CHAPTER IX

CONFERENCE AUXILIARIES

Women's Missionary Association and Otterbein Guild—Young People's Work—Board of Christian Education—Orphanage and Home—Lebanon Valley College—Camp Meetings

PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE BRANCH
WOMEN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

By Mrs. Paul E. Holdcraft

The General Conference of 1841 organized "The Parent Missionary Society of the United Brethren in Christ," and provided it with a constitution. However, missionary work was confined to the homeland for some years. In 1852 frontier work was begun in Oregon. Since our church had always championed the cause of the negro in America, Africa was chosen as the first field of foreign missionary effort. In 1855 W. J. Shuey, D. K. Flickinger and D. C. Kumler, M. D., arrived in Sierra Leone, West Africa.

Prior to the organization of the Women's Missionary Association there seems to have been some opposition on the part of the ministers, who felt that it might retard the missionary work in which the church was already engaged, and that funds which had found their way into the treasury of the General Society might be diverted into other channels. However, this feeling soon changed to one of encouragement for we find this report given at the General Conference of 1873, "Your committee is pleased to learn that God has put it into the hearts of many of the devoted women of the church to organize Women's Missionary Associations in the various annual conferences. . . . Resolved, that we recommend their zeal and enterprise in this good work to the favorable consideration of the women of the church in all our annual conferences."

Mrs. A. L. Bilheimer, who was the first woman to be sent as a missionary from our denomination, had returned from Africa and was appointed an organizer for the Association. In 1877 she attended the Camp Meeting at Emig's Grove, near York, Pa., for the purpose of promoting missionary work among women in our conference. Mrs. Z. A. Colestock, a Vice President of the National Board, was chosen to direct the work in the conference. Miss Susan Erb and Miss Elizabeth Erb were chosen Secretary and Treasurer, respectively. Ministers' wives present were given the authority to organize societies in their own churches. Records of the organization and the first few years of the work are very incomplete. At the Jubilee Convention in 1927, Mrs. J. R. Hutchison and Mr. George A. Wolf stated that the Branch was organized at Mt. Wolf, and presented for display a picture of the building in which the organization took place.
In March, 1878 the Pennsylvania Annual Conference met in York, Pa. From the minutes we read: "Whereas, the sisters of our conference have organized a Woman’s Missionary Society within the bounds of our conference, according to the directions of the General Conference, therefore, Resolved, that we not only say to them as Boaz did to Ruth, 'Go not from hence but abide fast by us,' but do extend to them our aid and warmest sympathies, and pray that great success may attend their labors." Also, "Our sisters, some six months ago, organized a Women’s Missionary Society, with Mrs. P. L. Colestock as President; Sophia Cressler, Lydia Lower and Mazie Knipp as Vice Presidents; Sue E. Erb, Secretary; Lizzie A. Erb, Treasurer, and bring the following report: local societies, 6; number of members, 119; money in treasury, $61.20." An election of officers was held in the lecture room of the church during the session of conference and the above officers were re-elected, except that Mrs. S. Raber, of York, was elected in place of Miss Mazie Knipp. In 1879 money raised amounted to $130.80. In 1880 there were 11 societies, 260 members, and money raised amounted to $287.68. In the conference minutes of 1882 we find this statement: "That we hail with joy the advent of the 'Woman's Evangel' and will use our efforts to help it forward in its noble mission." In 1887 there were 120 subscribers to the Evangel. In the Pennsylvania Conference minutes of 1888 we find these words: "There should in this place mention be made of the Women’s Missionary organization of our church. The wisdom and energy with which they have managed their work demands the earnest commendation of all, and instead of being a hindrance to the general work, as was prophesied when they organized, their energy has furnished helps to the work in general. In view of what has been done, let us devoutly thank the Lord and take courage." .... "Resolved, that we are gratified with the commendable success that has attended the Woman's Missionary Society of our church, and pray that they may yet be more successful."

Branch meetings were held during the Annual Conference sessions, a custom which prevailed for some years. Locals were organized at these churches. An executive meeting was held but once a year, the most of the business being transacted by correspondence.

