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Chapter 11: Twin Rocks Conference 1927

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Twin Rocks Conference

1927

"Are we being true to the vision God gave us at the last Conference? A part of that vision was the message of the church. Let us pray for our Yearly Meeting... Another part...was the needs of the world. Half of the world has never heard the gospel. What shall we do about it? A vision of the return of our Lord to Earth. Are we living each day with that expectation...? Keep the vision!" These quotations from "The Friendly Endeavor" encouraged members of the C.E. Union to keep the summer Conference in their minds and prayers through the year and plan to attend the next one. Those who had pledged money in 1926 were urged to pay up so the improvements on the grounds could continue. Several men had volunteered to give their services to help with the work and they would need to be fed so cash was needed to send them. The first section of the dining hall was built during the year, as well as various other improvements, thus making the Bozarth conditional gift still valid. As work on the grounds progressed, plans and promotion were being carried on by the planning committee through the year. The Friendly Endeavor published monthly information and announcements.

In March an invitation to the Fourth Annual Banquet was issued by Highland Friends Church of Salem to be held April 9, 1927. They pointed out "what a good place the banquet is to renew acquaintance with other Endeavorers and to make new friends, and to get enthused about the Conference in 1927. Can't you picture the scene even now--all roads lead to Salem...what a grand reunion it will be! You are part of the family so do your best to be there." The banquet was a great success with 340 present. An attender remarked, "When you think of so many young people banded together in the interests of the Kingdom, one can see great things for Oregon Yearly Meeting." Another reported that the wonderful dinner cooked by Mrs. Stanton with the waitresses wearing Twin Rocks headbands "almost made you think you could see the rocks and hear the sea."

A new project proved successful in promoting the Conference. An essay contest had been announced in March, open to eighth grade pupils and high schoolers. Five subjects were listed from which one could choose, all pertaining to the values of Conference. At the banquet five essays were read and the judges asked to choose the prize winners. Maryanna Newlin, First Friends, Portland, was given the first prize. Myron Morford of West Piedmont, Portland, won the second prize. Ralph Choate received the first prize for the Washington and Idaho division. All three extolled the values gained at Conference. Myron Morford wrote, "The Twin Rocks Conference stands out as a milestone in the life of many Endeavorers on their journey through this world..."

It is only at our Conference that we find this unparalleled combination of recreation and religion which plays so great a part in the development of Christian Endeavor work in Oregon Yearly Meeting." Mary Anna Newlin wrote, "Conference—the time that we all look back upon with pleasant memories for six months of the year; the time that we all look forward to with great eagerness the other six months...next winter when you get lonesome, you can travel in your mind back to all the things that happened there of, if you feel that everything is dull...you can cause a thrill to run up and down your spine by thinking, 'it is only a short time till Conference!'" Ralph Choate wrote, "...I decided to attend this Conference and see for myself...To me, it means education. The classes were a great help to me. It means inspiration. I came away inspired to live closer to my Master and to work harder for the advancement of His Kingdom...to me, the Twin Rocks Conference means a happy vacation with FULL pay!" Hearing these enthusiastic essays added to the spirit of the banquet.

Later issues announced the program, arrangements and changes for 1927. A registration fee of 50¢ would be charged again, proving helpful in the experiment last year.. The cost of room and board remained at \$10.00. Pastors and their wives were invited to be guests at the dining room, their children up to twelve, half price. Walter Lee expressed regret that they could not include room accommodations. There was the usual request for a pre-reservation \$5.00 for the dining club and aid in securing sleeping accommodations to be sent to Worth Coulson at Scotts Mills, Oregon. A change of program was the weiner roast and stunt night would be held Tuesday evening instead of Saturday in order not to break into the evangelistic services. Each Quarterly C.E. Union was to prepare a stunt. Sunnyside Society challenged the others to the song contest, "to be of general Conference loyalty songs that can be used from year to year."

August 1st finally came and the registration for the week was 221, with many more attending part of the time. The large tent was full at the evening services. There were more vacationers attending than for several years. George Deshler, pastor of the Friends Church in Denair, California, came to be the evangelist for the second time. He brought messages both in the inspirational hour and in the evening services. There were seekers at the close of every service.

