Our town was predominantly Protestant. The Ku Klux Klan was active with cross burning and parades in Protestant churches. Not once during this time did I ever hear my parents speak critically of Miss Weiler, who was my teacher. Not once did I ever hear Miss Weiler speak ill of the Protestants.

Miss Weiler encouraged me in my church activities, and followed me long after I had left her class. Later, when I had received my license to preach and preached at my home church, Miss Weiler was in the congregation. That was a time in our town when Catholics did not worship in Protestant churches. Sometime later, I was assigned to the United Brethren Church in Olney, Illinois. By that time, Miss Weiler had retired from teaching and moved back to her hometown, which was Olney. One day, she stopped by the parsonage for a personal visit and encouraged us in our pastoral work.

I think her prayers and the sincere concern she demonstrated in my early ministry, and the tolerance and respect she and my parents demonstrated in their daily living, had much to do with guiding my attitudes in those formative years.

Another person who was helpful to me during a period in early manhood, when I was planning my education, was Dr. I. J. Good, president of Indiana Central College, (now known as the University of Indianapolis). I was serving a five-point circuit after graduation from high school. (I think the conference was short on pastors at that time.)

It was during that conversation with President Good that I saw the importance of a liberal higher education in a college of the church. I cancelled my plans to attend the Bible Institute and that fall enrolled at Indiana Central College. It was 1929. The Great Depression hit with a fury. During my college days, I worked for twenty-five cents an hour doing whatever was available and as much as was available. I worked as much as 60 hours some weeks.

Some of the work was with shovel on the grounds. Some was up town during the sales at the Block Store. I finally ended up in the college bookstore and post office and running some errands for the school office. I completed my work in three years and one summer, to save money. I borrowed some from the Board of Christian Education.

I believe those years on the campus of Indiana Central College gave me a broader vision for the ministry, brought me into contact with leaders of the church, challenged my mind to think more deeply, and gave me a new appreciation for education in general. Professors Cummins, Haramy, Cravens, Gilliatt, and many others live on in my memory—I believe I have been a better man because of my years at college.

But my parents shaped my early years as no others could.

When I think of I. J. Good, I think of Indiana Central College. Doctor Good was one of the earliest graduates of the college, and served as president through several generations of students. He was interested in young people and arranged for many young people to attend college who otherwise would never have had the opportunity.

One time when he and a team of men were staying at our home while they canvassed the congregation for money, our oldest daughter, who was in the lower grades of school at that time, asked her mother, "Is Indiana Central the only college in the world?" President Good gave his life to the school

and guided it through some of its most difficult years. The church should be forever grateful for him.

Professors at Indiana Central College left a deep imprint upon my life in many ways. Professor Haramy was the coach of our debating team. I was drafted to be a part of that team, and although I enjoyed some of the trips to the neighboring schools for the debates, I never became interested in debating. Professor Haramy knew how to make interesting what was otherwise an uninteresting subject. He was a visitor in our home at Olney, Illinois, when he was there to give a lecture at the annual teacher's institute.

Professor Cummins was an old man when I was at the college; at least I thought he was old. He was my professor of Philosophy and Logic. He taught me how to think. Other professors taught me how to work in laboratories, explore nature, and how to study.

Professors Cravens and Weaver challenged me with a new appreciation of literature. They wanted me to take more courses in their departments than those required, but at the time I was so narrowly focused toward the ministry and anxious to get back into "the swing of it" after fifteen months at Birds Circuit that I did not do it.

I always appreciated the faculty parties when we had opportunity to get out of the dormitory and into a home. The college was small at the time, and students knew the faculty members personally. They were like parents to us.

But it was through the classroom teaching and discussions, along with the comradeship of other students on the campus, our daily chapel service that included visiting lecturers, our campus literary societies, and other campus organizations that lifted my horizons beyond parochial boundaries. Fellowship around the tables in a common dining room, lectures and practice in etiquette, our football and basketball games, all rolled together fitted us for leadership in society.