The churches of Washington and Frederick Counties in Maryland belonged to the Virginia Conference from its organization in 1831 until 1887, and to the Maryland Conference from 1887 to 1901, when the latter was merged with Pennsylvania Conference. The Woman’s Missionary Association of the Virginia Conference was organized in 1877. United Brethren women living in Western Maryland were active in the work from its organization. They were divided into two groups, the Virginia Branch and the Maryland Branch, each with its own officers, because the conference covered a large territory, divided by the Potomac river, which was without bridges at the time. In the Virginia Conference minutes of 1879 we find the officers of both groups given. Those of the Maryland Branch were: President, Miss Susan Stokes, Mechanicstown (now Thurmont); First Vice President, Mrs. Annie Funk, Leitersburg; Second Vice President, Lydia Routzahn, Myersville; Secretary, Miss Jennie Eyler, Myersville; Treasurer, Mrs. Ella Grimm, Frederick. From 1887 to 1901 the
OFFICERS OF PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE BRANCH, W. M. A. — MAY, 1937

FRONT ROW—Miss Mary Louise Rider, Mrs. P. O. Shettel, Miss Janet M. Trostle, Mrs. M. H. Welty, Mrs. George F. Bell (President), Mrs. P. R. Koontz, Mrs. Kenneth Adams, Mrs. P. D. Emenheiser.

BACK ROW—Mrs. J. Gratton Mason, Mrs. David R. Fink, Mrs. D. K. Reisinger, Mrs. P. E. Cooper, Mrs. H. C. Neikirk, Mrs. Nelson Slaybaugh.

OFFICERS NOT ON PICTURE—Mrs. J. A. Gohn, Miss Sarah Ensminger, Miss Estella Hoffman, Mrs. S. M. Kent, Mrs. C. M. Ankerbrand.
Conferece auxiliaries constituted the Maryland Conference, the Women's Missionary Association operating as a separate branch. In 1901 these churches were united with the Pennsylvania Conference, but the Women's Missionary Association did not merge until 1903. The women of the Maryland Branch opposed the union on account of the greater distances involved, which they felt would prevent some from attending the Branch conventions. Those prominent in the work were: Mrs. C. I. B. Brane, Mrs. A. M. Evers and Mrs. L. O. Burtner who served as presidents; Mrs. S. H. Snell was an organizer; Mrs. Washington Topham and Mrs. A. B. Statton were Vice Presidents and Mrs. F. E. Renner was active in the work.

Almost from the beginning of organized missionary endeavor among women in Pennsylvania Conference a keen interest was taken in young women and children so that they might be trained in the work for the future, and a place on the program was given them at Branch Conventions. As early as 1898 we find that an entire evening was given to the "Young Ladies' and Children's Bands." In 1910 Young Women's work became a distinct department of the Association. Miss Amy Clippinger became the first secretary and remained in the office until 1920. In 1911 there were nine Young Women's Bands with a membership of 489. At the National Board meeting in 1913 the name was changed to "Otterbein Guild" at the suggestion of Miss Vera Blinn, then National Secretary of the department. Other secretaries serving our conference are: Miss Hilda Reagle, 1920-23; Miss Verna Smith, 1923-29; Miss Katharine Kuhlburn, 1929-35; Miss Eleanor Ziegler, 1935-36; Miss Mary Louise Rider, 1936—.

Through the leadership of Miss Katherine Kuhlburn an annual weekend retreat for girls was established at Camp Nawakwa, near Bigler-ville, Pa.

In 1935, at the convention held in Carlisle, Pa., the Guild celebrated its 25th anniversary. Reversing the birth-day gift idea, an attractive folder containing a ten dollar bill for each of the twenty-five years was presented to the women of the Branch. Also, a beautiful white silk service banner containing a star for each of the missionaries who have gone out from the Branch during the past twenty-five years was presented to the Branch by the girls. There were twenty-three stars at the time of the presentation, and another is to be added.

