

GLIMPSES OF EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY METHODISM

A Series of Three Articles

INTRODUCTION

What was the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church really like in the early 1900's? The answer to that question would depend upon the viewpoint of the respondent. To provide a picture as complete and accurate as possible, THE CHRONICLE investigates that question from three perspectives: those of (1) a 1941 administrator in the conference office, (2) a modern ethnic researcher reconstructing the home missions ministry to ethnics, (3) a singular individual of the period with both lay and clergy experiences in the local parish. The main body of each paper presented is the [edited] work of the indicated author, while the **Appendices** have been added by the editor.

Edwin C. Keboch was born in 1881 in Berrysburg, Dauphin County. He began his ministerial career as a supply pastor for Paxton and Manada (then in the Philadelphia Conference) in 1904 and served at Wolfsburg, New Bloomfield and Warrior's Mark. A 1916 denominational experiment made him Conference Director of Religious Education. When most public schools were still one-room affairs that offered little frills, Dr. Keboch had revolutionary visions -- children placed in classes according to age and not lumped together in one room, interest centers, creative and educational play areas, etc. While the program and the position met with some skepticism, it proved to be a resounding success and a model for the denomination. The paper in THE CHRONICLE is Dr. Keboch's 1941 report, which marked his twenty-fifth year in the position. In 1948, at the age of 67, he transferred to the Florida Conference to continue his outstanding work in the field of Christian Education at the district and local church level. He finally retired in 1963, and died four years later. Mrs. Mabel Dershen Keboch, also an ordained Methodist minister and Christian Education worker, died in 1994 at the age of 85. The Kebochs are buried in Millersburg, Dauphin Co.

George G. DiTomasso, a Lycoming College history education major from Montoursville, combined an honors seminar research paper with an investigation into his own Italian heritage. Working with the assistance of the conference archivist, he utilized primary source documents in the Conference Archives and traveled to Altoona to do on-site research and conduct interviews with surviving members of the Italian Methodist Church. Since no other formal history of the Italian work in Altoona has ever been prepared, THE CHRONICLE is especially pleased to be able present the fruits of Mr. DiTomasso's work.

Harry A. Smith was born in 1888 in Sunbury, Northumberland County, and grew to maturity in that community. He graduated from Syracuse University in 1914 and served the Belleville and Shirleysburg circuits before "moving on" to conferences in New York and Ohio. After retiring from the ministry in 1937, he taught history for several years at Miami (Ohio) University. The document in THE CHRONICLE was sent with a cover letter by Rev. Smith to Charles Berkheimer in 1968. Whether he ever recorded for posterity his experiences beyond his "Pennsylvania days" is unknown. Harry Ambrose Smith died in 1980 at the age of 92 and is buried in Troy, Ohio.

**TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
of the
CONFERENCE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

by Edwin C. Keboch, 1941

The Forty-Eighth Session of the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, meeting in Eighth Avenue Church, Altoona, March 15-20, 1916, began a new-type Crusade for Christ of more effective Christian living. Upon the request of Dr. Edgar Blake, corresponding secretary of the General Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Earl Cranston appointed The Rev. Edwin C. Keboch on March 20, 1916, to the office of Efficiency Superintendent of Sunday Schools for the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference. Approving this new venture and joining to support Dr. Blake were the district superintendents of the conference: Simpson B. Evans (Altoona), James B. Stein (Danville), Augustus S. Fasick (Harrisburg), Emory M. Stevens (Juniata), and Horace Lincoln Jacobs (Williamsport).

Under chairman Bishop William F. McDowell, the General Board had decided to try the experiment of placing a man in charge of the Sunday School work within a given conference to develop the schools using modern methods in religious education. Central Pennsylvania was the conference selected for this experiment. Bishop McDowell, who became the resident bishop of the Washington Area in May 1916, said to Rev. Keboch, "Let's make Central Pennsylvania a model in its attitude toward life under twenty-one; maybe the Kingdom will come while we are yet alive to see it! It must come somewhere; why not in Central Pennsylvania."

The appointment was accepted at a time when there was little promise of permanency for the venture. In talking the matter over with the appointee, in fact, his district superintendent remarked, "Well, Keboch, if you leave this pastorate you will take what you get when you come back." In the words of Dr. Blake to Rev. Keboch: "Our existing Sunday Schools need reorganization, and we have decided to try this experiment in Central Pennsylvania. You will, therefore, go from Sunday School to Sunday School upon the invitation of the pastor and the local Sunday School, and you will stay long enough to rebuild the Sunday School just as you did at your last pastorate in Warrior's Mark."