I heard Dr. W. R. Funk speak at one of the first conferences that I attended when I was a young minister. I remember him as a heavy-set man, with white hair and mustache neatly trimmed. He was the agent for the Publishing House. It was under his leadership that the United Brethren Building had been erected in downtown Dayton, Ohio.

He talked about bonds and interest, rentals for the lower floors of the building to a large department store, church offices in the upper stories, and income from the publications printed at the nearby publishing house in Dayton. It was difficult for me to understand all that he talked about, and Dayton, Ohio, seemed so far away from Illinois. By the time I began to "get my feet on the ground," Dr. Funk had retired, but as I became acquainted with the history and work of our church, my appreciation for his life and ministry greatly increased. I often heard comments from other ministers about his hard work and his great vision for the United Brethren Church.

When I was a student at Indiana Central College, someone invited me to go with him to a winter retreat for ministers at the old First United Brethren Church in downtown Indianapolis. I remember only one thing about that meeting, but it left a lasting impression upon me. It was a Holy Communion service with Bishop A. B. Statton preaching. Bishop Statton was from Kansas City. I did not know him. I did not know anything about him. He was only a name. I do not remember anything special that he said, but there was something about his conduct of the service that left me with a sense of mystery surrounding the sacrament of Holy Communion. I have always been grateful for the opportunity of being present at that service, and have thought of it many times when I have administered the sacrament.

#### IV. REMEMBERING THE BISHOP WHO ORDAINED ME

*Paul Milhouse was a student of EUB history. Long before he was ever ordained a bishop, he stood in awe of the fact that his ordination by Bishop H. H. Fout in 1931 placed him only five generations from William Otterbein, the cofounder of the United Brethren in Christ movement. In this reflection, he reflects on his relationship with Bishop H. H. Fout and Bishop Fred Dennis.*

My first encounter with Bishop H. H. Fout was when I became a member of the Illinois Conference in the fall of 1928. I had completed the conference reading course for quarterly conference license that summer while preaching at the four churches on the Birds Circuit. Bishop Fout gave me my first full-time appointment that fall by sending me officially to Birds Circuit. I was ordained by Bishop Fout in 1931 after completing the conference reading course for annual conference ministers. The conference met in Casey. The ordination service was held in the Casey gymnasium.

In September, Frances and I attended the Illinois Conference, which was held in our United Brethren Church in Lawrenceville. The Rev. A. O. Ramsey was pastor. Bishop Fout presided. Those were the days when appointments were kept secret until they were read just before the benediction on Sunday morning. My name was read for Elliott. We had never heard of it. We had no idea where it was. No one had ever talked to us about the assignment before it was announced. We knew nothing about the church. The appointment came as a complete surprise. When we inquired about the location of Elliott, the people whom we asked did not know. We found out where it was after returning to my home in St. Francisville and inquiring of Uncle Will who traveled the state as a salesman.

Bishop Fout was originally from the South. I remember him as a very courteous and dignified gentleman, both in his presiding at an annual conference and in his personal relations with other people. He was always well dressed. He had been an editor of our Sunday school literature before he was elected



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bishop. By the time I began my ministry under him, he was becoming hard of hearing and had to have help at the desk when presiding at the conference.

Sometime after I had been ordained by Bishop Fout in 1931, I discovered that there were only five bishops between my ordination and that of Otterbein. Otterbein was ordained in the Reformed Church in 1749. [The United Brethren Church was officially organized in 1800.] Newcomer was ordained by Otterbein in 1813. Bishop Newcomer ordained Kumler, Sr. in 1816. Bishop Kumler ordained Glossbrenner in 1833. Bishop Glossbrenner ordained Weaver in 1848. Bishop Weaver ordained Fout in 1887.