Early records show that much was being accomplished among children. In 1907 there were 11 Gleaners and Mission Bands, and a total of $204.33 was raised. Mrs. J. A. Gohn had been most active in this work and in 1911 was elected Junior Superintendent, serving until 1917. The General Conference of 1913 took action that the Junior Christian Endeavor Societies should be made auxiliary to the Women's Missionary Association, so that the children might receive missionary instruction. It was decided by the Conference C. E. Union and the Branch W. M. A. that the Glad Chest offerings of the Juniors should be given to the W. M. A. for distribution. This offering in 1937 amounted to $265.03.

For the first fifty years of missionary work among women in our conference records show a steady increase in the number of societies, members, and in the amount of money raised. In 1927 the fiftieth an-
niversary of the work was fittingly observed. A Jubilee Souvenir in the form of a history was compiled by Mrs. Paul R. Koontz, from which some of the data for this sketch has been taken. At the convention some phase of Branch history was featured at each session. There were on display historical letters, Branch programs, minutes, pictures, charts, etc., showing the growth along various lines during the half-century. There were at the time 8309 members in 82 locals and 61 chapters. It was reported that 4,133 women and girls used Thank-Offering boxes. Subscribers to the Evangel numbered 2,455, and a total of $21,846.23 was raised.

In 1937, after sixty years, there is a membership of 5,073 in the eighty W. M. S. Locals; the Otterbein Guild has 2,634 members in its seventy-two Chapters; subscribers to the Evangel number 2,524, and a total of $20,715.50 was sent to headquarters.

BRANCH PRESIDENTS: Mrs. Z. A. Colestock, 1877-81; Mrs. John Dickson, 1881-83; Mrs. J. R. Hutchison, 1883-03; Mrs. H. B. Spayd, 1903-05; Mrs. G. K. Hartman, 1905-11; Mrs. Washington Topham, 1911-25; Mrs. Roy M. Taylor, 1925-27; Mrs. Paul R. Koontz, 1927-34; Mrs. George F. Bell, 1934 —.

RECORDING SECRETARIES: Miss Susan Erb, 1877-98; Mrs. Kate Best Bowman, 1898-01; Miss Mary Durr, 1901-04; Miss Nora Steffy, 1904-08; Miss Anna Cornman, 1908-17; Mrs. H. C. Reiber, 1917-18; Mrs. P. R. Koontz, 1918-23; Mrs. H. C. Neikirk, 1925-31; Miss Janet Trostle, 1931 —.

BRANCH TREASURERS: Miss Elizabeth Erb, 1877-98; Miss Susan Erb, 1898——; Mrs. J. T. Shaffer——; Mrs. Catharine Houck ——; Mrs. George Wolf, 1901-08; Mrs. F. W. Porter, 1909-11; Mrs. E. W. Leech, 1911-12; Mrs. J. E. Kleffman, 1912-13; Miss Florence Baker, 1913-14; Mrs. F. E. Renner, 1914-22; Mrs. Edna Wolfinger, 1922-30; Miss Jessie Hoerner, 1930-33; Miss Hester Trehr, 1933-36; Miss Katharine Kuhlburn, 1936-37; Mrs. Mervie Welty, 1937 —.

OFFICERS ELECTED IN 1937: Honorary President, Mrs. J. A. Gohn; President, Mrs. George F. Bell; First Vice President, Mrs. P. R. Koontz; Second Vice President, Mrs. D. K. Reisinger; Third Vice President, Mrs. Paul O. Shettel; Statistical Secretary, Mrs. K. L. Adams; Recording Secretary, Miss Janet Trostle; Secretary of Otterbein Guild, Miss Mary Louise Rider; Assistant Secretary of Otterbein Guild, Miss Sarah Ensminger; Secretary of Literature, Mrs. P. E. Cooper; Secretary of Thank-Offering, Mrs. J. G. Mason; Secretary of Stewardship, Mrs. Paul Emenheiser; Treasurer, Mrs. Mervie Welty; Director of Children’s Work, Miss Estelle Hoffman; District Superintendents, Hagerstown, Mrs. H. C. Neikirk; Mechanicsburg, Mrs. Nelson Slaybaugh; Baltimore, Mrs. Samuel Kent; Chambersburg, Mrs. C. M. Ankerbrand; York, Mrs. David Fink.

