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A History of the Kentucky Mountain Mission Work of the Evangelical United Brethren Church

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A HISTORY OF THE KENTUCKY MOUNTAIN MISSION WORK
OF THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHERN CHURCH

by

David W. Weinert

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the

Western Evangelical Seminary

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of the requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Divinity

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CHAPTER I
THE INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE INTRODUCTION

Throughout its history, the Evangelical Church has always been concerned for the underprivileged and unreached. Through a comprehensive survey of the needs of the mountains of Kentucky, it was decided that this was a logical place to do missionary service. The underprivileged of the mountains of Kentucky had long since been neglected. The Evangelical Church accepted that area to further its Missionary enterprises.

THE PROBLEM

This paper was written with three objectives in view. First, the writer desired a better understanding of the work which is part of the missionary outreach of his denomination. Secondly, the writer hopes some day to become a part of this endeavor. In order to understand the developments which gave rise to the present situation, it is necessary to understand the history of the work. Without this knowledge, the writer feels he cannot be qualified to meet present day problems in this work and among these people. Thirdly, to make available to all interested persons a history of the Red Bird Mission work in one volume. Some definite conclusions have been established in the writers mind from the research of this thesis.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

No comprehensive history of the missionary work in the Kentucky mountains of the former Evangelical, and later the Evangelical United

Brethern Church, has ever been written. This work has been outstanding in the annals of the denomination. The founder of this work, Rev. J. J. DeWall, has passed on to his eternal reward. Few of the beginning workers are left to help reconstruct a history of this early work. Much of the work is not recorded. Substantial evidence can be gathered through contacts with persons, who lived in the area and who were actively helped through this endeavor. The source of much other information can be gathered through past issues of the Missionary periodicals of the church. Rev. A. E. Lehman began a history of this work but was able to write it only through the period of the superintendency of Rev. J. J. DeWall. This work has never been published or completed and is available only in the original rough draft at the Mission at Beverly, Kentucky.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

In some instances there were conflicting reports concerning some facts of this history. In these cases reports found in the Missionary periodical of the denomination were used because the writer felt these accounts were written at the time of the happenings and therefore more authentic. There were other periods of time when little information could be found concerning the development of the work. These periods of time were filled in with what information was available.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To better understand this history, the following terms are defined:

Stills: The place where illegal liquor was made and distributed.

Outstation: An established Mission center other than the first station at Beverly, Kentucky.

Extension School: A school that was operating away from Beverly, at another station. But whose course of action was controlled from the central headquarters at Beverly.

W. S. W. S.: Women's Society of World Service. The official women's missionary organization of the Evangelical United Brethern Church.

Annual Conference: This was used to denote a group of organized churches under a single leadership in the Evangelical United Brethern Church within a given area, oftentimes within state boundaries.

Kentucky Conference: This conference was composed of all the Evangelical United Brethern Churches in the state of Kentucky.

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Documentary Sources: Various documentary sources were used to gather this historical information. Material gathered from the Mission headquarters was incorporated into this study. A substantial number of

Evangelical Missionary Worlds, The World Evangel, and The Telescope Messenger were examined for material directly applicable to this work.¹

Trips: A trip was made to the site of this missionary endeavor with the purpose of viewing first hand the work that has been a result of this endeavor. Trips were made to many of the outstations and also to the agricultural station at Queendale to better understand the work.

Letters: Some personal correspondence was done with missionaries and former missionaries on the field who would be able to give information relative to this study. A complete list of these are found in the Bibliography.

Conference Journals: The conference Journals of the newly formed Kentucky Conference of the Evangelical United Brethern Church were used for the section on the establishing of the Kentucky Conference.

General Board of Missions: The General Board of Missions of the Evangelical United Brethern Church was able to supply the writer with several brochures concerning the work in Kentucky. A recent one on the building of the new hospital was of much value.

¹Official Publications of the Evangelical United Brethern Church.

STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

In chapter one the reader has been introduced to the study. Chapter two contains the work as it was established and carried on under the able leadership of the first Superintendent, Rev. J. J. DeWall.

Chapter three deals with the continuation of the work under the leadership of Rev. A. E. Lehman who brought the Mission through the trying days of the depression of the 1930's and World War II in the early 1940's.

In Chapter four the work is discussed as it was led by Rev. John W. Bischoff, the present Superintendent of the Mission. Also in Chapter four is the brief account of the organization of the Kentucky Conference. Chapter five concludes the study.

CHAPTER II

THE WORK UNDER SUPT. REV. J. J. DEWALL

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THE BEGINNING WORK

Missionary work has always played a vital part in the life and ministry of the Evangelical Church. Jacob Albright, the founder of the church, was himself a missionary to the German speaking people of Pennsylvania. The early years of the existence of the church were in themselves a missionary venture. As the church grew and the constituency increased, so did the missionary outlook and outreach. Foreign mission fields were considered important. Very little thought was given to the early English speaking people in the more backward areas of our nation until the church was over one hundred years old. About the year 1913 a work among these people became a topic of conversation among certain members of the United Evangelical Church.¹ It stemmed from a group of women in southern Indiana who were members of the Women's Missionary Society. They became burdened for the backward people of our nation and began to pray that God would send them the gospel in some way. They continued on this basis until the entire Women's Missionary Society

¹P.H.Eller; History of the Evangelical Missions; p.124; In 1894 there was a split in the Evangelical Church. The two groups were known as the United Evangelical Church and the Evangelical Association. In 1922 these differences were overcome and there was a merger of the two groups into the Evangelical Church. The very beginning work of the Red Bird Mission was started under the United Evangelical group. Shortly after the merger took place.

of the church began to see this venture as a reality in their own denomination. In 1920 the Women's Missionary Society took the initiative and presented a proposal of this work to the Board of Missions of the United Evangelical Church.¹ At the Board of Missions meeting that year, a committee was appointed to investigate the possibilities of such a missionary venture into the southern mountains of the United States.² The committee consisted of five members: Corresponding Secretary Dr. B. H. Neibel, Bishop Maze, Rev. C. C. Poling, Mrs. Sarah Earnst Snyder and Rev. J. D. A. Curry.³ They were given the authority to investigate, establish, look after and care for, and report at the next meeting of the board, any steps feasible to the establishing of such a mission.⁴ The committee investigated several possible locations. Included in these were the mountains of Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and Arkansas. Much travel and correspondence was carried on by the committee before a decision was reached. Upon final tabulation of all the advantages and disadvantages, it was decided to establish a work in the extreme south east corner of Kentucky in the heart of the Cumberland Mountains.⁵ This area was selected above the others for a number of reasons. The chief reason was because each of the other locations had been ministered to

¹B. H. Neibel; "Among the Mountaineers of Kentucky;" Evangelical Missionary World; February, 1923; p.52

²Ibid.; p. 53

³Spreng; History of the Evangelical Church; p.151

⁴Ibid.; p.150

⁵B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.52

by other groups, or at least were accessible to other missionary enterprises. This area in Kentucky had never been touched by missionary endeavor.