Bishop Fout sometimes examined his ministers on the conference floor, about such items as conversions and additions to church membership, and if the apportioned items were paid during the year. On one occasion, he called my name. I had to stand to answer his questions, while everyone around me remained seated and was looking at me. I had no additions to report that year, and I doubt if the finances were paid, for it was during the Depression. I was somewhat relieved when he indicated he could not hear me very well,

but I still remember that it was a very embarrassing moment for me. I think it was my second year at Elliott, and the split in the congregation had not yet been healed.

Bishop Fout embarrassed Frances at our first conference in 1932. We had been married less than three months. We were standing on the front steps of the church during the noon hour, as the members of conference were reassembling for the afternoon session. Bishop Fout was walking up the steps and remembered that he had performed our wedding that summer. He came over and talked to us briefly, and before leaving, he kissed Frances on the cheek. She has never forgotten the embarrassment of that moment.

Dr. Fred L. Dennis '16 was elected bishop at the 1941 General Conference which was held in South Bend, Indiana. I was pastor of our church in Olney, Illinois, at the time, and remember Bishop Dennis being in our home soon after that. That was the beginning of many years of working with Bishop Dennis that gave me a growing appreciation for him and his leadership. He was kind in his criticism of his ministers, and always helpful when he met with us in executive sessions.

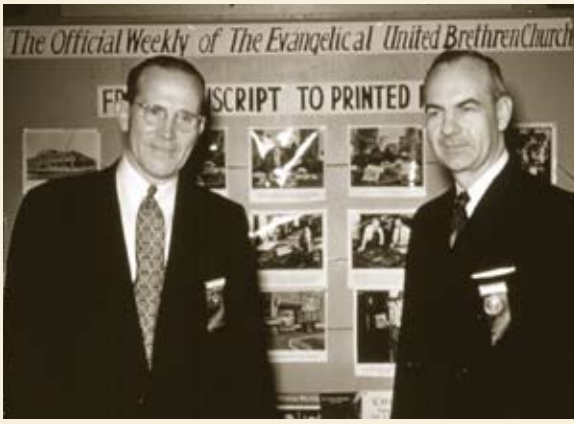
I recall one executive session when he talked with us about those times when we had private counsel sessions with our people. It was when pastors were beginning to give more attention to private counseling sessions in the church office before weddings and with individuals who had personal problems. He warned us of pitfalls that could occur at such times, and suggested that we always counsel "across the desk,"—have a desk between us and those we were counseling. I have found it to be a good guiding principle.

I was elected secretary of the annual conference while Bishop Dennis was our presiding officer and was chosen as one of the delegates to the 1945 General Conference.

## V. REFLECTIONS ON BEING AN EDITOR FOR THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH

*This set of reflections deals with the period in Paul Milhouse's life when he served as an editor for the E.U.B. Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (1951–1958). He narrates the events that led to his appointment to that role and the events that later brought him back to the role of pastor of an E.U.B. Church.*

While pastor of First Church in Decatur, I was elected to delegate to the 1950 general Conference of Evangelical United Brethren Church meeting in Dayton, Ohio, in November. I was appointed Reading Secretary of that conference. When it came time for electing general officers for the Church, I was elected to serve as Associate Editor of the *Telescope-Messenger* for the next four years. The election occurred about the middle of the morning and I could not get to a phone until after 12:30 that afternoon to call home.



The election came as a complete surprise to me. I had no idea that I was being considered. At church union in 1946 there were agreements made in which most every board and agency would have an executive from each of the two uniting churches. In the case of the church paper, the editor was to be from the Evangelical church. The United Brethren Church was to have the associate editor. The gentleman who had served as associate editor during the first quadrennium of the union retired at the 1950 general conference, so I was elected to fill that vacancy.

The 1946 union appeared to have gone very well among the local churches, but there had been some conflicts among the general agencies. The idea of two editors for the church paper was the source of some of this controversy. Now I was caught in this conflict. The agent of the Evangelical press, where the paper was published, came to me after my election and suggested that I resign because “We do not need you in Harrisburg. You have a good church; why don’t you just resign and go back to your church.”