The following program for local church visitation was then developed:

- * *Make a survey of the existing situation, including a list of names of those not now enrolled in Sunday School and non-church members.*
- * *Change destructive agencies in the local community to helpful institutions.*
- * *Grade the pupils and organize them into the different departments -- such as Cradle Roll, Beginners, Primary, etc.*
- * *Introduce the lesson materials prepared by the Methodist Episcopal Church.*
- * *Discover and train an adequate leadership.*
- * *Keep evangelism in Christian education, so as to lead the pupils to make a personal commitment to Christ.*



Photograph from one of Rev. Keboch's promotional displays. The caption appearing below this early 1900's view of the Picture Rocks Church is: "We gave up a fine class room so that we might have a departmentalized school. Our motto is *OTHERS*."



View of the Cradle Room and Beginners' Room at Warriors Mark, 1920. Note the table, visual aids on the wall, and attendance competition banner.

The next session of Annual Conference met at Lewistown, March 21-26, 1917. After hearing reports of the work at the Port Matilda, Catawissa and Pine Street churches, those assembled adopted the following resolutions:

Whereas, the Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church has placed a Sunday School Specialist in the state of Pennsylvania in the person of E.C. Keboch, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania;

Whereas, he has devoted all his time to the Central Pennsylvania Conference during the last year and intends to do the same this coming year, so far as possible;

Whereas, much good has been done in general reorganization and efficiency work and Sunday School evangelism; be it

Resolved, That we hereby express our appreciation of this fact and so express it to the Board of Sunday Schools;

Resolved further, That we urge all our ministers to do their best to meet their apportionments for the General Board of Sunday Schools in full.

The annual journal contains, in various locations, the following statements concerning the work and actions regarding Sunday Schools during the 1917-18 conference year.

**A Conference Board of Sunday Schools was formed as required by the Discipline. The Board was to consist of one pastor and one layman from each of the respective districts within the bounds of our Conference, the said persons to be appointed by the Bishop; the District Superintendents and the Sunday School Specialist shall be ex-officio members of this Board.*

**The Bishop appointed the following persons to constitute the Conference Board of Sunday Schools, the District Superintendents and E.C. Keboch being ex-officio members: A.S. Fasick (chairman), C.V. Drake (secretary), J.B. Stein, Professor F.L. Patee, W.S. Lysinger, Robert Bagnell, A.K. Thomas, J.E. Skillington, Honorable H.M. Showalter, J. Henry Smith.*

**The Conference Board of Sunday Schools, organized at this session of the Annual Conference, reports that the work of the Sunday Schools in this Conference is superior to that done at any time in the history of the Conference.*

**Under the leadership of E.C. Keboch, Efficiency Specialist of the Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, a new vision of the possibilities of the Sunday School has come to this Conference, which has brought definite results. Fifty-one Sunday Schools have now been graded and reorganized; twenty Teen-Age Departments, officered by their own members, have been formed. Fifteen teacher training classes have been started and eighty-seven Adult Bible Classes organized. There have been 321 decisions for Christ during these efficiency drives.*

In 1919, the Conference Board of Education suggested that all the Sunday Schools be surveyed toward the goals of increasing enrollment, raising the average attendance, and developing a more adequate missionary program. It was during this year that Rev. Keboch was released from his regular work, at the request of the Washington Area secretary Morris E. Swartz, to direct the Centenary Campaign in the Sunday Schools of the Area. A total of one million dollars was

pledged, and the following points were stressed: organization, instruction, giving, prayer, and worship services.

The 1921 conference year witnessed two significant innovations. First, the Conference Board of Education conducted two Boy Scout Camps. One was held at Lower Reese Station with J.E. Skillington and G.H. Ketterer in charge; the other, "Camp William F. McDowell," was composed of Perry County groups and held near Delville with L.E. Wilson, C.F. Berkheimer and L.L. Owens in charge. Also, Bible Story Telling Leagues were organized for teenagers thirteen to eighteen years of age. A total of one hundred people representing forty churches and fifteen sub-district groups participated in the leagues.

