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Chapter 15: Twin Rocks Conference 1931

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Twin Rocks Conference

1931

Progress and growth! The work of the C.E. Union of Oregon Yearly Meeting continued to show^a remarkable combination of purpose, concern and vigor during the 1930s. Word came that the government had started work on the North Jetty at Bar View. Rock for the project came from a quarry at Watseco, south of Twin Rocks and close to the Conference property. A short spur line was built from the railroad tracks to the quarry. It became apparent that there would be an influx of workers for this significant undertaking, and some families would come along for the two or more years required. Housing in Twin Rocks and along the coast would be filled with temporary families, a significant increase in the population. The Executive Committee was always concerned about ministering to the residents in Twin Rocks and along the coast. Everett Tuning and his brother, Theo, had been sent to start a Sundayschool on the Conference grounds and services were held Sunday morning and evening. In addition, they realized that some men would not have families with them and could use some kind of social center. The Conference dining room was available so an appeal went out for magazines, furniture, rugs, tables, games, and a radio—items that would make the room homey and inviting. Though the project would not be permanent, it offered an opportunity to reach workers and their families.

Money was raised at the 1930 Conference for further work on the grounds during the year. A major project was to fill in the swampy area between the tabernacle and the highway. ~~The~~ Cammacks brought large machine equipment to do the necessary work. Sixteen new tents were purchased and areas cleared to provide space for more tent frames. A new addition to the dining room gave extra space for eating and meeting. Lowering the board ~~coast~~ had brought so many more into the dining room, it was necessary to expand.

The annual banquet and rally were to be held in Portland, but as this occasion continued to draw larger numbers, it became clear that the First Friends Church basement was not adequate. Mildred Hadley (Brown), Portland Quarter Superintendent, was able to obtain permission to hold it at the Centenary-Wilbur Methodist Church. The promotion promised, "there will be plenty of room, everyone will be able to see, everyone will be able to hear. It will be the best banquet ever. Every society bring a song so we can have music in the air. When Oregon Friends C.E.ers get together there is pep, ginger and enthusiasm!!." The banquet turned out to be bigger than ever as over 400 came. "It seemed like everyone was there...Piedmont nearly scared us out of our seats with their vigorous singing. Sunnyside and Highland Intermediates were very much on the map. South Salem does not have a society now but sixteen came anyway. Newberg came in strength. Chehalem Center persevered in spite of car trouble and came in large numbers. Kelso had a good representation. Idaho had the largest group they have ever had." The pro-

✓ Check accuracy of Cammacks "large machine equipment" -
(Chapter 18 p. 6 bottom seems correct)

gram was a "Bluff College Reunion." Merrill Coffin was the toastmaster and said he had not attended Bluff College so would have to bluff his way. Toasts were given by previous students so they knew how to bluff. A male quartette from Pacific College sang. The artistic decorations were provided by Milo Ross and Emil Pearson. Elizabeth Ott (Bishop), secretary, announced the program for the coming Conference. Chester Hadley gave a challenge on the subject "Doers or Dodgers" and reported the work on the Conference grounds and the services being held there. His remarks inspired an offering of \$121 to be used for further grounds improvements. Walter Lee closed the evening with an appeal for standards of Christian living which Christ gives us and which our fathers in the church have taught us. The program closed with all singing, "Faith of Our Fathers." Lively good-byes always included, "see you at Conference!" Someone reported that at the banquet, "old folks grow younger, young folks grow younger and on the way home everyone talks about Conference. Sleep that night is a jumble of Twin Rocks, chilly breezes, salty water, boats on the lake, huckleberry picking, dinner gong, deep sea fishing stories."

Promotion for the Conference continued as the time approached. Personal testimonials were always enthusiastic. Allen Hadley, son of Chester and Grace Hadley, told in the July, 1931; "The Friendly Endeavor" why he liked to go to Conference. He wrote, "I have been going to this annual gathering since I was the tender and attractive age of three years, and certainly this is no time to stop. I have got the habit. From the minute the last song is sung at the C.E. banquet, I begin to count the weeks until Conference. The summer would not be complete without a chance to get up in the misty mornings at four to make a fire in the main kitchen, and then watch the campers come to life from far and near...also exchange something in the shape of a chew of gum or a chocolate bar for something in the shape of a nickel. The classes are always interesting and the influence of the evangelistic meetings has been a benefit to me. Without appearing to be boastful, I take pleasure in announcing that I am no slouch of a sailor, and it affords me boundless delight and puts me in a merry mood to go deep sea fishing and watch the kittenish antics of the passengers as they drape themselves playfully over the railings. I had rather be present at that little episode than to be placed in the Hall of Fame. And you who have never attended a Saturday night frolic on the beach have yet to taste the joy of placing a red hot, juicy weenie inside a perfectly good bun and then dropping the whole thing in the sand.

I haven't time to tell you more, My duties call me hence.

But I will meet you everyone, at C.E. Conference."