When I was able to get to a phone to call home and tell the family of my surprise election, I found that the story of my election had been put on the news service and the reporter for the Decatur paper picked it up and had called Frances earlier. I guess the noon meal that day was not a very happy occasion. Mary was going into her senior year in January as a member of the academic honorary society. No one had any thoughts of moving. Pauline declared, with tears running

down her cheeks, “We might just as well go to Africa.” The election was a “shock” to every one of us.

I had mixed emotions. I had never had any other desire than to be a pastor. I loved the pastorate. I loved the people. The challenges and the excitement of being a pastor never waned from week to week. I enjoyed writing but I had never thought of it as my chief responsibility. I did not feel I was qualified as an editor. But I looked upon the election as God’s call to a specific task. I had never sought it, so I accepted my new task with the confidence God would guide me through the transition and into a life of service as a writer. I began to think of my new job in terms of pastoral relations. My desk would now become my pulpit. My congregation would be the readers of the paper.

We moved in early January 1951. It was a three-day trip from Decatur to Harrisburg. The weather was cloudy and cold. This did nothing to bring sunshine to a weary family leaving friends to enter into a new and a strange world. The only four-lane highway we had on the trip was a short section of the Pennsylvania Turnpike that had recently been completed. As we left the turnpike and came within sight of Harrisburg, the sun came out to welcome us to the city that would be our home for the next eight years.

Going to Harrisburg as an editor opened many opportunities to me that I would never have had if I had remained in the pastorate. I was put in a position that took me to every corner of our denomination—preaching, teaching in summer camps, become personally acquainted with leaders in every conference, making friends everywhere. My understanding of the denomination was greatly enlarged, and my life was enriched.

My position also brought me into a close relationship with editors of other church papers. This gave me a new perspective on other denominations and I came to a new appreciation of those who saw things from a different viewpoint than mine. My mind was broadened. My appreciation for the local pastor working under difficult circumstances grew. I learned to think of individuals, whereas before I often thought of strangers by a “class” of society.

One year while in Harrisburg, the Council of Churches asked me to provide a 15-minute TV religious news show on Saturday evenings. I did this for a year, securing my national religious news from Religious News Service. I used pictures along with my prepared script, but I was never enthusiastic about it, so I resigned. I think the show was dropped after that. I also did an occasional devotion on radio, from which I received some listener response. But I could never become enthusiastic about radio or TV broadcasting.

One day the district superintendent was in my office and made the statement, “If you would stay at home on Sunday, I’d appoint you to a church.” I responded, “If you will appoint me to a church, I’ll stay at home.”



By this time, my longing for a return to the pastorate was very strong. I enjoyed the editorial work but I missed the closer associations of a pastor with his congregation. I was glad to accept the appointment to Grace Church in Steelton, a suburb of Harrisburg, on a part-time basis. The children continued attending Grace church in Penbrook while Frances and I started attending Grace Church in Steelton.

Grace Church had declined over several years as a student appointment and they welcomed mature leadership. Our attendance grew and the people became more enthusiastic about their church. If I remember correctly, we had about a dozen people on our first Sunday. Our attendance grew over the next three or four years to an average of fifty or more. A Men's Bible class was formed with about a dozen men attending regularly. Someone remarked one day that "You are the first pastor we have had for many years who did not talk to us about closing our church."

While in Harrisburg, I wrote *Laymen in the Church*, when I thought more emphasis should be placed on training laymen for leadership but books on the subject were not obtainable. Warner Press published the book. Since that time, many books on lay leadership have been written.

*Worship in Symbol and Ritual* was written when our rituals of the two churches were combined and rewritten. I was a member of the committee on worship of the denomination and felt we needed some guidance for our pastors. The book was published by the Evangelical Press. Another book, entitled *At Life's Crossroads*, was published by the Warner Press.