In addition, the National Board of Sunday Schools and the Conference Board of Education cooperated to organize the Dickinson Summer School of Christian Education, which is now recognized as one of the best of its kind, at Carlisle's Dickinson College in July 1921. This school was planned to train leaders of leaders for the local church. Two hundred eighty persons were enrolled in that first session, and ninety-nine of them were pastors in the Central Pennsylvania Conference. Beginning in 1940 the Philadelphia, Wyoming and Peninsula Conferences joined with Central Pennsylvania to sponsor this continuing event.

The following year in Philipsburg, on November 6, 1922, the National Board of Sunday Schools and the Conference Board of Education started the first Standard Leadership Training School in the Methodist Episcopal Church. E.C. Keboch was elected Dean of the school and R. Skyles Oyler, pastor of the local church, was named Registrar; Williamsport District Superintendent Edwin A. Pyles cooperated in the new endeavor. The members of the faculty and their courses of study were

- Rev. W.T. Powell - Training in Recreational Leadership
- Mrs. W.T. Powell - Children's Work in the Sunday Schools
- Dr. E.A. Pyles - The Methodist Church and Its Work
- Miss Mary A. Rosengrant - Junior League Work
- Rev. E.C. Keboch - Young People's Work

More than one hundred sixty church school workers and about twenty-five Junior League workers registered; correlation of church school and Epworth League work was strongly stressed.

The following week, on November 13, a similar school was held at Hazleton's St. Paul's Church for the charges in that area. The same faculty taught, except that Sunbury District Superintendent J.E.A. Bucke led the course "The Methodist Church and Its Work" and Dr. Wade Crawford Barclay taught a class in "Bible."

After eight years of work in the new position, from 1916 to 1924, Rev. Keboch report the following accomplishments to the 1924 annual conference:

- * *departmentalized 162 Sunday Schools*
- * *started Training Classes, with 3529 enrolled*
- * *organized 369 Bible Classes, with 4820 scholars enrolled*
- * *surveyed and studied 184 communities, including one entire District*

** instituted a Standard Training School, in cooperation with the General Board of Sunday Schools, at Philipsburg in 1922. This was the first school of its kind in the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

** offered 253 Institutes and group meetings, attended by more than 30,000 of the constituency*

** chaired Week-Day Commission of Religious Education, under the Harrisburg Church Federation in an effort to establish Week-Day Schools of Religion in that city*

** emphasized missionary education*

** received 1814 persons into the Church after they had been converted during Efficiency Campaigns*

** saw the total enrollment in Conference Sunday Schools reach 117,242*

** promoted training teen-agers for leadership*

** organized 61 Teen-Age Departments*

** organized 55 Adult Departments*

** emphasized Home Religion and Parent Training by the Adult Department of the Board*

** saw 244 persons give themselves for full-time life work, most of which were the result of the Epworth League Institutes at Eagles' Mere*

** encouraged cooperation between the Sunday School and the Epworth League work, which later culminated in the organization of the District and Conference Councils of Religious Education sponsored by the Board of Education and the Woman's Home and Woman's Foreign Missionary Societies*

Typical of statements included in the full text of that report are the following:

**We believe that there is a distinct place for the work and program of the Epworth League and of the Sunday School. We are just as sure, however, that these two agencies cannot get along in the same field of labor unless they get together and correlate their programs and even fully unify them as we have done in Central Pennsylvania.*

**St. John's Church, Sunbury, is working in its second year on a plan that has caused national comment. Here the Teen Age room was too small; hence, it was decided by the local Sunday School board to group all the young people 15-24 years of age into the Young People's Department of the church. One set of officers were elected. They were the officers according to the Epworth League plan for organization. Now this department convenes in the morning as the Young People of the Sunday School and in the evening as the Epworth League. Mrs. J.E.A. Bucke was the splendid counselor for this group.*

**The secret to the success or failure of our work depends upon the character and type of our leadership. Consecration brings success. Humanness plus prayer equals achievement. We never fail to remind ourselves of the statement of Mrs. William F. McDowell who said, "The Lord does not anoint machinery; He anoints people."*

**In the development of an adequate program of religious education for our conference, we are face to face with two main propositions:*

first, to maintain at an increasingly high standard of efficiency the work that has begun within certain schools of our conference, chiefly the city and sub-district group center schools;

second, to enlist these schools that are now modern and gear them up with our existing sub-district group machinery to go down and help the smallest and last (but by no means least) Sunday

School in our conference to attain such standards of efficiency as are possible under conditions that exist.