Ruth Kellogg (Brown) wrote an "Advance Information" piece in the "Friendly Endeavor" saying, "Ho, mates! Have you heard of the good schooner 'C.E. Fellowship' of Oregon Yearly Meeting which is to drop anchor at Twin Rocks for the week of July 28 to August 2? That is just what is going to happen and it is to be a week crammed full of good times...

I have been there before and this year promises to be bigger and better...purchase a round trip ticket, else you may want to stay indefinitely, but we want each one to return to his home society with more pep and enthusiasm and a deeper Christian experience."

Betty Lou Gardner (Hutchens) recalls packing for Conference. She says, "The first things we usually packed besides clothes were the wash basin to wash our faces in, then candles, clothes lines and pins, a mirror to hang on a nail, flashlight, hot water bottle and ^{of course} tissue. Only outhouses were provided. It was a long trip. We left from Salem and usually met Uncle Chesters (Hadley) at Willamina. We cooked breakfast outdoors and ate together. We had to arrive a day early and help Mamma set up the kitchen as she was one of the cooks, along with Grace Hadley and Bertha Heacock. You know the camp runs on its stomach so they really ran the camp! When we arrived, we were assigned a tent frame. My job was to take the ticks and fill them with straw. We had to stuff them so they would feel just right because those old bed frames had a single wire spring. We distributed our clothes around, hanging some on nails left by former campers. We put our names on the outside of the door, the lower wooden half. The upper half was canvas, flaps of course."

The Conference was larger than ever. Registration reached 301 with 450 present on Sunday. Some campers did their own cooking but the average number in the dining room was 180. Attenders were pleased with the improvements on the grounds since last year. The youngest person registered was Mildred Marie Cook, eight months old. The oldest person was Marion George, called "Father George", who was 81. All but three pastors of Oregon and Washington meetings were there. Eight representatives from ~~California~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ Christian Endeavor Union of California Yearly Meeting came. There were Bertram Miller and wife, president, a Mr. White and sister, and Laura Taylor ~~from~~ ^{the} Citrus Heights. Blaine and Nellis Bronner were especially welcomed as he was a former president of the Oregon ^{yearly Meeting} C.E. Union and had attended early Conferences. Everett Cattell, president of Ohio Yearly Meeting C.E. Union returned the visit of Walter P. Lee to Ohio in 1929. His messages during the Inspirational Hour were greatly appreciated.

The evangelistic services under the leadership of Merrill Coffin, pastor of First Friends, Portland, were experiences of inspiration and blessing. He talked about "the Fullness of God" and brought thoughts from Acts 1: 1-8 concerning the Holy Spirit. He said that He is a person not an influence and that when He descended, He was as truly divinity come to earth as the day when Jesus, the Son of God, was born of the Virgin Mary. That "ye shall be my witnesses" was one of the last said things of Jesus. Between 65 and 75 young people knelt at the altars to make their peace with God.

There were helpful classes. Carl Miller presented Personal Evangelism. Minnie Miller brought lessons from the life of Jesus. Ida J. Lee taught history from the Old Testament. Her class was attended by a large number of Intermediates who came to Conference in greater numbers than ever. Edward Mott presented Friends history and doctrine. The

last two days he answered questions about Friends' testimonies and practice. Floyd Perisho led a class about "Life-Work Problems and the Will of God." This was helpful to young people faced with important decisions ahead in their lives. A class on Missions was taught by Chester Hadley who reported on the progress of the mission program undertaken by Oregon Yearly Meeting in Bolivia. The C.E. Union had contributed \$300 to this work during the year so were gratified to learn more about it. A strong interest in Missions continued through the years.

The children were divided into two age groups, those below third grade and those from third grade to twelve years of age. Ethel George was in charge and was assisted by Lois George (Schild) who also acted as recreational leader for the children. Their lessons were planned around the theme "Fishers of Men" and they worked in booklets made in the shape of fish.

The Chorus class was led by William Murphy. The Sunday afternoon concert was a "volume of praise and prayer." Marcy Newlin played the piano. A duet was sung by Phyllis ^{Macy} ~~Cammack~~ and Vera Square. A male quartette composed of Herman Smith, Frank Cole, Herman Macy and Homer Nordyke, sang. Bertram Miller played a piano solo and Gertrude Cook sang. The report says, "all blended in a harmonious expression of the melody of the heart."

Milo Ross and Laura Cammack planned the recreation, dividing up attendees for a "Bolivian Cruise." The four teams were christened by Admiral Hadley, the good ships La Paz, Ed Harmon Captain; Arica, Glena Kneeland, Captain; Titicaca, Allen Hadley, Captain; and Juanito, Lois George, Captain. By supper the captains had their crews singing the fame of their several ships and the dining room was decorated with Bolivian flags, cruise posters and Japanese lanterns. A variety of afternoon trips included Neah-Kah-Nie Mountain, launch ride on the Bay, hiking on Short Sand Beach, and deep sea fishing. There was a rowing regatta on the lake, a trackmeet and ball games on the beach.