## VI. MY SERVICE AS AN E.U.B. BISHOP

*Bishop Paul Milhouse was elected to the episcopacy of the E.U.B. Church in 1961. From then on, one of his responsibilities was to prepare the way for the anticipated merger with the Methodist Church. This reflection narrates some of the concerns that members of the E.U.B. Church had about this prospect, and how Milhouse engaged such questions.*

My installation as a bishop took place in First Evangelical United Brethren Church at Dayton, Ohio, in March of 1961. My official duties had begun on December 1, 1960, following my election by mail ballot to fill the vacancy left by the sudden death of Bishop L. L. Baughman. Kansas City, Missouri, was our place of residence during this period. My work consisted mainly of the usual responsibilities of a bishop.

Although I had many fears about the office of bishop, I found it quite easy to preside at the annual conferences and meet with the superintendents to plan the work of the Area. The Southwestern Area to which I had been assigned included our churches in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, with two churches in Louisiana and one church in Arkansas.



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Our weekends were usually spent on the road, preaching in the churches of the Area on special anniversaries, dedicating new buildings or improvements, and in district meetings. I attended the meeting of the general boards of the church and interdenominational gatherings at various times. I reported special activities to the Board of Bishops.

My service as bishop in the Evangelical United Brethren Church stretched across the last eight years of the denomination, leading to the 1968 uniting of the Evangelical United Brethren Church with the Methodist Church. I, along with the other bishops of our church, served on the Commission on Union with the Methodist representatives. We had several meetings together, and I thought the meetings went very well. I never felt that the Methodist members of the Commission tried in any way to use their weight of numbers to "get their way" in working out plans for union. The 1968 Uniting Conference was held in Dallas, Texas.

During my eight years of Episcopal service in the Evangelical United Brethren Church, union was on the agenda during most of the annual conferences. I tried to prepare our churches for union by giving several lectures on the history of the two denominations. I tried to answer questions honestly. I felt there was a fear on the part of our people that we would be "swallowed up" in the union. I thought this was an honest fear.

When it came time for voting, I think the conferences in the Southwestern Area of the church, which I served, had the largest percentage of "yes" votes of any of our areas. In addition to that, after union appeared to be certain, I worked with the Methodist bishops in my Area to unite several local congregations before the Dallas Conference. If I remember correctly, I think there were about forty "united" congregations across my Area by the time of the 1968 Uniting Conference.

## VII. REFLECTIONS ON BEING A BISHOP OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

*Following the merge of the E.U.B. Church with the Methodist Church, Bishop Milhouse was assigned to a new ministry within the new denomination. For the next twelve years, Paul Milhouse would serve the Oklahoma Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.*

In 1968, we were in Dallas for the uniting conference. In July of that year, we were in Oklahoma City for the Jurisdictional Conference. Since we had been living in Kansas City, I was assigned to the South Central Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church.



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It was about this time that the leaders of the Okalahoma delegation to the conference asked me to meet with the delegates from that conference to be interviewed about the possibility of becoming their bishop. This was new to me, and I felt that it was a way of “getting around” the authority of the Episcopal Committee, which was charged with the responsibility of placing the bishops. I refused to meet with the delegates from Oklahoma. I was not going “to bargain” for a position in the new church. The leader of the delegation was Finis Crutchfield, pastor of Boston Avenue Church in Tulsa, probably the largest church in the Oklahoma Conference at that time. I was told that this was a common practice among the Methodists.

The Episcopal Committee assigned me to Oklahoma City, to follow the twenty-four year leadership of Bishop Angie Smith. We purchased a house at 2213 North West 56<sup>th</sup> Terrace with a little assistance from the conference, and lived there for the next twenty-three years, until we moved to Franklin, Indiana, to be nearer our children and their families.

I spent the next twelve years as the presiding Bishop of the Okalahoma United Methodist churches, including approximately a hundred Indian churches. I retired in 1980, after serving in the Episcopal office for twenty years.