The terrain, in this rather remote northern corner of Bell County, Kentucky, was characterized by steep mountains covered with timber. The valleys were very narrow, often no wider than the stream running through them, with room enough for a very humble home and garden spot here and there. Occasionally the valley widened sufficiently to allow for an acre or two of level ground for farming purposes. Nowhere could one find any material improvements, such as bridges or roads. The whole area was very much as nature made it. Travel was either on foot or on the back of an animal across trails that were oftentimes difficult for even the animal.¹

The people of this area were not immigrants but pure blooded Americans from past generations. These southern mountaineers were very patriotic. They showed great loyalty to their country. Their life was a simple one. They were satisfied if they had enough to eat, to keep warm and a place to sleep. Although these people had been denied many things in the past, the generation at the time the mission was established awakened to the needs that confronted their children and wanted them to have opportunities for advancements that were never afforded them.²

¹Ibid.; p.52

²Ibid.; p.52

In December of 1920, the Board of Missions, realizing some of the opportunities and obstacles that confronted them in undertaking such an endeavor as this, sent Bishop Maze and B. H. Neibel to visit the field.¹ They were guided to Beverly, Kentucky by correspondence with Mr. Millard Knuckles. At this time Beverly consisted of the Knuckles home and a small grocery store that was also the Post Office.² Except for the Mission, Beverly is still the same size today - the Millard Knuckle home, the store and the Post Office. Uncle Millard, as he is respectfully called by all the folk of the community, owned the store and was the Post Master. Beverly is about nineteen miles from Pineville, Bell County Seat. Bishop Maze and Dr. Neibel went by railroad to Heyburn, then thirteen miles by mule back to Beverly.³

The four Knuckles brothers, and other leading citizens of the community, were very desirous that the United Evangelical church establish a mission in this area. In order to help decide in favor of this location, the Knuckles brothers offered to donate twenty-two acres of land along the Red Bird Creek for the establishing of a mission station. Bishop Maze and Secretary Neibel were very much impressed, both by the location and the need and attitude of the people. Hence, it was decided that this was the ideal location for missionary work.

Immediate plans were made to proceed with work at this place. The plans were approved by the entire board of missions and the lead-

¹Ibid.; p.53

²Spreng; Op. Cit.; p.51

³Ibid.; p. 151,152

ing officials of the church. A committee of three was appointed by the Board to go ahead with the arrangements for needed buildings and securing workers. The committee consisted of Bishop Maze, Dr. Neibel and Mrs. Sarah Snyder.¹

In April of 1921, Dr. Neibel again visited the field to make arrangements for the erection of buildings.² Another trip in May completed the arrangements for the erection of a ladies dormitory and a combination school and church.³ Of the twenty-two acres of land that was donated, three and one-half acres were level and suitable for the erection of buildings. The rest was mountainous but could be used for pasture and gardens.⁴ During Dr. Neibel's trip in May, he was able to secure enough timber for the erection of buildings. The timber was donated; the church paid for the cutting and sawing.⁵ He hired the mountain people to do the work. Already the Missionary work was helping to raise the economic standards of the people by making available to them employment, payable in currency.

Now came the responsibility of securing and selecting qualified workers for the new mission field. As the call of the church went out, so the call of God came to two young ladies of the church to give themselves for missionary service in this remote area of the

¹B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.152

²B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.53

³Spreng, Op. Cit.; p.153

⁴B.H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.53

⁵Ibid.; p.53

United States. These young ladies were Miss Emeline Welsh of Amboy, Illinois and Miss Myra Bowman of Johnstown, Pennsylvania. They were sent to the Red Bird Mission in July of 1921 to begin teaching and to organize Sunday Schools.¹ The church was fortunate to get a man of vision in Rev. J. J. Dewall for the leader of the Missionary work in Kentucky. At this time he was the pastor of the United Evangelical Church in LeMars, Iowa and had just completed the erection of a church there. Rev. and Mrs. Dewall were an ideal choice for this work because of their ability to adapt themselves to the pioneer work. The DeWall's went to the field in the latter part of August of 1921. One of their first tasks was to complete the multi-purpose building, to be used as a school and church, which had been arranged for by Secretary Neibel.²

THE EVANGELISTIC MISSION

The work of a Superintendent of such a mission field was not an easy one. A transition had to be made from living in a fine modern parsonage to living in pioneer fashion without modern conveniences. Also, many ways of the mountain people were new to the workers and they had to become acquainted with these.

The work of Evangelism on the mission field did not only consist in the task of preaching the gospel to needy souls, but along with this Rev. DeWall had to supervise the building projects, and at the same time be ready to call on the people in times of need. How-

¹Ibid.; p.53

²Ibid.; p.53

ever, each Sunday, preaching services were held in which Rev. DeWall was in charge.

Some of the fruit of the Evangelistic work was witnessed at the time of the dedication of the first building. Secretary Neibel, who had so much to do with the starting of the Mission, had charge of the dedication service.¹ At the Sunday morning service the auditorium was filled. At the dedication service in the afternoon there were eighty five present. The Sunday afternoon message was on "The Blood of the Atonement and the Power of Christ to Save from Sin by Faith in Him." At the close of the service when the invitation was given to accept Christ, thirty-five seekers bowed at the altar. During the day an offering of fifty one dollars was given to pay the expenses of the dedication.²

One of the most difficult problems to handle among the mount-ain people, and which caused one of the greatest hindrances to the early work, was the problem of illegal liquor business. In reporting to the Board of Missions in his first yearly report, Rev. DeWall told of the serious nature of the problem and of his stand against it. He stated:

Because of this moonshine business, life was unsafe and lawlessness prevailed. Officers feared to make arrests; witnesses feared to testify. Altogether the situation looked hopeless. At first I was determined not to deal with the moonshine business directly, hoping that the preaching of the gospel would bring peace and righteousness. When I discovered that the number of our Sunday School scholars and worshipers were decreasing every Sunday for fear of the outlaws, I went to the leaders of the group and beg-

¹B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.53

²Speng; Op. Cit.; p.163

ged them, for their own sake and for the sake of the committee, to be decent. They promised everything I asked but sent word to me that if I did not like the way they were running the country, I was welcome to return to the place from whence I came. I accepted their challenge. The next Sunday there were about twenty men present who were about half drunk and fully armed. I made the announcement that not another nail would be driven into our half completed buildings until I knew what the community would do about the moonshine business. I informed them that our church and school would not operate in the same community with the moonshine business. Then I announced that on the following Monday afternoon a meeting would be held when I desired to discuss the matter with them. When the time of the meeting came, the schoolhouse was filled with men, all seriously sober.