In 1924 a new era of work was begun when the old Newton Hamilton Camp Meeting Grounds were purchased from McVey Ferris Company, Altoona, for \$19,000. Rev. Keboch had proposed the idea to Superintendent E.R. Heckman of the Harrisburg District, in which the property was then located, and G.W. Shaffer of Altoona. He suggested purchasing the grounds in order to establish a center for our Youth Leadership Training program using Summer Institutes and Camps. Methodist youth participating in selling stock and developing the program. The Methodist Training Camp Corporation added a number of new buildings -- including a large dining hall, thirty cabins and a swimming pool -- and the present value of the property is approximately \$80,000.

Resident Bishop William F. McDowell dedicated the MTC grounds on the afternoon of July 4, 1925, while the first Epworth League Institute was being held at Newton Hamilton. J.E.A. Bucke was the Dean for that first year, and 325 young people attended. The next year the Institute was reserved for older young people, and separate camps were begun for the others. The leaders and numbers of campers for those second year events were:

* *Epworth League Institute: J. Howard Ake, Dean - 153*

* *Intermediate Boys Camp: Ivan Houck, Director - 194*

* *Intermediate Girls Camp: Mrs. Grace Thomas, Director - 153*

During the years that followed, the program of the MTC -- with cooperation of the Conference Board of Education and other agencies -- has become an important part in the religious development of potential leadership in our conference. During the 1939 summer season, 2308 persons participated in regularly scheduled programs (including the Pittsburgh Conference events) of the MTC.

The following schedule of events for the 1941 seasons shows the extent of the present programming:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| <i>June 19-20</i> | <i>Spiritual Life Conference</i> |
| <i>June 29-July 6</i> | <i>Junior High Camp</i> |
| <i>July 6-13</i> | <i>Pittsburgh Conference Intermediate Institute</i> |
| <i>July 13-20</i> | <i>Pittsburgh Conference Institute</i> |
| <i>July 20-25</i> | <i>Farm Bureau Co-op Insurance Institute</i> |
| <i>July 25-26</i> | <i>Methodist Men's Convention</i> |
| <i>July 27-Aug 3</i> | <i>Junior Boys' and Girls' Camp</i> |
| <i>July 31</i> | <i>Methodist Day</i> |
| <i>Aug 3-10</i> | <i>Methodist Women's Fellowship Week</i> |
| <i>Aug 10-17</i> | <i>Young People's Institute</i> |

The office of Life Work Secretary was created by the Epworth League Institute held at Eagles' Mere in 1916 to give guidance to full-time life work recruits. This was the first Epworth League Institute in the denomination to elect a secretary for that purpose. Chosen for the position at that time, E.C. Keboch thus became Methodism's first person to serve in that capacity. From 1916 to 1930, nineteen young men decided to enter the Christian ministry through that office; these

persons had attended camps or institutes at either Eagles' Mere or Newton Hamilton and are now members of the Central Pennsylvania Conference. Since 1930 that number has continued to increase, and many other young men and women have offered their lives in full-time service to the Church.

Evangelism in Christian Education has been a supreme emphasis during the past twenty-five years. The 1935 journal records that the Conference appointed a special committee on evangelism chaired by Rev. Keboch. Composed of both ministers and laymen, the committee was to be governed by the following objectives adopted by the Conference.

1. We will lead our people into a new, personal, saving experience of God as Father through Jesus Christ our Blessed Redeemer.
2. We will lead our people into a new, personal, saving experience of man as brother through Jesus Christ our Blessed Redeemer.



Photograph of a poster used to advertise a 1919 Regional Campaign for the Town Hill, Harveyville, Jonestown and Bloomingdale charges.

Following this action by the Conference, mass meetings of Sunday School Boards were conducted in cooperation with the district superintendents to "clear our thinking on this problem of evangelism in Christian Education." These meetings were attended by 1704 members of local churches. It was during that same year that "16 of the 49 boys in the 1934 Intermediate Boys' Camp made their decisions to follow Christ." During these twenty-five years Rev. Keboch has guided approximately 5100 persons, mostly youth, to make a profession of faith in Christ.