At the invitation of President Jerald Walker of Oklahoma City University, I moved my office across the street to the Oklahoma City University campus. I gave the next eleven years to the university as Bishop-in Residence—so far as I know, the first bishop to serve as Bishop-in-Residence on a United Methodist college campus.

I had no agenda, no schedule to follow, but I soon found my place in teaching international students courses in Biblical Literature. I was soon teaching two, sometimes three classes each semester. Each class consisted of approximately 50 students. I also taught English to some of the wives of older Middle Eastern students who had brought their families with them.

Frances entertained many of the international students in our home. We took many of them with us to church every Sunday, including visits to some of our black and Indian churches in the conference. Our association with these university students, and the fellowship with the university faculty and staff, were happy years, but busy ones.

### *UIndy Honors & Awards*

- Honorary Doctorate of Divinity (1950)
- Distinguished Alumnus Award (1978)
- Alumni Making a Global Impact (2006)

### *Other Recognitions & Honors*

- Honorary Degree Westmar College (1965)
- Oklahoma City University (1969)
- Southern Methodist University (1969)
- Distinguished Service Award of the United Methodist General Commission on Archives and History in 1996

### *Books: author & editor*

#### *Historical & Biographical Works*

- *Philip William Otterbein: Pioneer Pastor to Germans in America*, Upper Room Books, 1968
- *Nineteen Bishops of the Evangelical United Brethren Church*, The Parthenon Press, 1974.
- *Theological and Historical Roots of United Methodists* (privately published, 1980)

#### *Books of Sermons*

- *Doorways to Spiritual Living*, Warner Press, 1950
- *The Layman and the Church*, Warner Press, 1957
- *At the Crossroads*, Warner Press, 1959

#### *Books of Prayers*

- *Come Unto Me* (ca. 1955)
- *Lift Up Your Eyes* (ca. 1963)

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## OKLAHOMA PASTOR'S REMEMBRANCE OF BISHOP MILHOUSE



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*We have not been able to establish the authorship of this reflection, but as the context makes clear, the pastor in question gave eloquent testimony to the character of Paul Milhouse's ministry as bishop.*

It was late summer [in 1968], the year in which the Jurisdictional Conference met in Oklahoma City, a group of curious followers were huddled in a District meeting, and one who had been with him reported, "It's true what we have heard; he is a gentle and quiet man but he can ask the most penetrating questions I've ever heard."

The Conference Board of Evangelism was in session and he came to be with us. He told us of his passion for evangelism in the church, and his voice broke as he spoke of the unspeakable joys of leading new disciples to the Christian way.

I have climbed the steps of the Cravens Building with him and traveled the highways of the District with him beside me in the car. I have not found him to be personally ambitious or aggressive for positions of power. I sat opposite him at the Cabinet table and sometimes stood on the opposite side of an issue. I have not known him to be vindictive or retaliatory.

The Episcopal symbol of the shepherd's staff not only hangs on his wall and adorns the sleeve of his robe, but is emblazoned on his person and his spirit. He seeks to be a Pastor to the flock, including the ministers of his Conferences, their spouses and families, the members of the congregations and the greater community in which we live and work.

The freedom which Bishop Milhouse has intentionally allowed the Oklahoma Annual Conference in designing its structure and in its administration should neither be overlooked nor forgotten. We have appreciated his fairness evidenced by his insistence upon the inclusion and participation of the laity in the Annual Conference. No congregation has been too small or too remote to warrant his concern or to merit a personal visit, schedule permitting.

The Conference was stirred with pride as "our Bishop" was elected by his colleagues to preside over their council and as he shared with us the honor of hosting the Council of Bishops in Oklahoma City.

The bold stance and aggressive leadership of Bishop Paul Milhouse is recognized as the determining factor in the dramatic turnabout in the life of Oklahoma City University, our United Methodist school.

While directing many administrative details and a myriad of other things, Paul W. Milhouse brought honor to himself and to us as he added a unique and important dimension to our church by blending the German tradition of the Evangelical United Brethren with the British-American tradition of Methodism to bring balance and strength to our United Methodist Church.