At the meeting I stated kindly, yet positively, that if the better class of citizens did not take a firm stand against the moonshine business, and for decent living and right citizenship, I would await its decision in regard to the continuance of the mission. I presented three propositions to the group of men. First, that each of them would discontinue the illegal sale, manufacture of or transportation of liquor. Second, that anyone of them would report to the proper officials anyone who continued the sale, manufacture of or transportation of liquor. Third, that when the violators were brought to trial, each of them would, without reservation, testify honestly to all they knew about the case. Twenty-five signed the document upon which this was written, and each took an oath before a notary public that they would do as they had promised.¹

One of the Knuckles brothers was a Notary Public and present at the meeting that afternoon. "That meeting was the emancipation proclamation to the community."² As a result of this meeting, all whiskey stills within three miles of the mission were reported. The leaders were arrested, tried and served sentences in the penitentiary. The church services increased in attendance and interest. Families could now enjoy a peaceful evening at home without danger. Industry started to grow. The worst hindrance to Evangelism was

¹Ibid.; p. 158-161

²Ibid; p.158

nearly gone.¹

Not until many of the obstacles had been removed did the effective witness of the gospel spread to other areas in the mountains.

It was during the summer of 1922 when the call for workers that had been coming from Jack's Creek, ten miles north of Red Bird, was answered.² Preaching services were begun in a store building.

At the close of the first years' work in August of 1922, Dr. DeWall sent his report of the progress of the Mission to the General Board of Missions. He summarized the work under three main points. First, the Mission was located in the right place. It was one of the hardest places to reach with the gospel but no other attempt had been made by other boards in this locality. Secondly, the Board employed the right method in carrying on this work. If they would have established preaching places only, much money would have been spent and years of labor used without any lasting results. The problem here was not only to win converts, but to keep them won. This was being done through educational, social, religious and industrial work. Through this method, facts and figures did not pile up quickly, but lasting and permanent results were obtained. Thirdly, the work had met with the approval of the better class of mountain people, and the people had gained confidence in the workers. At least four other communities had asked for a church, a school and workers to come and serve them. These communities were Goose Creek, Flat Lick, War Branch

¹Ibid.; p. 158-161

²B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p. 53

and Beech Fork.¹

Superintendent DeWall also told of a spiritual change that had taken place which could not be easily described on paper, but must be felt to be appreciated. His report stated that:

One year ago all but about half dozen men within a radius of five miles were engaged in the moonshine business in one way or another, and most of them were their own best customers. Drunkenness prevailed everywhere. Men, and occasionally even the women and young boys and girls were intoxicated regularly. The mountaineer, who is by nature quick tempered, is doubly quick and violent when intoxicated. As a result of the weekly celebrations on Saturday's and Sunday's, bad feelings were gendered. Threats and challenges passed between individuals and communities. Many of the men, and even young boys of sixteen or seventeen years of age, armed themselves with pistols whenever they left home. On Saturday evenings, and frequently all day Sunday, drunken crowds would ride up and down the creek roads yelling and shouting and shooting. People fled from their homes in the night to find safety from the flying bullets. Homes were shot into and in one instance the dishes and lamp were shot off the table while the family was at supper.²

As a result of the mission, in one year this condition was changed.

Rev. DeWall reported the results of changed conditions were these:

Our Sunday School enrollment now numbers 130. At our first annual rally, 148 were present. The mens Bible class on that day had an attendance of forty-five, and has an average attendance of around thirty. Our church services are attended by an average of one hundred people, quiet respectful and devout worshippers. At Jack's Creek station we have a wonderful Sunday School of forty-five. Our teachers now have 223 pupils under their instruction in the day schools. Each of these schools is opened with a scripture reading and prayer every morning. In addition, scripture verses and Bible lessons are taught during the day.³

At the end of the first year of Missionary endeavor the property consisted of the following: Twenty-two acres of land donated by the

¹B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.54

²Ibid.; p.54

³Ibid.; p.55

Knuckles brothers. A number of buildings consisting of a church, parsonage, teachers cottage and a sixty room dormitory, then under construction. There was also a teachers cottage at Jack's Creek. The membership of the church numbered twenty-two and more candidates were to be baptized soon. The prayer meetings were attended by most of the members, and others, and all members took part in the prayers and testimonies.¹

By the end of 1922 there were ten workers on the field in all phases of the work. These included six teachers, a nurse, a dormitory matron and Rev. and Mrs. DeWall. As the work at Red Bird grew it became impossible for Rev. DeWall to have complete supervision of the mission, to be pastor of the church and in charge of the day school at Red Bird.

During the second year, Rev. and Mrs. E.M. Miller from, Minnesota, were appointed to pastor the church and to be in charge of the day school at Beverly.² This freed Rev. DeWall for more administrative work. Also added to the staff of capable workers were Rev. and Mrs. J. S. Deedrick of Iowa. They were appointed to Jack's Creek station to pastor the church there.³ During this time a combination church and school was built and dedicated by Bishop Maze on November 2, 1923.⁴

¹Ibid.; p. 55

²Spreng; Op. Cit.; p. 163

³Ibid.; p. 163

⁴Ibid.; p. 163

With the acquisition of additional help, more emphasis could be put on needed evangelistic efforts. In the early part of 1924 a revival meeting was held at the Red Bird Church. Many of the young people were converted during this meeting and it wonderfully changed the spirit of the entire school.¹ Many of these young people became "pioneers of righteousness" through their changed lives. They went back to their home communities and withstood the sins of feuding, killing, immorality and drunkenness to live a witness for Christ. They believed in and upheld the doctrines of their church and were living demonstrations of Christian ethics.²

One of the very tangible results of the Evangelistic work at Jack's Creek was the fact that one of the young men received the call to the Christian ministry and was recommended by the congregation to receive a license to preach. He began his work by helping Rev. Deedrick in most of his meetings, in leading prayer meetings and exhorting. While he may have been deficient in training, his desire to serve lacked nothing.³

The evangelistic efforts were also used of the Lord to revive the work of the Red Bird school. Rev. DeWall tells of it in one of his reports.