YOUNG PEOPLE’S WORK

On the fourth of June, 1890, representatives of fourteen annual conferences met in First U. B. Church, Dayton, Ohio, and launched the denominational Young People’s Christian Union. At the Pennsylvania Annual Conference of 1891, held in Mechanicsburg, February 25 to March 2,
officers were elected for the Pennsylvania Conference Branch of the union. These officers were: President, W. T. Durr, York; Vice President, Harry Leonard, Harrisburg; Secretary, J. H. Shank, Chambersburg; Treasurer, George Houser, Baltimore. The constitution as recommended by the denominational union was adopted.

The first branch convention was held in York First Church, June 1891. In 1908 the name was changed to Young People’s Christian Endeavor Union.

The following have served as presidents of the Pennsylvania Conference Branch Union:

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<td>W. T. Durr</td>
<td>1891-96</td>
<td>S. B. Dougherty</td>
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<td>W. A. Dickson</td>
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<td>J. E. Knipp</td>
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<td>J. F. Rudisill</td>
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<td>D. M. Oyer</td>
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<td>A. R. Clippinger</td>
<td>1907-08</td>
<td>Huber D. Strine</td>
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<td>F. B. Plummer</td>
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<td>E. E. Redding</td>
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<td>G. I. Rider</td>
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<td>R. R. Ziegler</td>
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<td>J. W. Owen</td>
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<td>R. J. Tyson</td>
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<td>Wm. R. Glen</td>
<td>1913-15</td>
<td>Miss Grace Lovell</td>
<td>1937—</td>
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With the exception of Messrs Durr, Rudisill and Strine, and Miss Lovell, all of the above are ministers. The annual convention at first dealt solely with Christian Endeavor work. In recent years the Christian Endeavor Union invited the Sunday Schools of the conference to send representatives and the program included features of interest to that group. In 1934 an added feature was a ministers’ lecture course. In 1935 the Christian Endeavor Convention became known as the Christian Education Convention. Miss Grace Lovell, of Washington, D. C., was elected president of the Young People’s Union and Rev. Harry L. Fehl was made president of the Adult Union in 1937.

**PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

The General Conference of 1929 merged the departments of Christian Education, Sunday School and Brotherhood Work, and Christian Endeavor and called the merged units the Department of Christian Education. Rev. O. T. Deever, D. D., former general secretary of Christian Endeavor work was chosen executive secretary of the new department and has been re-elected by the General Conferences of 1933 and 1937.

At the 1929 session of Pennsylvania Conference, the Conference Board of Christian Education was elected as follows: R. R. Ziegler, P. E. Cooper, G. B. Sprenkle, F. B. Plummer, G. C. Daugherty, Huber D. Strine, M. R. Fleming, P. R. Koontz and P. E. Holdcraft. Changes in the personnel of the board have been made from time to time and the following have served, or are serving, as members: P. O. Shettel, R. G. Mowery, J. H. Lehman, P. E. V. Shannon and C. Guy Stambach.
The conference superintendent is a member ex officio; also the president of the branch W. M. A.

The board, in 1929, organized by electing M. R. Fleming, president; Paul E. Holdcraft, vice president; Paul R. Koontz, secretary; George C. Daugherty, treasurer. These officers served until 1937 when Paul R. Koontz was made president; C. Guy Stambach, vice president; Paul E. Cooper, secretary; George C. Daugherty, treasurer.

The board has selected the following departmental directors:

- General Director, M. R. Fleming, 1929-36; John H. Ness, 1936—.
- Adult Work Director, P. E. Holdcraft, 1929-34; C. Guy Stambach, 1934—.
- Children's Work Director: Miss Frances Oyer, 1929-33; Miss Estelle Hoffman, 1933—.
- Leadership Training Director: Paul O. Shettel, 1931-33; Paul E. V. Shannon, 1933—.