Together with the many other gifts which he brought to this "Home of the Redman," we are most grateful that he brought Frances, who has shared both faith and love through her warm Indiana charm.

We salute our Bishop and a Bishop of the United Methodist Church, Bishop Paul W. Milhouse.

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## AN EVENING PRAYER<sup>13</sup> BY BISHOP PAUL MILHOUSE

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Almighty God, Creator and Sovereign of the world, who hast revealed thyself as the Good Shepherd, bless me with thy shepherding Presence, I pray.

Take my weary body and enfold it in restful sleep, O Lord. Let me rest in the goodness of thy providence, and grant me the peace of mind that comes from knowing that Thou art near.

Free me from the fears of the unknown tomorrow, and grant me courage to face whatever the future brings to me. As Thou hast walked with me through today, I know that Thou wilt walk with me through tomorrow, and through all of the tomorrows that follow.

Quiet my restlessness as Thou didst quiet the restless sea, O Lord, and relax inner tensions, so that thy healing grace may have freedom to do its work.

Bless those who have waited upon me during this day. Give strength to those who watch over me during the night.

I thank Thee for those who have remembered me during the day. I am grateful for their kindness, for the cheer of their words, and for the joy of their fellowship. Bless them with the satisfaction of knowing that they serve Thee.

Give me patience to endure my affliction. Bless me with the faith that overcomes all anxieties, and grant me inner peace which none can take away. In Christ's name, I pray. Amen.

## BISHOP PAUL W. MILHOUSE (1910–2005)

by Robert L. Frey '60

GOD OF LIGHT, in whom there is no darkness nor shadow of turning, be Thou the light of my life, I pray.

Scatter the shadows with the light of thy holy Presence, and make my day bright with thoughts of Thee.

Show me the way that Thou hast marked out for my life, O Lord, and guide me in the paths of righteousness. Hold my hand lest I stumble and fall.

Grant to me inner strength to patiently endure suffering and to face disappointment without despair. Restrain my lips from complaining of my lot. Keep me cheerful and hopeful in the knowledge that Thou, who art the strength of my life, giveth victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

May these days of restricted activity and confinement lead me into closer companionship with Thee. Fill my empty hours with thoughts of thy goodness and power. Enlighten my mind with a better understanding of spiritual things. Fill my soul with a desire to please Thee in all my ways.

Condition my spirit for the effective working of thy healing grace. May all those who are working to help me regain my health, come to the close of the day with the satisfaction of having done their best.

Strengthen my heart, O Lord, as I wait before Thee. In the name of Christ Jesus, our Savior, I pray. Amen.

The Reverend Doctor Paul W. Milhouse, last surviving bishop of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, died in Franklin, Indiana, on March 12, 2005. Born on August 31, 1910, in St. Francisville, Illinois, Bishop Milhouse grew up in a United Brethren family that emphasized “works consistent with faith.” Paul was active in church as a young person organizing a youth fellowship group and serving as its first president. He began serving a pastorate after graduation from high school, and in the fall of 1929 Paul entered Indiana Central College. He graduated with honors in three years, earning his way by working in the college bookstore. Shortly after commencement Paul married Mary Frances Noblitt, whom he met in college. Their marriage was blessed with three children—two girls and a boy—and eventually with seven grandchildren and sixteen great-grandchildren. Paul completed his formal education by earning Bachelor of Divinity (1937) and Doctor of Theology (1945) degrees from the American Theological Seminary.

Until 1950 Dr. Milhouse served pastorates in Illinois. In that year he was elected associate editor of the *Telescope-Messenger*. The 1958 General Conference elected him executive secretary of the General Council of Administration, a position where he was at the center of denominational programs. When a heart attack felled Bishop L. L. Baughman in 1960, Paul Milhouse was elected bishop to replace him, serving the southwest conferences of the EUB Church located in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas—a large geographical area requiring extensive travel.