The annual frolic and stunt night on the beach Saturday evening was planned as "The Court of Neptunus Rex." The ceremony imitated what Carroll Tamplin, missionary to Bolivia, had to undergo when he crossed the equator. After the hot dogs, court was held. With a log for his throne, corrugated cardboard crown, pitchfork trident, slashed newspaper beard and black shield, Neptunus Rex (Frank Cole) held forth. Various personages were called forth by the herald (Milo Ross) to perform. Rear-admiral Lee was one of these. The eight Californians sang. The winning team initiated the losers in appropriate ways. A jolly time was had by all.

Reports of the Conference express appreciation for the good food served in the dining room and the pleasure in the lively singing, joking and fun that accompanied each meal. Chester Hadley managed the operation with Walter Lee helping with the buying.

Betty Lou Gardner (Hutchens) has vivid memories of life in the kitchen. She spent considerable time there while her mother cooked. "I often sat on the wooden box that held the huge loaves of bread. The wood-burning stove was very large. It took up most of the northern end of the kitchen. It had two or three fireboxes as different kinds of food required different kinds of heat. There were boys who built the fires. Out from the stove were four tables that formed a square in the center of the room. Inside that was the cook's territory. They worked out from and instructed others from there. On the west wall were shelves. A little door opened onto a deck and a stairway led down underneath to the icehouse. It was partly dug into the earth and was the refrigerator. Block ice was delivered. I remember Uncle Chester would be upset if the ice hadn't come in time to get things cooled down for the produce. Most of the fresh food, like eggs, milk and bread, were purchased locally and delivered. Other foods were purchased locally ahead of time and some came out from Portland. In the northeast corner were huge stainless steel sinks and sprays for dishwashing. Water was heated by the stoves.

The hierarchy of the kitchen staff was the cooks, the boys who helped and the pantry girls who came half an hour early to get out the pitchers, salt and pepper, sugar and butter and set the tables. At mealtime they got their instructions from the cooks who told them that each table may have two dishes of this and two of that and maybe three platters of that. Sometimes there was one biscuit around and sometimes there were seconds. The cooks worked very hard. They were up at four or five o'clock so they could mix up necessary recipes for the day. They made everything except the bread. They had large cooking equipment and each had her favorites. Some brought items from home. Mother used to take her favorite paring knife, butcher knife and beater. They didn't finish up till after the evening service. They couldn't go to service and sometimes Mother wouldn't even know who was preaching."

There is one story of a morning just before breakfast when diners bowed their heads for grace, spoken by Chester Hadley. Just as the prayer ended, there was a moment of complete quiet. Grace Hadley, not realizing the situation, called out loudly from the kitchen, "Let her rip! the biscuits are done."

Allen Hadley started a small candy store, using some crates that had brought equipment out from Portland. He sold candy bars, chewing gum and other small items. When he wanted to go off with his girl friend or on other business, he got his little cousin, Betty Lou, to mind the store. Her pay^{girl} was a piece of licorice or other sweet. He provided this service to campers for several years.

Saturday night was a big date night. One attender reports that when the big Idaho truck arrived, young people lined up to see who came, and maybe¹¹ to speculate on which one you hoped would ask you for a date.¹¹ Fred and Marietta Cope served again as chaperones. Their tent was named "The Watch Tower." Attenders were expected to be in^{by} 10 P.M. and to let them know ^{in case of} if sickness or accident. Copes were friendly and loving advisors but sometimes had their hands full.

There was always provision for health care. Bell G. Badley was a registered nurse and for several years gave her vacation time to serve as Conference nurse. She wore her white uniform and blue and red cape. Other nurses were Alberta Swanson and Faustina Burg.

Walter Lee reported to Oregon Yearly Meeting in June the work of the C.E. Union. He told about the new conference plant established at Payette Lakes in Idaho, thus making available a summer conference for the benefit of Young Friends of Idaho. It consisted of about eight acres of land overlooking the Payette Lakes, and a large three story building in which ~~can be~~^{was} housed a dining hall and two dormitories. So there were two successful Conferences in 1931. He emphasized the strong interest in missions with another missionary with long C.E. Union service going to Bolivia—Helen Cammack.

On his way home Everett Cattell wrote a letter to the C.E. Union giving some of his impressions of Twin Rocks Conference. He wrote, "First is the character of Oregon Yearly Meeting's young people. It is not the usual thing to find so vigorous, so talented and yet so spiritual a group together in such numbers...another impression is of the happy combination and balance between recreation and evangelistic fervor. I thoroughly enjoyed the frolics we had together the night on the beach, so funny and so wholesome... and your happy faculty of coming at once from lively fun to the deep seriousness of evangelistic services. I shall not soon forget the wonderful moving of the Spirit, the filled altars and the voices of victory...let me thank you most sincerely for the wonderful welcome you gave me, the comfortable entertainment, splendid fellowship and blessed inspiration." Perhaps this expression of one attending Conference for the first time shows the successful fulfillment of the vision of 1918—that the young people of Oregon Yearly Meeting have a Christian vacation, combining recreation and fun with spiritual enlargement and growth. The vision did not change.