The task assigned to this board is to give general supervision to the total educational and spiritual program of the conference, involving the Church Schools, Christian Endeavor, W. M. A., O. G., the summer Leadership Training School, and all other auxiliaries having an educational program. The annual Christian Education Convention is now a three-in-one convention and is under the direction of this board. In addition to the ever popular general assembly periods the convention breaks up into three groups, twice daily, to discuss the problems and programs of the Adults, Young People and Children.

Beginning in June 1935 the board has sponsored summer Standard Leadership Training Schools, held in the buildings and on the campus of Lebanon Valley College. The enrollment exceeds two hundred each year and the interest runs high. Rev. Paul E. V. Shannon is the dean of the school and has the support of the entire board of education.

THE UNITED BRETHREN ORPHANAGE AND HOME
QUINCY, PENNA.

The first benevolent home to be operated by the United Brethren in Christ was the Colestock Old People's Home at Mechanicsburg, Penna., and the second was the Orphanage at Quincy, both within the bounds of Pennsylvania Conference. Pennsylvania Conference ministers took the initiative in their establishment and by their benefactions made the institutions possible. By action of the General Conference the entire East District became the cooperating territory for both the Old People's Home and the Orphanage. This involves the Pennsylvania, East Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, Allegheny, Erie and Florida Conferences.

The Rev. Z. A. Colestock, D. D., and Mrs. Colestock, gave their splendid home in Mechanicsburg for the purpose of an Old People's Home and it was formally opened for the reception of guests April 1, 1893. The Rev. H. J. Kitzmiller, and Mrs. Kitzmiller gave their farm at Quincy for the purpose of establishing an Orphanage, and ten children were admitted early in April, 1903. Measures were taken in 1909, and completed in 1913, by which the Old People's Home at Mechanicsburg was merged with
Rev. and Mrs. H. J. Kitzmiller
the Orphanage under one management. A large and beautifully appointed building was erected at a cost of $28,000 for the eleven old folks who were brought from Mechanicsburg. This building was ready for occupancy March 25, 1915. Subsequently another large building was erected for the aged people, also two splendid cottages. Dr. Colestock was a member of the Home family from the beginning until his death January 19, 1924, at the advanced age of ninety-nine years, nine months and twenty-four days.

Many years ago a girl who had been left an orphan was taken into the family of a kind-hearted farmer, Mr. Joseph Smetzer, living near Quincy. At about the same time a young man came to live in Quincy to learn his trade as a machinist in the Quincy Engine Works. These young people became acquainted and were married. Later they inherited the farm where the girl was reared. The two young people became well known later as Rev. and Mrs. H. J. Kitzmiller. In the late summer of 1901, Rev. Mr. Kitzmiller, then pastor of Mont Alto - Quincy charge, confided his plans for the establishment of an orphanage with Rev. A. R. Ayres, the presiding elder, who gave him encouragement and advised the calling of a meeting of interested persons to study the matter. It was agreed to invite the following to a meeting in the Kitzmiller home, early in August, 1901: Rev. J. Luther Grimm, Rev. J. R. Hutchison, Rev. J. P. Anthony, Rev. W. H. Weaver, Rev. W. H. Washinger, Rev. A. R. Ayres and Rev. H. J. Kitzmiller. Doctor Ayres acted as temporary chairman and appointed the committee that formulated the plans for launching the project, and to present Mr. Kitzmiller's proposition to the conference for its consideration.

The committee consisted of Revs. Grimm, Weaver, Hutchison, Washinger and Anthony. Item one of their report was as follows: "We recommend that the proposition made by the Rev. H. J. Kitzmiller and wife, in which they tender their excellent farm and all the improvements thereon, containing 163 acres of land, located at Quincy, Penn., on the condition that both or either of them, receive an annuity of $450 during their natural lifetime, and that they have the privilege of being identified with the supervision and management of the Home, be accepted by the Church of the United Brethren in Christ." (Conference Minutes, 1902, page 24)

The report and recommendations were acted upon favorably by the conference and the committee above named became the first Board of Trustees by vote of the conference.