Our meetings were held at two thirty in the afternoon during the last period of the school session. It is necessary to hold afternoon sessions because travel at night is impossible. For one of the afternoon meetings I had planned to preach a sermon

¹J. J. DeWall; "A Glorious Revival," Evangelical Missionary World; p. 83

²Charlotte Arnold; "Pioneers of Righteousness," Evangelical Missionary World; p. 53

³J. J. DeWall; Op. Cit.; p. 83

which I had used in other Evangelistic services with good effect. But from the time the first song was being sung it was evident to me that my sermon was as inappropriate as the proverbial fly in the ointment. The longer the devotional part of the service continued, the more distressed I became because of the sermon. And to increase my embarrassment I could not think of a single appropriate text of scripture or any other sermon. The spiritual time of the meeting was high. The singing was fervent and the prayers were touching pleas with God for the unsaved. When it was time for the sermon I knew I would not preach that day. I could not preach. The Holy Spirit has often given me a sermon to preach; that day he took the only message I had from me.

Instead of preaching, I asked the young people who had been saved to tell the story of their salvation. Five young men and women gave their testimonies. They told the stories in such a way that the whole audience was moved to tears. No sermon ever moved a congregation more deeply. At the close of the fifth testimony, I asked all those who wanted to be saved as these who had testified had been saved, to come forward. Nineteen souls, ranging in age from a dozen to over fifty years, with tears streaming down their faces came to an altar for prayer. It was a hallowed never-to-be-forgotten occasion. No sermon could have done what those testimonies did.¹

In numerous instances the young people and children were instrumental in bringing adults to Christ, as has been shown in the account of this revival. It was difficult to win people by a direct appeal. Hence, more time was spent with the children and young people. Many fathers and mothers of the mountains were saved through the prayers of their children.²

In the fall of 1923 a good revival was held at Jack's Creek with the result that twenty-one persons were converted to Christ and added to the church. The large majority of these conversions were permanent. It was through these results that Rev. Deedrick felt led

¹J. J. DeWall; "Red Bird Revival Echoes;" Evangelical Missionary World; p. 126

²Caroline M. Ochse; "Suffer the Little Children to Come Unto Me," Evangelical Missionary World; p. 131

to begin a Sunday School and worship services in a school house four miles beyond Jack's Creek station and another one at Bowen's Creek, a little farther away.¹

Beech Fork, one of the flourishing stations of the mission work, was inspired by Superintendent DeWall's report to the Board of Missions. He reported there were six adjacent communities which should have preachers and teachers. The board appointed a committee who investigated and determined to locate a mission at Beech Fork, fourteen miles from Beverly. When it was learned in the community that the Board had decided to establish a mission, a petition signed by thirty three citizens was presented promising co-operation and support. This was the way in which the mountain people showed their desire to train their children in a Christian atmosphere. They also gave pledges ranging from \$20 to \$500 in addition to fifty acres of coal land for a church and school location.²

Upon approval to open the work at Beech Fork in the summer of 1924, Rev. J. S. Deedrick was stationed there and Rev. and Mrs. H. N. Porterfield, from the Ohio Conference, were stationed at Jack's Creek.

After much work on the part of the community people at Beech Fork, and Rev. and Mrs. Deedrick, the official dedication of the work was held on September 6 and 7, 1924. The program for these two days

¹Mrs. J. S. Deedrick; "Religious Work on Jack's Creek," Evangelical Missionary World; p. 136

²P.H.Eller; Op. Cit.; p.128

was well planned by Rev. DeWall, Rev. Deedrick and Miss Opha Wilson, the teacher at Beech Fork. The first service of the dedication was held at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday with circuit Judge R. B. Roberts as the first speaker. Among the things he said was:

This days work marks a new beginning for Leslie County. My whole heart and every good wish is with you in this good work. The time has come when this country must be cleaned up.¹

After the Judges' address, Secretary Neibel spoke on "The Attitude of our Church Toward Civil Government and Toward the Liquor Traffic." Rev. Neibel spoke again in the afternoon and the message resulted in three conversions and eight requests for prayer.²

On Sunday morning the church was completely filled and Secretary Neibel brought the dedicatory message. At the close there were two more conversions, eleven united with the church and eight were baptized. The entire service lasted three and one half hours. The work there had a very successful beginning. In the previous five days there had been ten conversions, nineteen accessions to the church and twelve persons were baptized.³

The great dedication services at Beech Fork proved to be only the beginning, for in the following January a revival resulted in twenty five souls saved, and thirty three accessions to the church.

¹B. H. Neibel; "Dedication in our Kentucky Mountain Mission," Evangelical Missionary World; II; 399-400

²Ibid.; p.400

³Ibid.; p.400

Among those welcomed into the church membership were several heads of families and a few former "moonshiners."¹

Another Mission station was opened at Straight Creek in September of 1925 with the organization of a Sunday School. In the following January a church was organized with eleven charter members. Straight Creek is located about halfway between Red Bird and the mining camp of Heyburn.²

One of the important reasons why it was possible to establish churches in these communities was because the missionaries carried on a program of personal home visitation. To make these calls required a long, hard days journey from early in the morning to late at night on Mule back. The missionaries discovered in their visitation program that in many instances the way had already been prepared for the presentation of the gospel by some member of the family who already was a Christian. For when one person in a home had been saved he would do all he could to see that the rest of the family was won to Christ.³

In summarizing the evangelistic efforts of the founding years of the Kentucky Mission, several significant observations were noted as reported by Superintendent Rev. J. J. DeWall.

¹"Good News From our Mission in Kentucky," Evangelical Missionary World," III; 87

²Elaine Goben; "Echoes From Straight Camp," Evangelical Missionary World; V; 17

³Elizabeth Rabausch; "A Visiting Day on the Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; II; 128

First, urgent appeals continued to come from other communities asking them to come and establish a church and school. In his report, Rev. DeWall included this information for challenge and encouragement. Two communities had sent appeals and had offered all the timber and land needed for a church and school. One offered \$1500 in cash. Each of these communities were in a strategic location.¹

Secondly, the encouragement of the spiritual progress being made among all the stations here was indicated by the fact that there were ninety three conversions during the year and ninety seven accessions. This made a combined total membership of 147. At that time there were four active Sunday School's holding regular meetings and due to the fine work which was being done by them, most of the prejudices against the Sunday School's were broken down.²

Thirdly, the mission was growing numerically, physically and spiritually.³ A church building was being constructed at Beverly early in 1927. The sole function was to meet the spiritual needs of the community. Up to this time all services were held in the school rooms.⁴ The Mission now had property evaluation at Beverly of \$37,600, at Jack's

¹"Annual Report of the Red Bird Mountaineer Mission," Evangelical Missionary World; III; 371-372

²Ibid.; p. 371,372

³Rosa J. Dimmick, "Growing"; Evangelical Missionary World; III; 131

⁴George E. Epp; "Developments in the Kentucky Mission"; Evangelical Missionary World; V; 173

Creek of \$4,700 and at Beech Fork of \$9,200. This made a total evaluation of \$51,500.¹

