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Holiness Writers

**SKETCH OF
M.L. HANEY**

By

Kenneth O. Brown

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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**MILTON L. HANEY
PASTOR, CHAPLAIN, EVANGELIST,
SEVENTY-SIX YEARS A METHODIST MINISTER**

KENNETH O. BROWN

[HDM herewith expresses thanks to the author of this excellent article for permission to publish it digitally. This valuable article by Kenneth O. Brown contains a number of interesting facts about Milton Lorenzo Haney that are not found in his autobiography, and the references in the endnotes will be appreciated by those who may wish to study his life in more detail. — DVM]

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The January, 1992, issue of *Methodist History* included John W. Brinsfield's article, "A Song of Courage: Chaplain (Colonel) M. L. Haney and the Congressional Medal of Honor." The article highlighted Haney's Civil War service, especially his courage during the siege of Atlanta, GA, for which he was later awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Only a handful of chaplains have received that medal and Haney is the only holiness chaplain/evangelist ever to have received such an honor.

That medal highlights Haney's Civil War service, and rightly so, but his entire ministerial career deserves recognition, too. Although his name seldom appears in scholarly reference texts, the Reverend Milton Lorenzo Haney was one of the most colorful Methodist ministers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He served as pastor of several Methodist congregations in Illinois, but spent most of his ministerial life as a freelance holiness evangelist. Called "Father Haney" in his later years, he gained widespread recognition and respect for his preaching of the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification. By the time of his death in 1922, he had been a Methodist preacher for seventy-six years.

The Haney family was unusual for its contribution to the Methodist ministry. Milton's father, James Haney, served as a local preacher for over fifty years and four of his sons, one grandson and one great-grandson entered the ordained ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church.^[1] The most widely known of these seven preachers was Milton whose ministry included the pastorate, the army chaplaincy, a nation-wide ministry of evangelism in local churches and camp meetings, the editorial chair, years of administrative work, extensive missionary activity, and the authorship of hundreds of periodical articles and several books and tracts.

Born on January 23, 1825, Milton became a Christian in his sixteenth year and in 1846 received appointment as the junior preacher of the Dixon, Illinois, Circuit. He had been licensed to preach only six weeks before and was barely twenty-one years old. Three years later he married Sarah C. Huntsinger, of Princeton, Illinois, and the home they established lasted over seventy years!

Milton Haney possessed what he called a "passion for evangelism." From the very first year of his ministry he conducted revivals in the churches he served, and when he professed the experience of entire sanctification at a Methodist camp meeting in 1847, this doctrine became the keynote of his evangelistic emphases. He early identified himself with the "holiness movement" as it developed under the ministries of the Palmers and the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness. He attended the 1868 National Camp Meeting, held at Manheim, Pennsylvania, and claimed that its baptism of fire and revelation of God had marked his soul for all eternity.^[2]

Haney had been a "pronounced abolitionist" since 1847. His very soul flamed with zeal for the Union cause at the outbreak of the Civil War. He had just begun his work as pastor of the Bushnell, Illinois, Methodist Episcopal Church, when he was asked to help enlist a company of local

volunteers. Within five days he had gathered over one hundred men, many of them Methodists, who helped make up two companies of the "Bushnell Light Guard." One group elected Haney as captain, and on October 11, 1861 he volunteered for active duty as Captain of Company F, 55th Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry. ^[3] Within five months Colonel David Stuart asked Haney to resign as Captain and assume new duties as Chaplain. On March 16, 1862, Haney was mustered in as Chaplain of the 55th Illinois. ^[4]

This regiment saw considerable action during the war, including the Georgia campaign and the siege of Vicksburg. Haney actively participated in these engagements and took the role of chaplain far beyond its usual limit. He preached, led worship services and offered spiritual counsel, but he also led the men in foraging expeditions, looked after the needs of the wounded and dying, and had command of the regimental ambulances. He sometimes carried the weight of full command, and was once elected Colonel of his regiment. ^[5] In 1863 he requested permission to raise a black regiment. In 1864 he served as a recruitment officer before being mustered out of active duty. ^[6]