The theme for 1927 was "So Run, That Ye May Obtain." Friends ministers and teachers from North Pacific Evangelistic Institute taught the classes on relevant topics. Quaker History was presented by Ida J. Lee, beginning with George Fox in 1624 and discussing Quaker testimonies through the years—opposition to slavery, war and capital punishment, oaths, compulsory tithing, hireling ministry, but proclaiming the "day of the Lord and walking in obedience to the light of Christ." Allison Rogers, recently returned from mission service in India, conducted a class on missions. Two Bible studies were offered—the book of Ruth by Elizabeth Ward and of Joshua by William J. Murphy. Edith Minchin discussed the "I AM'S of Christ" and Edward Mott presented Christian Evidences. Children's meetings were conducted by Laura Cammack.

The dining hall, recently built, was a great improvement and was the center of much activity. A report in "The Friendly Endeavor" of random comments in the kitchen gives some insight into that heart of the food service. " a Ford dashes up the driveway and all hands run to the windows and doors. There is a welcome shout, 'There is Mrs. Fogg. Now for the good eats!' What are we going to eat tonight? Well, I had planned scalloped potatoes with bacon. I like hot rolls with that so I got twelve dozen from the baker this morning. We'll have peas and fruit and cookies, too. I think that will be enough, don't you? I expect five pans full will be enough. My word! Look at that crowd. I know there won't be enough. We'll just open a can of something to piece it out. Good morning! Yes, you may have all the soda you want. It is right there on that shelf. Yes, plenty of hot water, right there in the corner of the sink. I wonder how many gallons of cocoa they'll drink. Now for dinner today we will have roast beef, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie. How many pies do you suppose we will need? If we cut them in five pieces, we will want about twenty-two, but if cut in six, we won't need so many. Some of the pans are bigger so I expect nineteen will be right. Hustle up that fire or we won't have supper till nine o'clock! Good morning everybody--mush boiling, cocoa on, four hundred biscuits in the oven. Yes, Mr. Deshler, I think soda is good for a cold. You can take this box to your tent and keep it. Now all you girls who are going deep-sea fishing get your food and eat on the corner of the table here. Maybe we won't have to fix so much tonight if they all come back sick. Well, we might have to fix a little more if they are all empty. We'll have to fill them up. Just look at the fish they brought home from the ocean trip! It will keep till Sunday, don't you think? Let's get some salmon and give them one grand fish feed! Boys stop that racket and shut the door. They are having morning worship in the dining room. Now how much milk will we need today. Three gallons to drink, two for cooking and twelve quarts in bottles to sell to campers will last till he comes again this afternoon. There's the baker, too. Get fifteen loaves each of white and brown and twenty-four loaves for Springbrook. Yes, I think there are a third more in the dining room this year. The average is 120 each meal. Ten dozen eggs have been eaten this morning. Twenty-seven hundred meals have been served altogether. See you next year!"

Recreation in the afternoons followed familiar patterns. Beach sports drew a large crowd Saturday afternoon with volleyball and baseball. The launch trip to Bay Ocean was especially interesting as reports indicate a "damp experience." A little engine trouble started them off but the scenery was great and they meandered about the deserted resort looking for interesting sights. It was suggested that next year raincoats and caps be furnished. Huckleberries were scarce for the forest hikers, starfish were brought back by hikers to the jetty, surf bathing was popular as well as swimming both in the lake and in the Natatorium in Rockaway.

✓ An inspiring climax to the 1927 Conference came on Sunday afternoon. During the sacred concert at the call of Bess Owens Runyon, "young people who possess a call from God for special service, came to the front singing, 'If Jesus Goes With Me, I'll Go Anywhere.'" Blessing and encouragement came to them as they bowed in prayer and Elizabeth Ward vocalized a prayer of thanksgiving and petition to God for these who are 'chosen of Him'." Following this service, plans for building the long desired tabernacle were presented and pledges requested. A sense of Divine Presence hovered over this meeting with a deep consciousness of the Lord's blessing upon the Conference program. This was increased when a small woman arose and offered a pledge of \$500 for the tabernacle building. Under the inspiration of this generous gift, other pledges were quickly received until practically all of the amount needed was raised that afternoon. May Lattimer Wiley will always be remembered by Oregon young people for the loving contribution which made construction of the tabernacle possible the next year.

Walter Lee expressed his praise and thanksgiving for His wonderful blessings. He said, "We thank Him for a delightful Conference. If possible, it seemed that it was the best one we have ever had. We do not forget the kind friends who labored so cheerfully to help make the Conference a success. On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Christian Endeavor of Oregon Yearly Meeting of Friends, I thank every teacher and worker who gave so unstintingly of their time and efforts. We appreciate the services of everyone more than we can express. Furthermore, I personally thank the officers for their splendid cooperation in the work of the Conference. It has been a great gathering. Pray for next year." And so the work went on growing in scope. The vision did not change.