The home was dedicated October 17, 1903, as a part of the program of Pennsylvania Conference which was then in session in Chambersburg First Church. Bishop J. S. Mills was in charge of the ceremonies.

Under the supervision of Superintendent and Mrs. Kitzmiller, who worked under the direction of the Board of Trustees, a program of building and expansion was begun which has continued down to the present. Today we have one of the finest institutions of the kind in the east.

Two farms, aggregating 156 acres, adjoining the original farm, were purchased by Mr. Peter Newcomer and presented to the Orphanage and Home at a cost of $24,400. Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Settle made possible the purchase of property costing $6,000. Many other substantial gifts have helped the home on its way to its present status. The churches in the East District support the home with an offering at Christmas time. The
The Quincy U. B. Orphanage Band, Mr. Melvin J. Flickinger, Conductor
large and fertile farm provides much of the food for the two hundred guests of the home.

Approximately 500 boys and girls have been sheltered and fed by this institution and 159 old people have been made comfortable in the twilight years of life through the generosity of those who have supported the work by their gifts and prayers.

The home maintains a bakery, a wood-working shop, a printery, a poultry building and a large herd of tuberculin tested cows. The Orphanage Band is considered one of the crack musical organizations of this section.

On the twenty-fifth of January, 1936, "Pop" Kitzmiller, as he was affectionately known to hundreds, was called into the better world. His body rests in the Quincy cemetery, overlooking the buildings and the farm he loved so well. Mrs. Henrietta Kitzmiller continues her activities as matron in the old people's department.

Prof. A. C. Wertsch, who had been serving as Rev. Kitzmiller's assistant since 1924, was named by the trustees in June, 1936, to take over the superintendency of the home.

At the present time the property valuation of the home is rated at $415,197.80. The present orphanage and home family consists of 147 children and 53 old people.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE

The East Pennsylvania Conference, in March, 1865, resolved to establish an institution where their young people could procure a higher education under denominational auspices. A committee was instructed to confer with a similar committee selected by the Pennsylvania Conference.

The following March this committee reported favorably, and action was taken: first, to establish a school of high grade under the management and supervision of the church; second, to accept as a gift for this purpose the grounds and buildings of what was then known as the Ann-
ville Academy; third, to lease the building and grounds to a responsible and competent party to operate the institution in the name of and subject to the supervision of the newly created Board of Trustees. On May 7, 1866, Lebanon Valley College admitted forty-nine students; the year closed with 153 students enrolled.

Rev. C. A. Lynch, D. D., LL. D.
President of Lebanon Valley College

In 1867 the Legislature granted a liberal charter, and Dr. Thomas R. Vickroy became the first president. The following year a large administration building was completed at a cost of $31,000.00.

The second president, Lucian H. Hammond, 1871-1876, an outstanding educator, was compelled to resign because of ill health. His successor, Rev. D. D. DeLong, saw the construction of a new building for art, science, library, and music. In 1887 Rev. E. S. Lorenz became president; declining health prevented his consummating an ambitious program.

Rev. Cyrus J. Kephart was elected in 1889; he declined re-election after serving one year. During Dr. E. Benjamin Bierman’s presidency, 1890-1897, the buildings were renovated, the enrollment increased, and ten thousand dollars received as a scholarship fund from Mary A. Dodge.

From 1897 to 1906 the administration of Dr. Hervin U. Roop was characterized by great material expansion. The present Administration
Engle Conservatory of Music  Administration Building

Carnegie Library  South Hall
The Men's Dormitory building replaced the one destroyed by fire in 1904. The Engle Conservatory, the Carnegie Library, North Hall, the Men's Dormitory, and the Heating Plant were also erected. In the brief administration of Rev. A. P. Funkhouser, 1906-1907, debt-paying efforts were made. President Lawrence Keister, 1907-1912, liquidated much of the indebtedness and established the credit of the college.

Dr. George D. Gossard came to the presidency in 1912; for twenty years he guided the college into a new era of academic expansion and financial adequacy. Two successful endowment campaigns and the gift of the General Education Board enabled the college to qualify for regional accreditation.