On July 22, 1864, in the battle outside Atlanta during the Georgia campaign, Chaplain Haney performed several acts of bravery which won him national fame. He shouldered a rifle, rallied his faltering troops, and helped retake the federal works which had been captured. One of his own men called him a hero. At one point it was said that over one hundred rebel muskets were fired directly at him, mowing down the brush on all sides. The Chicago Tribune reported, "A stalwart rebel ordered him to surrender. 'Never,' said the chaplain, and shot him dead." ^[7] General Sherman remarked that such a Chaplain was worth a thousand men! ^[8] Over thirty years later, the United States Congress recognized Haney's heroism during this battle and voted him the highest recognition it could bestow, the Congressional Medal of Honor, issued on November 3, 1896. ^[9]

Haney rose to prominence as a leader in the American holiness movement, especially in the west, and devoted his life and ministry to this cause. He joined the National Association in 1878, attended the Western Union Holiness Convention at Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1880, and quickly became a leader in the rapidly expanding Iowa Holiness Association. ^[10] He held increasingly important offices in the National and Iowa associations and helped organize the Wesleyan Holiness Association in Illinois, one of the first state holiness associations. He participated in various holiness conventions, including the 1901 "General Holiness Convention" held in Chicago. He helped pave the way for the formation of the National Holiness Missionary Society as well as the California College and Holiness Bible School. Moreover, he founded one of the earliest western holiness periodicals, the Repository of Holiness, but it soon ceased publication due to financial difficulties. ^[11]

Haney appears to have become a full-time holiness revivalist in 1872. At first his work centered in southern Illinois, but he quickly expanded, preaching in churches and camp meetings throughout the midwestern states. By the time his picture appeared on the cover of the April 25, 1896, issue of the Christian Standard, Haney had already achieved national recognition for his work as a holiness evangelist. He served several continuous terms as Vice President of the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness and later became a contributing editor to the Christian Witness.

It is evident that Haney early saw the value of the printed page for his evangelistic efforts, for in 1881 he published his first book, Inheritance Restored, a popular treatise on the subject of holiness

which went through at least four editions by 1906. In 1904 he published his autobiography, *The Story of My Life*, reprinted in 1906 as *Pentecostal Possibilities*. In 1910 he published a small book entitled *Tares Mixed with the Wheat*, a compilation of a series of articles he had written for the *Christian Witness* under the caption, "Unsaved Church Members." In 1911 he published a small paperback entitled *Impatience and its Remedy*, and followed that with a series of tracts including *Fanaticism*, *Depravity*, *Holiness a Hobby*, *Language of Real Consecration*, and *Questions to Objectors*, all published by the *Christian Witness Company*.

Haney's war service and reception of the Medal of Honor undoubtedly influenced his revival work, and, indeed, helped sustain him in it. For one thing, it helped attract old comrades and other veterans to his services, and the reception of the Medal of Honor brought him free publicity. Haney enhanced that by maintaining an active role in the veterans organization, serving as chaplain of the 55th Illinois for many years.^[12] Beginning in 1889, he began to draw a pension of \$15 per month, which increased to \$20 per month in 1893, or, \$240 per year. Since Haney reported only \$590.31 from his revival campaigns that year, paying his own traveling expenses and house rent, his army pension may have made it financially possible for him to continue the evangelistic ministry.^[13] According to the pension records, Haney received \$40 per month starting in 1916, and continued to receive that amount of support, \$480 per year, until his death.^[14]

In 1916 the Haney's moved to their new residence at 118 Glorietta Street, Pasadena, California. Milton continued his work of evangelism in the local churches and served as Senior Superintendent of the Southern California Interdenominational Holiness Association. He died in California on January 20, 1922, after suffering a severe attack of pneumonia. The funeral was conducted at the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Pasadena on January 23, 1922, Haney's 97th birthday. More than fifty ministers attended the service, including such prominent holiness leaders as Dr. Henry Clay Morrison, editor of the *Pentecostal Herald*, and the Reverend George A. McLaughlin, editor of the *Christian Witness*. McLaughlin preached the funeral sermon, and the body was interred at the Mountain View Cemetery, in Pasadena.^[15]

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ENDNOTES

1 M. L. Haney. *The Story of My Life* (Chicago: The Christian Witness Company, 1906), 7 ff.

2 For his sanctification experience, see *Ibid.*, 68 ff., and for the Manheim camp meeting, see *Ibid.*, 278.

3 *Ibid.*, 140 ff. The "Company Descriptive Book" of the 55th Illinois, on file in the Military Archives Division, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., also verifies these facts, and supplies the exact dates. Moreover, these records inform the reader that when Haney entered the army he was 38 years old, 5' 8" tall, and had blue eyes and brown hair.