Fourth, Rev. DeWall reported that he was thankful his own life had been spared so he could submit a good report such as this.²

THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION

One of the reasons for the need of Missionary work in the Kentucky Mountains was the deficiency of secular education. The Board of Missions was aware of this and also of the need for more than just an evangelistic effort, if it was really going to give these people a better way of life. As soon as work had begun, the establishing of schools

¹Annual Report; Op. Cit.; p. 372

²Ibid.; p. 373. Most of the conversions are wonderful experiences of regeneration. In this group of converts are men who were wicked men. Men who were pistol-toting, drunken boot leggers. They were men who regarded neither God nor man. Yet today they stand as living witnesses of God's saving grace. And many of these men who were formerly violators of the laws of their country, and bitter enemies of Jesus Christ and his church are now engaged in a great crusade to rid the country of the curse that for a long time blighted their own life and their homes. Of one of these men, who a year ago came near being my murderer, his former associates are now saying that he has a Bible in one pocket, an Evangelical song book in the other, a gun on his shoulder and hell and high water can't stop him. With malice toward no one he has led the raids that have resulted in the destruction of a score of moonshine stills in the last few months.

A little over a year ago this same man sat one day on his mule, too intoxicated to know what he was doing, with a long range rifle in his hand, the trigger cocked for action and the muzzle less than a foot from my breast. Is it a wonder that we are grateful to God for His goodness?

and the recruiting of teachers became a vital part of the work.

Miss Welsh and Miss Bowman, who were the first missionaries on the field, arrived in July of 1921. They opened a school as soon as they were settled. The response of students gave an indication of the interest of the mountain people for such a project. With no compulsory education, as it is known today, Miss Welsh had an average attendance of sixty-five and Miss Bowman, fifty.¹

The first educational building at the Mission was a two story, thirty-four by sixty-two foot school and church combination. It was dedicated on January 29, 1922 and greatly enhanced the educational work.²

The beginning work on Jack's Creek in the summer of 1922 led to the opening of a school there in the fall. With the acquisition of two more teachers the school was opened in a store building. The first term yielded thirty nine scholars most of whom were over thirteen years and some past sixteen years of age. These children were greatly retarded, not from the lack of ability, but from the lack of opportunity. When given the opportunity they showed remarkable progress. Miss Ruth Hall of Kansas and Miss Florence Gunn of Iowa took over the work at Jack's Creek upon their arrival on the field.³

¹Spreng; Op. Cit.; p. 153

²B. H. Niebel; Op. Cit.; p.53

³Ruth Hall; "Jack's Creek Extension;" Evangelical Missionary World; I; 130

One of the great material improvements and aid to the educational work was accomplished during the second year of missionary endeavor. This was the completion of the dormitory, called Knuckles Hall, in honor of the four Knuckles brothers who so graciously gave the land for the establishment of the Mission. The completed building was 180 feet long and sixty feet wide. It had a full basement for laundry and storage sections. There was a spacious dining room that seated about 125 people. A well equipped kitchen was adjacent to the dining room. The school library was also on the first floor and was as large as the dining room and kitchen combined. A hall extended through the center of the first floor. The second and third floors were identical in construction. Each had twenty dormitory room and four wards with two lavatories. The building was heated with four pipeless heaters. One of the modern features of this building at the time of its completion was its electrical plant. This plant furnished electrical plant. This plant furnished electricity for the entire Mission. The girls were housed in the east end of the building and the boys in the west end.¹

The building had a capacity of from seventy-five to one hundred students. The total cost of the building was approximately \$25,000.² It was completed and dedicated on February 23, 1923. Rev. George Epp

¹Rosa J. Dimmick; "Dormitory Life in Knuckles Hall," Evangelical Missionary World, I; 129

²Spreng; Op. Cit.; p. 164-165

gave the dedicatory message and led in the Litany.¹

Miss Rosa Dimmick, who arrived at the Red Bird in the latter part of 1922, was the first matron of Knuckles Hall. By April of 1923 there were thirty-three students living under her supervision. They ranged in age from ten to nineteen.²

Life in Knuckles Hall was much the same as life in the dormitory of any school campus. There were specific regulations and adequate supervision. Most of the work of the hall was done by young people supervised by the matron. The rising bell was 5:45 A.M. and meals were served promptly as scheduled hours. The meals were as much of a variety as was possible under the circumstances. Before each meal a song was sung and the blessing upon the food asked.

Every evening family worship was conducted in Knuckles Hall. It was led by the staff, including Rev. and Mrs. DeWall. All the students were required to be in the mid-week prayer service, as well as the Sunday services.³

At the close of the school year, in april of 1923, there were four teachers and 125 pupils in the Red Bird settlement school. Fifteen of these had reached the High School level and so composed the Red Bird High School. The largest percentage of students were in the fifth grade alone. This was mainly due to previous training in the

¹Ibid.; p.164

²Rosa Dimmick; Op. Cit.; p.129

³Ibid.; p. 129

crude mountain schools which offered only four years of elementary education.

One of the biggest problems faced by the school was to keep students from leaving and getting married. It was customary for many mountain girls to get married at fourteen to sixteen years of age. The boys were usually not much older. If a girl could be kept in school past the fifth or sixth grade she would usually continue. The problem was to keep them until the ambition or desire to continue was stirred.¹

Another problem found by the school was the instability of purpose on the part of the student. It was believed that one of the underlying reasons for this problem was due to the type of church work carried on in the mountains previously by a group which did not stress the need of consistent Christian living or the value of a fixed purpose in life. Men of the mountains would give up almost anything when the smallest obstacle hindered them.² Miss Welsh, one of the teachers at Red Bird, had observed that many a man or woman of the mountains had desired to live a Christian life but lacked the strength of purpose to carry out his convictions. Because of this great obstacle that was faced in the work in the mountains, Christian training was most essential.³

¹Pearl Parsons, "The Red Bird Settlement School," Evangelical Missionary World; I; 128, 129

²Emeline Welsh, "Our Greatest Obstacle," Evangelical Missionary World; I, 127, 128. A boy in High School almost gave up an education because he could not get the room he wanted in the dormitory.