Dr. Clyde A. Lynch became president in 1932. His has been the...
difficulty of piloting the college through the treacherous shoals of the depression. The enrollment has been maintained, the buildings renovated, a new pipe organ installed, the recognition of the American Association of University Women obtained, the alumni organizations revived and enlarged, and closer contacts established between the college and its constituency.

Lebanon Valley College has graduated 2,347 students; 5,047 others have attended. The present enrollment is 552. There are thirty-six professors on the faculty. Ten buildings and a campus of twelve acres are valued at $503,220.00. The endowment has a book value of $917,000.00.

The college looks expectantly to the East Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania, and the Virginia conferences to provide added strength commensurate with the demands of this new day. The seventy-fifth anniversary in 1941 will be the occasion for launching a campaign to provide a new gymnasium and the increasing of the endowment to a million dollars.

CAMP MEETINGS

The first camp-meeting held in the United Brethren Church was begun August 17, 1815, at Rocky Springs, near Chambersburg, Pa., on the property of Abraham Huber. The next year two or three camp-meetings were held in Pennsylvania, and they soon became general throughout the Church. So popular were these meetings that whole families would come great distances to attend, bringing with them tents, bedding, and food. One woman told of having walked ninety miles to attend one of these meetings. Thousands were converted in these meetings and many churches were started in their wake.

The editor of this volume asked Dr. A. R. Ayres, an aged but vigorous veteran of the conference, to sketch the histories of the camp-meetings in this section. The letter he wrote to accompany his findings was not intended for publication, but is worthy a place in this chapter, and we take pleasure in presenting it as a preface to the main article contributed by Dr. Ayres.

Carlisle, Pa., Feb. 11, 1937.

Dear Dr. Holdcraft,

The enclosed is a brief history of our Camp Meetings held within the bounds of Pennsylvania Conference. Space forbids me entering into any details relative to customs, style of tents, cottages, system of lighting, lodging, boarding of preachers, order of service, etc. I attended all of them excepting the Yockey Camp Meeting. I was present at the Andrew Heaney Camp Meeting when but a lad eleven years old. Also at the great revival held in John Strayer's barn, the outgrowth of which was the Winterstown Church.

I took my first and only lesson in baptizing by immersion while perched in a tree when but a young fellow at the last Camp Meeting held in Heaney's Grove. When called upon to baptize a number of persons in Sherman's creek near Shermansdale, the second year of my ministry, I had not forgotten how the old minister did it while I was watching him from the tree. I baptized seventeen persons that day (not all by immersion) but most of them I immersed, and got through fine without drowning any of them. Memory takes me back to those wonderful Camp Meetings. I can see the bright altar fires yet, and smell the pine knots burning on them, and see the sparks flying to the
CONFERENCE AUXILIARIES

tops of the trees when the old professional fire man, who traveled from camp to camp, stirred up the fires into a big blaze. And then the mighty preaching, for we had "giants in those days." The singing on a calm evening could be heard a mile or more away, and the shouts of the many converts added much to the enthusiasm and joy of the services. I have boiled down the historic sketches I am sending you, so that I have left but very little juice in it. I hope you may get out of it something that may fit in with what you want. Wishing you well and many blessings, I am yours.

Fraternally
A. R. Ayres

The Camp Meetings filled a very important place in the early history of the church in Pennsylvania Conference. In those days we had but few church houses, or "Meeting Houses" as they were then called. When the church wanted to hold a "Big Meeting," evangelistic in character, it was obliged to hold it in a grove, or in some friend's large barn. These meetings often resulted in many conversions, and accessions to the church. Soon more and larger church houses had to be erected. For example, in York County, Pa., south of the city of York, we had but four "Meeting Houses," namely, Dallastown, Union (known as Heindel's), Stabley's (now Zion), and Winterstown. We now have eleven large church houses in the same territory wherein the Camp Meetings were held. The same is true in northern York County, Franklin County and Perry County, Pa., so that there is no longer need of resorting to barns and groves for the holding of the "Big Meetings."

Dallastown Camp Meeting
two miles southwest of Dallastown in 1824 ("Land Marks" by Albright). Again in Charles Rojahn's grove one mile west of Dallastown in 1874.