4 Haney, *Story of My Life*, 144. The official records in Washington state that there is no original "muster-in" file, but that the March 14, 1862 date is accepted on record (in 1889) because the "Field and Staff Muster Roll" shows him as Chaplain as of March 14, 1862. This is confusing because the official army register listed him as Chaplain from December 2, 1864. See *Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861-1865*, nine volumes (Gaithersburg: Military Books, 1987), VI: 307. Haney probably served as acting Chaplain as of February 24, 1862, the date former Chaplain Lewis P. Crouch left the regiment.

5 Haney, *Story of My Life*, 197. See also Lucien B. Crooker. *The Story of the Fifty-Fifth Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Clinton: W. I. Coulter, 1887), 224. Haney contributed a chapter to this book entitled, "Personal Reminiscences." See also Victor Hicken, *Illinois in the Civil War* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1966), 241-242. These sources show that an interesting political struggle took place for the election of Colonel, and Haney won.

6 For Haney's work as a recruitment officer, see *Story of My Life*, p. 213 ff, and "Personal Reminiscences," in *The Story of the Fifty-Fifth*, 461.

7 Quoted in "Chaplain Milton S. Haney, 55th Illinois Vols.," records on file in Washington, D.C. Note that this particular record lists an incorrect middle initial.

8 Quoted by the Reverend George Asbury McLaughlin in his funeral address for Haney. See "The Ministerial Character of Rev. M. L. Haney," in the *Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness*, February 9, 1922,1.

9 See *Medal of Honor Recipients 1863-1978* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), 106. See also Herman A. Norton, *Struggling for Recognition, The United States Army Chaplaincy 1791-1865*, two volumes (Washington: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, n.d.), 11:106.

10 See the "Minutes of the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness" for 1907 ff. Haney served as vice-president for several years. See also the various early yearbooks for the Iowa Holiness Association.

11 For Haney's holiness convention work see: Proceedings of the Western Union Holiness Convention Held at Jacksonville, ILL. (Bloomington: Leader Publishing Company, 1881), 14; and S. B. Shaw, Echoes of the General Holiness Assembly Held in Chicago (Chicago: S. B. Shaw, Publisher, n.d.), 21. His interest in the work of missions may be seen in W. W. Cary, Story of the National Holiness Missionary Society (Chicago: National Holiness Missionary Society, 1940), 9. He helped establish the California school. See "California College and Holiness Bible School" in the Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness, November 3, 1921, 18. For the Repository of Holiness, see Haney, Story of My Life, 218. See also Gordon Melton, Log Cabins to Steeples (Nashville: Parthenon Press, 1974), 268.

12 See Report of the Proceedings of the Association of the Fifty-Fifth Illinois Veterans Voluntary Infantry (Davenport: Egbert, Fiddler & Chambers, 1892), 19. He could not attend the 1894 gathering; see Report of the Proceedings of the Association of the Fifty-Fifth Illinois Veterans Volunteer Infantry (Davenport: Egbert, Fiddler & Chambers, 1894), 14. Haney is listed as Chaplain of the organization.

13 See his pension records, on file in Washington, D.C.

14 Ibid.

15 J. D. Leslie, "The Passing of Rev. Milton L. Haney," in the Christian Witness and Advocate of Bible Holiness, February 16, 1922, 5. A brief notice had appeared in the February 9, 1922 issue. Also see G. R. Palmer, "Milton Lorenzo Haney," in Minutes of the 67th Annual Session of the Central Illinois Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Galesburg: Wagoner Printing Company, 1922), 403-404. This obituary incorrectly gives his date of death as January 23, 1922, instead of January 20, 1922.

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