Although numerous efforts were made to increase the enrollment and average attendance at our Sunday Church Schools, there were losses. We worked to improve the efficiency of our teaching staffs. The Church School Advance Campaign of the Conference emphasized three objectives:

- * *Hold the scholars now enrolled.*
- * *Enlist the interest of new scholars.*
- * *Make increases permanent.*

Many of our pastors and superintendents purchased the workbooks specifically prepared for this task.

In 1938 and 1939 special emphasis was placed on Church School literature. Church School Literature Caravans were sent throughout the Conference to give guidance on the correct use of our Methodist literature. Representatives from the Methodist Book Concern, the editorial staff, and the denomination's Board of Education rendered valuable assistance to the district superintendents and the conference's Board of Education in this effort.

The Uniting Session of the Central Pennsylvania Conference, October 25, 1939, adopted resolutions concerning conscientious objectors and men in the army. Upon recommendation of the Conference Board of Education, the Conference pledged its support to those choosing either position.

The Conference Board of Education granted Rev. Keboch the privilege of taking extension courses offered by the University of Pennsylvania and Dickinson College in 1926, 1927, 1928 and 1931. In 1935 and 1939 he went to Philadelphia to take graduate work in education at the University of Pennsylvania. This led to consideration and adoption of the following principles and program for the Conference Board of Education at the 1940 annual conference.

- a. Are objectives stated in terms of a learning product?*
- b. Is it suitable to the stage of development of the person?*
- c. Does it provide for continuous and progressive experiences in personal and social relationships?*
- d. Are the units of work and activities in general arranged according to accepted principles of learning?*
- e. Is the Bible made to come alive in the experiences of the pupils?*

Activities were then planned in harmony with these principles, and the outcomes are being checked in so far as that can be done.

In addition to his regular duties, Rev. Keboch has assisted the work of the Methodist Home for Children, the Conference Board of Examiners and the Methodist Training Camp. He was a member of the unified staff of the State Council of Christian Education and of the Committee on Town and Country Work of the State Council of Churches. He also served as chairman of the educational committee of the State Council of Christian Education and as chairman of the field staff of the General Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The resident bishops during these twenty-five years have been William F. McDowell, Edwin Holt Hughes and present episcopal leader, Adna W. Leonard, who is also president of the General Board of Education. These bishops were and are outstanding Christian Educators. Great credit is due them for the helpful guidance and Christian fellowship they have given.

As the number of local churches which had been reorganized increased, new calls for guidance came to the office of the conference Board. This necessitated the organization of separate departments with specific duties. Manned by volunteer men and women willing to work under the cooperation of the Executive Secretary, these departments engaged in the following activities.

Children's Department: visit local churches to improve the work with children, conduct Vacation Church Schools, promote the Junior Boys' and Girls' Camp, discover and send workers to the Dickinson Summer School of Christian Education, give guidance to all phases of the religious growth of children.

Young People's Department: improve work among the youth by visitation to local churches, promote Junior High and Senior High and Young People's Camps and Institutes at Newton Hamilton, train youth leaders at the Dickinson Summer School of Christian Education, enrich the total youth program through District and Conference Councils of Methodist Youth, promote the Booth Festival, observe Youth Day on the first Sunday of May each year, work to make youth aware of Christ and His call to Christianize the social order.

Adult Department: sponsor Religion in the Home Sunday, cooperate in Men's Convention, develop a program for young adults, visit local churches to develop programs that are effective.

Leadership Training Department: encourage local churches to pursue a definite leadership training program built in the light of needs and revised annually, sponsor the Dickinson Summer School of Christian Education, conduct Leadership Training Schools in rural situations, develop leadership personnel available on call.

Finance Department: The program of Religious Education in the Conference was first supported by the General Board of Education at an outlay of \$1,500 for Rev. Keboch's salary and a \$500 travel allowance. As the program developed, this Conference took over the responsibility so that through Rally Day Offerings and money received on apportionments from local Sunday School Boards the entire budget of \$6,865 is being met in full.