After the 1968 merger creating the United Methodist Church, Bishop Milhouse was assigned to the Oklahoma area, where he replaced a popular bishop who had served the area for many years. Bishop Milhouse placed a great deal of confidence in his colleagues. He was not a micromanager, preferring to lead by example rather than by directive. As an administrator he was respected for his humility, his integrity, and his piety. He came from the tradition that believed a bishop was a first among equals—first pastor among pastors—and only secondarily as a chief administrator.

Bishop Milhouse continued to preach as often as he could, once remarking “I wouldn’t have this job if I couldn’t preach.” His style was low-key and conversational. His sermons were based on solid biblical scholarship and showed clear evidence of careful and extensive preparation. This style was evident during his keynote address at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of EUB Church Union, held at United Theological Seminary in 1996. Speaking without notes, the Bishop provided a vivid, often humorous, and deeply personal view of the bishops of the EUB Church. It was a spellbinding presentation that reminded those present of the heritage of the denomination.

Bishop Milhouse retired in 1980, and during his retirement years he continued to make important contributions to the United Methodist Church. He served on the Board of Trustees of United Theological Seminary and was elected a life member of the Board. As a member of the Advisory Council of the Center for the EUB Heritage, Bishop Milhouse was interested in preserving the historical records of the church and in seeing the heritage kept alive in a variety of ways. He donated many of his personal papers to the EUB Center, where they now form a valuable collection. In recognition of his interest in history, Bishop Milhouse was awarded the Distinguished Service Award of the United Methodist General Commission on Archives and History in 1996.

Bishop Milhouse’s personal friendship and Christian character will be missed by those who knew him. But we can all join in praising God for the life of Bishop Paul W. Milhouse—a man who accepted the “lordship of Jesus Christ” in his life—a man whose works were consistent with his faith—a man whose Christian witness is a model for all of us.

*This article was originally published in the Religious Telescope. Permission granted by the author and the Religious Telescope publication for use in the online “Profiles in Service” of the University of Indianapolis.*

## PHOTOGRAPHS

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1. Photo from the “Making a Global Impact” brochure, available from the Publications/Media Relations offices of the University of Indianapolis.
2. Photographic image of Paul Milhouse’s book *At Life’s Crossroads*, published by Warner Press in 1959, used with permission of Warner Press, Anderson, Indiana.
3. Photograph of the United Brethren Church, St. Francisville, IL, where Paul Milhouse made his decision to go into the ministry. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
4. Photograph of the United Brethren Church in Birds, IL, is where Paul Milhouse preached his first sermon. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
5. Photograph of Paul Milhouse from p. 29 of the 1932 edition of the *Oracle* yearbook of Indiana Central College, used with permission of the Frederick D. Hill Archives of the University of Indianapolis.
6. Photograph of Paul Milhouse at his pastorate, Decatur, IL. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
7. Photograph of Paul Milhouse at the desk of First Evangelical United Brethren Church in Decatur, IL. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
8. Photograph of Dr. Kreckler and Paul Milhouse at *Telescope-Messenger* offices of the Evangelical United Brethren Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
9. Photograph of Paul Milhouse at the Evangelical Press office, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1958. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
10. Photograph of Bishop Paul Milhouse in African robe after attending Africa Conference. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
11. Photograph of Bishop Paul Milhouse and his wife in the 1930s after both had graduated from Indiana Central College. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
12. Photograph of Bishop Paul Milhouse, ca. 2001. This family photograph used by permission of David Milhouse.
13. *Evening Prayer* from page 23 of the privately published booklet *Lift Up Your Eyes*, written by Paul Milhouse. Originals belong to Mrs. Mary Hauswald ’56 and are used by her permission.
14. *Prayer for Guidance* from page 15 of the privately published booklet *Lift Up Your Eyes*, written by Paul Milhouse. Originals belong to Mrs. Mary Hauswald ’56 and are used by her permission.