³Ibid.; p. 127, 128

Many times the work seemed discouraging as the workers observed these things, but they had the avenue of hope through the leadership of the Holy Spirit. At this time, the Mission Board, as well as the laborers on the field, realized that one of the big tasks of the Mission was to train leaders who would be strong Christian citizens in their own communities. The brightest hope along this line was the fact that there was a group of people in the mountains who were ready to give quite liberally to every means provided for their improvement. Among this group were some of the young people who had become the leaders through their intelligent and winsome personalities and strength of character.¹

Even though problems existed, the challenge for educational workers and work among the mountain people was great. The Board of Missions built the first extension school and church building at Roark, Kentucky, known as Jack's Creek, to meet the needs there. Although there was a building at Jack's Creek, Rev. Deedrick and Miss Hall, those in charge of the school, were handicapped due to lack of equipment.²

As is the case in almost any school there are always students who are desirous for more education than others. This was true at Jack's Creek school, so at the close of the regular school term a tui-

¹Charlotte Arnold; "Our Brightest Hope," Evangelical Missionary World; I, 128

²J. S. Deedrick; "Educational Work at Jack's Creek," Evangelical Missionary World; p.155

tion school was held for two months. Miss Hall was in charge of the lower five grades and Rev. Deedrick the upper three. The tuition was \$1.50 per month. Even though it seemed a small fee, there were still those who could not attend because of it.¹

The second extension school was four miles beyond the Jack's Creek station at a community known as Phillips Fork. In July of 1923 the county school house was utilized by beginning a school there.² One year later a Sunday School was organized. The new adventure here thrilled many of the adults, as well as the children, as it had been many years since some of them had had an opportunity such as this.³

The third extension school was established at Beech Fork along with the church there. At the close of the first year of classes there was an average attendance of fifty-one.⁴ When the reports for the second year were tabulated, it was found that the Beech Fork school had reached a peak of ninety-six in attendance for the year, with an average of sixty-eight in classes. Also during that year there was

¹Ibid.; p.135

²Ibid.; p.135

³Elaine Goben; "A Needy Community," Evangelical Missionary World; III; 132,133. One grandmother had this to say of the meetings one Sunday. "Of all the sights of my life! I never se'd anythin' to equal it. I mean what them women brung over a Sunday. Hit was nice shiny black box in a sort of wrappin'. They tuck hit out an' pulled down some legs and lifted up the top and one of 'em set down and made a tune on hit, and they sung. None of us could, fer listenin' to hit. Yes, I reckon hits an organ, fer Marthie said so, and she orter know fer she's our teacher. Hit's pin black the quarest thing in these parts. The children sang out 'Jesus Loves Me' and hit sounded good."

⁴J. J. DeWall; Op. Cit.; p.397

a band organized and a hot lunch program launched for the winter months. Two basketball teams were active that year and when spring arrived there were two students who were graduated from the eighth grade.¹

As the extension schools increased in number and grew in size, so did the school at Beverly continue to grow. In 1926 a new school building was built. It was sixty-four by ninety-six feet and two stories high. There were six classrooms, each thirty-two feet square. The new school building also included a laboratory, office and an auditorium sixty-four feet square. It very effectively and effeciently took care of a growing student body.²

The work at Red Bird was established not only to develop the mental and spiritual needs, but to build a well rounded adult, through various physical activities. Through team sports it was noted that the youth showed great development in self control and unselfishness. The athletic program included activities for both the boys and the girls. An intermurral sports program was set up so that all could participate. For the boys, inter-school compitition in basketball was established. Personal sacrifice for the good of all was always emphasized at Red Bird.³

¹J. S. Deedrick; "Beech Fork Extension," Evangelical Missionary World; IV, 210

²E. M. Miller; "A Glimpse of School Life at Beverly," Evangelical Missionary World; IV, 326

³E. M. Miller; "Our Beverly School," Evangelical Missionary World; III, 124

Dormitory life plays a large part in the life of any student and the students at Red Bird were no exception. However, after some time had elapsed since the building of Knuckles Hall, life in the dormitory changed to some degree. Many of the students at Red Bird were saved after coming to the Mission and hence took part in the devotional times. One of the favorite forms of passing an evening was to gather around the piano and sing songs.¹ Since so many of the young people had taken a part in the devotions, a junior prayer meeting was organized for the younger ones with two of the teachers in charge.²

One of the results of the training that the young people had received in the day school was felt in the life of the Sunday School. Of the nine classes in the Red Bird Sunday School, three of them were taught by students. The need of better qualified teachers in the Sunday School was seen by the Superintendent, so the first teachers training class was established with eleven enthusiastic students enrolled. Each one of these eleven had consecrated their lives to special Christian service.³

Even though many of the educational needs had been met, there were always more requests for help than could be filled. One such request came to Rev. DeWall from a County Superintendent of Schools who

¹Rosa J. Dimmick, "Home Life in Knuckles Hall," Evangelical Missionary World; II, 130. The piano was a gift from some friends in the north and meant much to all in the dorm.

²Rosa J. Dimmick; Op. Cit.; p.131

³Mrs. E. M. Miller; "The Red Bird Sunday School," Evangelical Missionary World; III, 127

pled that the Mission send workers to their county, but there was no one to go. He even built a school house that could be turned into a house and would be given to the Mission if some one could only go.¹

At the close of Superintendent DeWall's tenure at the Mission, there were nine schools under the Missions' sponsorship with no less than 450 students.² After seven years of work there were three former students of the Red Bird High School teaching in the out stations.³

THE MEDICAL MISSION

The Red Bird Mission was located in a very remote area during the early days of the work. This made it almost impossible for the people living there to have access to medical help in times of sickness or accidents. Because of this, the people were many times sickly and susceptible to disease. As soon as Rev. DeWall arrived at the Mission he could see the need of medical assistance at Red Bird. Finally in the summer of 1922, this badly needed addition was made to the staff. Miss Lydia Rice of Blue Springs, Nebraska, came to be in charge of the medical work. She was a registered nurse and immediately began to inculcate the principles of health and sanitation into the humble homes of the mountaineers.⁴

¹J. J. DeWall; Op. Cit.; p.123

²George E. Epp; Op. Cit.; p.172,173

³Florence E. Singer; "Sabbatical Year at the Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; VI, 285

⁴P. H. Eller; Op. Cit.; p.126

Miss Rice took over the medical duties of both those on the staff and all the surrounding community. She was assisted only in critical cases when a doctor would sometimes be brought in from Pineville.