The following are the present officers and members of the Conference Board of Education.

president: Fred P. Corson

vice-president: Richard W. Campbell

secretary: J. Presler Shultz

treasurer: Ira H. Yohe

educational institutions representative: John W. Long
Wesley Foundation representative: Harry F. Babcock
chairman of Children's Work: Miss Mary M. Bryerton
chairman of Young People's Work: Fred B. Norris (deceased)
chairman of Adult Work: Charles V. Adams
chairman of Leadership Training: W. Emory Hartman
members at large: F. LaMont Henninger, George Henry Ketterer, N.G. McCloskey, M.V. Mussina, Aurance F. Shank, J.E. Skillington, Lester A. Welliver, J. Merrill Williams, C.E. Cupp, A.J. Currier, Thomas L. Hinkle, P.K. Jarrett, Ruby G. Krouse, Mrs. E.A. Latham, B.A. McGarvey, W.R. North, E.E. Sipe, E.R. Williams, Clinton W. Bell Jr., Victor K. Meredith Jr., Jean Swomley.

Past office secretaries have been Miss Sara A. Rice, Miss Eleanor E. DeSilvey and Miss Sara L. Caton. Present secretary Miss Dorothy L. Hinkle was elected to her position in 1932.

This Annual Conference, the publishers and the General Board of Education are under many obligations to these board members, department chairmen and office secretaries.

Christ's commission to "Go...,teach...,do..." is our task, our strategy and our authority. To men, women, young people and children we offer Christian Educational opportunities. We believe that as people willingly participate in guided Christian activities they grow in understanding, appreciation and devotion for Christ and His church.

The program of the Conference Board of Education has been constructed to provide these experiences for different age and interest groups.

- 1. Assistance is available for the grading and improvement of local church school work.*
- 2. A commendable group of capable members of the Conference Board of Education and volunteers work with children, youth and adults.*
- 3. A budget of \$6865 is paid by the Church Schools of the Conference without subsidy from the General Board of Education.*
- 4. More than 5,100 persons professed faith in Christ through services conducted by the Executive Secretary of Christian Education.*
- 5. Many church school teachers are now including profession of faith in Christ into their teaching objectives.*
- 6. E.C. Keboch was elected Life Work Secretary at Eagles' Mere in 1916.*
- 7. The Dickinson Summer School of Christian Education was started in 1921.*
- 8. The first community Leadership Training School in the Methodist Episcopal Church was established in Philipsburg on November 6, 1922.*
- 9. The Methodist Training Camp was founded in 1924.*
- 10. More than 30 Central Pennsylvania Conference pastors indicate that they decided to enter the ministry at the Summer Institutes.*
- 11. The conference developed a significant program of, by and for the Methodist Youth that has become a pattern of national significance.*

The Conference Board of Education is under obligations to the brethren of the Conference, to the church school superintendents and church school workers, to the district superintendents, to the bishops, and to the workers in our General Board. Youth has also been our continual interest and inspiration.

It should also be stated that the attitude of the Annual Conference toward Christian Education in the local church has been changed. The value of church school work is seen particularly when one tabulates recruits for church membership. More than 85% join the Church by way of the church school. Therefore, the efforts through these years to improve the instruction in church school work has real point today. We have been taking the children "into our arms." Youth have professed faith in Christ. Church membership rolls have increased.

Local churches are organizing local boards of education at their quarterly conferences. This fact places the responsibility for Christian Education where it belongs. It makes it an integral part of the total church program. It will ultimately become a real factor in the efforts to increase attendance at worship services in the sanctuary. Churches are building unified educational programs. The curriculum of the church school is being evaluated in terms of life needs.

Due to the teaching of religion as related to all of life, this Conference developed a safe and sane interest in abolishing war as a method of solving problems. There is agreement that economic injustice is sin. The fact that one of the young men from this Conference is now a national leader in social service work confirms the achieving of these objectives.

The historical statement written herein tells its own story of the development of Christian Education in the Central Pennsylvania Conference during the past twenty-five years. It has been written with the hope that it will help to advance the work during the next twenty-five years. The most suitable closing to this statement is a quote made by Rev. Edwin C. Keboch at this time: *My major emphasis has been found in Matthew 1:21, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." I have always stressed the fact that He saves people from their sins and also saves people from becoming great sinners. Another passage, Acts 10:38, has also been emphasized: "And He went about everywhere doing acts of kindness, for God was with Jesus." I close this statement with the poem which has always been an inspiration to my work.*

GOD'S DREAMS
by Thomas Curtis Clark

Dreams are they -- but they are God's dreams!
Shall we decry them and scorn them?
That men shall love one another,
That white shall call black man brother,
That greed shall pass from the market place,
That lust shall yield to love for the race,
That men shall meet God face to face.
Dreams are they all,
But shall we despise them -- God's dreams?