Winterstown Camp Meeting

Winterstown Camp Meeting was first held in Rev. John Heaney's grove near Winterstown, Pa., in 1829. Also in Adam Strayer's grove at a very early date in the same community ("Land Marks" by Albright). Again in Andrew Heaney's grove near-by in 1869 and 1870.

Stabley's Camp Meeting

Stabley's Camp Meeting was a very large Camp Meeting, the successor to the Winterstown Camp Meeting. It was held in John Stabley's grove, mid-way between Red Lion and Winterstown, Pa., from about 1871 to 1876. It was continued a few years longer in Jacob Flinchbaugh's grove near-by until 1879.

Liverpool Camp Meeting

Liverpool Camp Meeting was of early origin, and was held in various groves in the vicinity of Manchester, Mt. Wolf, Emigsville and Saginaw, Pa., and was discontinued in 1879.
Emig's Grove Camp Meeting

Emig's Grove Camp Meeting was large and modern in construction, located in John Emig's grove, mid-way between Emigsville and Mt. Wolf, Pa. It began in 1880 and was destroyed by a disastrous fire on the morning of the closing of the camp on Aug. 17, 1896. It was not rebuilt.

Penn Grove Camp Meeting

Penn Grove Camp Meeting was organized by a stock company in 1897, and is located four miles east of Hanover, Pa. It is still in existence, but not under the control of the church.

Dillsburg Camp Meeting

Dillsburg Camp Meeting had its origin in a woods meeting held in Lewis Bender's grove, near Dillsburg, Pa., in 1862. It was continued as a Camp Meeting until 1909 when it was sold at public auction. It was purchased for the people of the community and continued as an independent Camp Meeting, retaining the name "Dillsburg."

Brunner's Camp Meeting

Brunner's Camp Meeting was of early origin and was held in John Brunner's grove, three miles east of New Bloomfield, Pa., and continued until in the fall of 1883.

Ickesburg Camp Meeting

Ickesburg Camp Meeting, sometimes called Eshcol Camp Meeting, was held in a grove five miles northwest of New Bloomfield, and was discontinued in 1882.

Mt. Zion Camp Meeting

Mt. Zion Camp Meeting, also known as Orrstown Camp Meeting began about 1869. It was a very large Camp Meeting, held in a grove purchased from Samuel McElhare, located in Franklin County, near Orrstown, Pa., and continued until 1903, when the grove was sold and the camp discontinued.

Yockey Camp Meeting

Yockey Camp Meeting was held in Yockey's grove near Fayetteville, Pa., early in the seventies, and was discontinued in about the year 1880.

Windsorville-Red Lion Camp Meeting

Windsorville Camp Meeting, better known as Red Lion Camp Meeting, was held in Jacob Flinchbaugh's grove, mid-way between Red Lion and Windsorville, Pa., beginning about the year 1894 and was discontinued in the fall of 1907.
Fulton County Camp Meeting

It was held in Foster’s Grove, near New Grenada in Wells Valley, Fulton County, Pa. It had its beginning back in the “Seventies,” and was discontinued in or about 1885. It was under the charge of Rev. John R. Croft a pioneer preacher and beloved member of the Pennsylvania Conference, who carried on a great work for God and the Church in that section of Fulton County, Pa. His circuit was made up of fifteen appointments.

By Whom Conducted

The Camp Meetings were in charge of the Presiding Elder of the district wherein the Camp Meeting was held. He assigned the pastors who were to do the preaching and took the oversight of the Camp Meeting in general. Bishops and general church officers were often in attendance. The services as a rule were evangelistic. The people socially and religiously enjoyed these annual gatherings. The preaching was of a high order and inspiring as was also the music under such able song leaders as Revs. J. C. Smith, H. A. Schlichter and others of like good voice and leadership. Like many other good things, the Camp Meetings seem to have served their day, and gradually dropped out.
MINISTERS ATTENDING MOUNT OLIVET CAMP MEETING, DILLSBURG, PA., AUGUST 1901