In Rev. DeWall's first annual report he mentioned that:

Our nurse, Miss Rice, though here but a short time, is receiving frequent calls and is bringing healing to both the body and the soul.¹

Miss Rice reported that it was only as the workers kept their bodies physically fit that they could do their best for Christ and for others. Their goal was not just to care for the sick, but to prevent illness in as many ways as possible. To do this, care was taken to teach the children to observe basic health rules. As nearly as possible balanced diets were served in the dining hall. One of the most effective ways to prevent sickness was to remedy poor health conditions. However, this was not yet possible, so effective work was impossible.²

In the summer of 1923, one of the first big steps was taken in the medical work at Red Bird. Two operations were performed in Knuckles Hall. One of the patients was a lady of the community who could not get well without an operation. A visiting doctor, a friend of Rev. DeWall, performed the operation. A week later one of the teachers be-

¹B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.55

²Lydia B. Rice; "Health Work at Beverly," Evangelical Missionary World; II, 133

came ill with appendicitis and the same doctor operated on her. So Knuckles Hall became a hospital ward for awhile. Miss Rice was on vacation at the time so the other staff members acted as nurses until she returned. This incident pointed to the need of a doctor at Red Bird.¹

The need of a Missionary doctor was pointed out to the Board of Missions by Rev. DeWall, who told them that much suffering could be alleviated. He also told the Board of the many crude and superstitious means and methods used for healing in the mountains, which were many times worse than the disease itself.²

One of the most effective ways of carrying on the medical work on the Mission field was through "clinics." These were held for one or two days at a time on each of the stations. When these clinics were held, a visiting physician would come from one of the neighboring towns to help. On May 19 and 20, 1925, a clinic was held at the Beverly Station, with three doctors present: two from Middlesboro and one from the state board of health. Two registered nurses, as well as the Mission nurse, were present. The Kiwanis Clubs of Pineville and Middlesboro paid the expenses of this particular clinic. During the two days, thirty-four operations were performed, seventy physical examinations made, twenty pairs of glasses fitted and two cases of blindness treated. Many of the operations were tonsilectomies among

¹Rosa J. Dimmick; Op. Cit.; p.130

²J. J. DeWall; Op. Cit.; p.397

the students of the Mission.¹

Although it was not always possible to have such an extensive clinic, yet much clinical work was done at Red Bird, Jack's Creek and Beech Fork. At Beech Fork the need for first aid was frequent because of broken bones, sprains, cuts, boils, dislocations, minor accidents and minor illnesses. Some of these should have been treated by a physician but there was none available at that time.²

A wonderful work was being accomplished in the medical field in spite of the fact they were without the aid of a doctor in many cases when one was needed. The lack of needed medical equipment was to be considered also. At this time the most pressing need was a resident physician.³ Once again the appeal went out to the churches stressing the need for a resident physician on the Red Bird.

By 1926 still no candidate had been found. Having so many workers on the field with no medical protection was brought to the attention of the Board and the church in the serious illness of Rev. J. S. Deedrick. It was considered a miracle that his life was spared. At this time the Board was able to send Dr. E. W. Smalzried, a medical missionary from China home on furlough, for a short duration. He was the first doctor sent by the board to the Red Bird Region.⁴

¹Clinic at Red Bird Mission, "Evangelical Missionary World; III, 248

²J. S. Deedrick; Op. Cit.; p.210

³H. Franklin Schlegel; "Among the Kentucky Mountains," Evangelical Missionary World; III, 255. Mr. Schlegel was the executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Board of Church Extension.

⁴A. E. Lehman; History of the Red Bird Mission; Unpublished Man.

Soon the call for a doctor for the Mission was answered by a young intern, Dr. Harlan S. Heim of Dawson Nebraska. He was raised in a missionary minded home, graduated from Western Union College and from Cornell Medical School. He served his internship in Bellevue Hospital in New York City.¹

In his own words Dr. Heim tells why he went to Red Bird:

For eleven years I had been preparing specifically for medical service in some foreign mission field. I had chosen China. However, because of unsettled conditions over there which had closed the door into that field, the hand of God pointed toward our mission field in Kentucky. It was hard to give up an old ambition and it was only after weeks of indecision that I finally became convinced that God wanted me to serve in Red Bird.²

He arrived at Beverly during the winter of 1927. Within an hour of his arrival he had treated his first patient, and at the end of the same month 262 patients had been treated.³

Miss Rice had done an excellent job preparing the way for a doctor. She had been able to break down many of the prejudices that were so common among the mountain people concerning doctors. Doctor Heim was the only doctor within a radius of fifteen miles of Red Bird. The medical work could reach into five counties from this point.⁴

Although the way had been well prepared for the coming of a doctor, it was through Dr. Heim's captivating personality, his skill

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³H.S.Heim; "So This is Red Bird;" Evangelical Missionary World; V; p.170,171

⁴Ibid.

as a physician and surgeon and his sincere religious spirit that won the hearts of the people.¹

Without a doubt, Dr. Heim was the busiest person on the Mission staff. When he started on a medical tour through mission territory, he never knew where he would be asked to help or when he would be able to return home. People would recognize him and his grey mule, Adam, along the way and call him up to a mountain cabin. Sometimes he would meet people who were on their way to Beverly to call him and he had to turn from his way. Many times when he arrived at his destination, word had gone out that the doctor would be there and there would be additional calls to make.²

Dr. Heim gained medical knowledge and experience through his work in the mountains. He came in contact with illnesses that would have ordinarily been referred to a specialist. It was impossible to refer them to anyone else so he became a specialist in many fields. He came in contact with new diseases and wrote articles to medical journals describing them and also reported some of these in person before the county Medical Society.³

When Dr. Heim was appointed to the Mission, the Board of Missions agreed to make plans for and erect a hospital costing approximately \$12,000. This hospital was to become self-supporting.⁴

¹A.E. Lehman; Op. Cit.; Many felt there was practically nothing Dr. Heim could not do. One man said, "It looked to me as if the Lord had given me up, but when I saw that Doc Heim hadn't give me up, I knowed I was alright."

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴George E. Epp; Op. Cit.; p.173

Actual work on the hospital was begun in the summer of 1928.

It was located one-half miles up the Red Bird at the mouth of Cow Lick Creek. The building was a two story structure providing a nursery, X-Ray machine, sterilizer, refrigerator and many other necessary items.¹

The hospital was dedicated on August thirty first, 1928 with Bishop Samuel P. Spreng giving the dedicatory address and dedicating the building. Mrs. Sarah Ernest Snyder, who had been on the original committee of five to select the location for the mission, was present and delivered an address. Rev. DeWall presided at the service but was unable to stand or walk without the aid of crutches.²

The hospital was opened to receive patients on November 5, 1928. A patient was admitted the same day and during the following year there was not a day when there were no patients. On November 7, 1928 Mrs. Howard N. Porterfield, wife of the pastor at Jack's Creek, was admitted to the hospital for an operation which was the first one to be performed in the new building.³

At the close of Dr. Heim's first year on the Mission field, he had traveled over 3,000 miles on mule back. Many of these miles were on dark rainy nights over dangerous mountain trails, often swimming swollen mountain streams. Still during this time he never lost one case and he treated over 5,000.⁴

¹P. H. Eller; Op. Cit.; p.126

²A. E. Lehman; Op. Cit.

³Ibid.