Dreams are they -- to become man's dreams!
Can we say nay as they claim us?
That men shall cease from their hating,
That war shall soon be abating,
That the glory of king and lords shall pale,
That the pride of dominion and power shall fail,
That the love of humanity shall prevail.
Dreams are they all,
But shall we despise them -- God's dreams?

Appendix I: Editor's Epilogue

At the time of the merger to form the United Methodist Church, congregations in towns having both Methodist and EUB churches that were named "First" or identified only by the name of town were encouraged to adopt more descriptive names. The following statement was prepared when the former Methodist Episcopal Church in New Bloomfield, in response to that request, renamed itself in honor of Edwin C. Keboch. Preserved in the New Cumberland District's notebooks of historical congregational material, it is presented in its entirety as a fitting epilogue to Rev. Keboch's article.

The Official Board of First United Methodist Church, New Bloomfield, voted at its recent meeting on November 3rd to change the name of the church. The church, which stands at the corners of Church and Main Streets, New Bloomfield, has been called First Methodist Church. The new church name will be KEBOCH MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. The following interesting information will explain one of the reasons for the change of name.

In March 1909, the Reverend Edwin C. Keboch was appointed to serve as the pastor of the New Bloomfield Charge of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Being an energetic young man, he was soon aware that the church building in New Bloomfield was in need of repairs and was obsolete in architecture. He also felt that the lot on the corner of Main and North Church Streets, which had been purchased in 1905, was the ideal location for a "modern" church building. Soon he inspired the trustees and membership to take action and appoint a Building Committee. Of course he needed a building fund, but before he talked too much about money he held a "rousing revival" whereby more members were added to the church roll. All the members were inspired to give both money and labor. The existing buildings on the new site were removed, the final payment on the lot was made, and then in April 1910 ground was broken. The motto for the venture was, "The people Had A Mind to Work." Dr. Keboch, along with the members, did just that. In July 1910, the cornerstone was laid.

On December 4, 1910, the church was dedicated. A Love feast was held in the old church (which is now the Fire House) and then the congregation marched from the old brick building on High Street to the new block building on Main Street.

A marvelous accomplishment engineered by a marvelous man, an understanding pastor and leader, a sincere Christian, a lover of people. Several years after leaving New Bloomfield in 1913, Dr. Edwin Keboch gained conference wide prominence by becoming Executive Secretary of the Central Pennsylvania Conference Board of Education. One of his early ambitions materialized when in 1945 Dickinson College conferred on him an honorary D.D. degree.

Now, in November 1968, this church is honoring the Reverend Dr. Edwin C. Keboch by naming the church - KEBOCH MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - a belated token of respect and love, but a fine way to keep his name known in the present generation.

At the church official board meeting on November 3, 1968, Mr. Charles W. Kugler made the motion, which was seconded several times simultaneously by other board members, that First Methodist Church, New Bloomfield, be renamed KEBOCH MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. The motion passed unanimously.

The church is presently being pastored by Reverend Jay A. Saxe, whose pastorate began on July 1, 1962. Keboch Memorial Church is one of three churches on the New Bloomfield United Methodist Parish.

Appendix II: Letter from W.W. Banks

Proposed when the Pennsylvania one-room school was in its heyday, the classing of students by age and other innovations of Dr. Keboch were not always well-received by local congregations. This 1918 letter preserved in the conference archives captures the prevailing mood of the era and provides a glimpse into the struggles of one particular congregation. Even though Emporium was placed in the Western Pennsylvania Conference as a result of the 1968 union, the style and flavor of the letter justify its reproduction in THE CHRONICLE and undoubtedly typify predominant attitudes across the conference.

That W.W. Banks and E.C. Keboch attended Dickinson College together in the early 1900's explains both the candid, familiar spirit of the letter and why the latter retained it among his papers that were eventually deposited with the conferences archives. Received on trial in 1907, Rev. William Banks wrote this letter relatively early in his ministry. Like his friend Dr. Keboch, he went on to a long and distinguished career as an excellent pastor and a worker at all levels within the denomination. His ministry included eight years as conference secretary, election to two jurisdictional conferences, and a term as a member of the General Board of Home Missions and Church Extension.

First Methodist Episcopal Church
Central Pennsylvania Conference

*Parsonage, Third Street
Bell Phone, 167*

*Rev. William White Banks
Pastor*

Emporium, PA
February 9, 1918

My Dear Keboch,

Well, I will write you something that I am sure will interest you. What there is in this that does not interest you, don't read -- just glance over it. Last Sunday we occupied our new rooms. It was the first Sunday we had tried 10 o'clock instead of "dinner hour." And 196 showed up -- about 60 more than we had had for a long time. Everything was in readiness; the "stationing committee" had all things arranged in fine shape -- pastor, superintendent, assistant, committee had done it!

During the week some had looked around the building and "selected" their own rooms -- of course without consulting with anyone or any thought of others. You should have seen our 17 year old teenagers -- how disappointed they looked when they looked into the room they (about 8 of them) had selected and found two fine sand tables, small chairs, a little organ, and spoons and blocks. They were told, "Your room is ready!" Then they just went downstairs and took the room assigned them and were happy.

As the people came in, one or two of the committee stood at "the parting of the ways." "What age, dear?" "3; this way." "6; this way." "9; this way." Finally it was done! Live and inexperienced, but better than experienced and dead, the school was called to order. The liveliest Sunday School hour spent in 25 long and weary years was actually indulged in by all!

Two things contributed largely to it all. One was Mr. T.B.L. He just stuck his head in the door, caught the glory of Sinai, and could not endure it -- it was so radiant. He took his seat in the auditorium and waited for the public service. He told

me afterward that if he had had the doing of things we would have all met in the main auditorium, sung "God Be with You 'till We Meet Again," and marched out in solemn procession class by class. I said that being so busy on Saturday, I hadn't thought to seek him out. He laughed.

The second was our loyal and faithful primary superintendent for low these many years was visiting in Florida and had not gotten back [I wish she had stayed until spring!], but she is back for tomorrow. God bless her.

And each class has elected their officers. You told us --and I believe it -- that great things are in store for us. We got the men out of the women's Bible class. I just told them we would call that the Women's Bible Class (and allow the five men who were in it to stay no more) and that we would announce it as such every Sunday. My! You should have seen them "git."

Tomorrow is Rally Day. The extra collection will go to the Sunday School Board. Tomorrow we close our re-opening and Jubilee -- you will see an account of the same in The Methodist, so I will not write it. The whole program was off in fine shape. Dr. Jacobs will be with us tomorrow morning and speak to a mass school at our Rally. I will add more to this letter Monday.

Sunday Evening -- 10 o'clock: Well, today at least 35 stood up for Christ in our Junior and Teen-age department. It was splendid to see them take the stand. The teen-agers were a little slower than the juniors in standing -- they rose one by one, but the juniors stood almost in a body.

Keboch, I believe Emporium will soon be sending boys and girls into special work. Pray for Emporium and me. I am not giving any concern about salary or promotion. I see so much that can be done in Emporium. Almost all the official members were at Quarterly Conference, and to my surprise a unanimous call was made by standing vote for my return. Ah! my boy, life is so real.

When I think about how cold some ministers are treated and what hard things they have to endure, I say to myself, "Be busy, but always thankful." I don't ask for anything so much as to see lives transformed by His Spirit.

I read such glowing accounts of your splendid work and how God is using you that I can't help but to say, "Thank God."

You are certainly doing a good work. When are you coming this way again? Let me know so I can arrange for you. Come any time.

The only thing I wish for at Conference is to see the brethren and hear the big things they have done and see them go back all happy. Almost all the visiting brethren who were here concede Bro. Heckman a place on a District. As for the other D.S., no one of them knows who will get it. We will soon see. When one sees how soon an ex-D.S. sinks into almost oblivion, it is remarkable. I believe it is worth and not position that counts. I am sure it is work and not intrigue or policy or politics that succeeds. You said it -- "Service is humility." Go on, and anything I can do to help you to greater service you can count on.

Your articles in The Methodist are worth a great deal. You have the chance to see lots of men in the harness. You see all kinds, and from all sides. You are the kind who will thus grow and grow. I trust to see you one of Central Pa's center men. Let me know when you can come this way.

Regards to Mrs. K. Sincerely yours,

Banks