⁴Florence E. Sinniger; Op. Cit.; p.285

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MISSION

The majority of the people in the mountains of southeastern Kentucky had enjoyed little economic advancements over the past century and a half. They had lived in very humble dwellings with hardly the barest necessities of life. In most cases there was no cash income so all their food had to be gotten from the earth. Clothing was all handmade and usually very inadequate. These were the conditions of most of the people when the Red Bird Mission was first started.

The main purpose of the Mission was to save souls, but the need for economic and social improvement was imperative. Mrs. J. J. DeWall called attention to it in one of her reports.

But how can the soul be reached, though angels preach the gospel, if the body containing that soul is shivering and freezing cold? Or how can the mind be trained if children do not have sufficient clothing to come to school?¹

Most of the mountain people were poorly clothed because of very little income and the impossibility of getting to town to purchase clothing. Because of this, Rev. DeWall sent out a request to the church for used, durable clothing. The response to the request was very gratifying as hundreds of pounds of used clothing arrived from the constituency of the church across the nation. One of the great and rewarding works of the mission was to be able to distribute the clothing sent from friends of the Mission.² It was done in the name of Him who said, "I was naked and ye clothed me.....In as much as ye have done it,

¹Mrs. J. J. DeWall; "Preaching the Gospel with Deeds, Not Words," Evangelical Missionary World; III, 125

²Mrs. J. J. DeWall; "A Great Need Supplied," Evangelical Missionary World; II, 134

even unto the least of these my brethern, ye have done it unto me."

(Matthew 25:36 & 40) The clothing sent by the Evangelical people helped to make the gospel demonstrate its kind and charitable spirit.¹ Over a thousand needy people of the mountains received much needed warm clothing. Many were dressed better then they had ever been before.² All the clothing received was not given gratis to the people, but when possible a small sum was charged to those who were able to pay.³

The distribution of clothing was not the only charitable work done by the mission. Other forms of assistance were given by providing medical needs, food supplies, educational work and care for orphans.⁴

There were fourteen orphaned children living in the dormitory whose tuition and board were paid by scholarships, and part of their

¹Mrs. J. J. DeWall; Op. Cit.; p.126

²J. J. DeWall; "Clothing Furnished Several Thousand People by Red Bird Mission," Evangelical Missionary World; II, p.91

³Mrs. J. J. DeWall; Op. Cit.; p.126

⁴J. J. DeWall; "A Stranger Taken In," Evangelical Missionary World; I, 284,285. "Felix appeared one chilly, rainy day in oversized worn out overalls and an old waist of his grandmothers. He wandered around the school during the day and in the evening Rev. DeWall found him sitting in front of the little store. It was still raining. He had absolutely no place to lay his head. 'The foxes have holes.....I have no where to lay my head.' Rev. DeWall took him in, bathed him, cut his hair, clothed him and fed him. The United Church of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania took his support of \$10 per month to keep him in school. Felix is just one of many of the same kind."

clothing was supplied from the boxes sent by the churches in the north. There were eight boys and six girls in this group. Some of these children had one parent living but in every case they were not properly cared for, as the parent could not support the family.¹

The fact that the late Henry Ford owned approximately 250,000 acres of land in the Red Bird area contributed to raising the economic standards of the people. Some of them were tenants on the Ford property and were directly connected with the Mission. This helped to bring roads and railroads into many parts of the mountains.²

The primary social improvement of the mountain people was evidenced through the destruction of the "moonshine stills." At the time of the dedication of the Beech Fork work, a prominent citizen of Bell County said to Rev. Neibel:

I am a Baptist, but I want to commend the great work your mission is doing, its influence has effected several counties. It has effected our courts, lessening to an appreciable degree the number of criminal cases.³

It was primarily the improving of the economic and social conditions of the people that helped the missionary endeavor advance as rapidly as it did.

¹Elaine Gobin; "Our Orphans," Evangelical Missionary World; II, 131,132

²H. Blake Masters; "A Trip to Jack's Creek, Kentucky," Evangelical Missionary World; III, 465

³B. H. Neibel; Op. Cit.; p.400

THE DEATH OF REV. J. J. DEWALL

The leadership of Superintendent J. J. DeWall was terminated by his sudden death on September 23, 1928. After serving faithfully in this capacity for seven years, Rev. DeWall received his higher summons at the age of forty-two years. Even though Rev. DeWall was responsible for much of the advancement that had been made and had carried the Mission over some of its greatest hurdles, there was still much to be done. His passing shocked and grieved the entire Evangelical Church, as well as the mountain people. He was buried in an humble grave on the mountain side he loved so well.

He radiated a Christian spirit which was contagious, and continued long after his body was laid away on the hillside overlooking the Beverly Mission. The founder of this work became a great tradition which long lingered on through the years, giving inspiration in moments of indecision and bewilderment,¹

After his passing, Mrs. DeWall chose to stay at the Mission and was put in charge of the distribution of clothing and the teaching of music in the school.²

SUMMARY

Another great missionary endeavor was started by the United Evangelical Church on home soil. It was only through careful planning and hard labor by many faithful men and women that the Mission passed

¹P. H. Eller; Op. Cit.; p. 128-129

²Mrs. E. A. Fogg; From a Scrapbook of Clippings.

the trials of the first years of successful existence. Only through the combined planning of evangelistic, educational, medical, economic and social work was the Mission able to meet completely the needs of the mountain people. Not one of these phases could have been successful if carried on by itself.

Although the work in this area was by no means easy, it was made less difficult by the fact that there was a large constituency throughout the Evangelical Church that was praying for it. Many helped answer their own prayers through contributions and definite action to encourage and advance the work in Kentucky. One such group, the primary instigators of the work, was the Women's Missionary Society of the United Evangelical Church.

At the first general joint meeting with the Evangelical Association, the following resolution was adopted: "The support of all Missionaries of the southern mountain work."¹

¹"From the proceedings of the General Joint Conference," Evangelical Missionary World; I; 28

CHAPTER III

THE WORK UNDER SUPT. A. E. LEHMAN

CHAPTER III

THE WORK UNDER SUPERINTENDENT A. E. LEHMAN

THE APPOINTMENT OF SUPT. LEHMAN

The passing of Rev. DeWall proved to be a serious problem for the Board of Missions. It left the Mission without authoritative leadership. The Board of Missions gave the executive committee of the Mission the authority to act as managers until the office could be filled. Rev. E. M. Miller, the principal of the Red Bird School, was the chairman of this committee. They met weekly to discuss the work and progress of the Mission. The Board of Missions appointed a committee of three who were charged with special supervision of the Mission at this time. It consisted of Bishop Maze, C. H. Stauffacher and George E. Epp. They made two extended trips to Red Bird to help in the supervision of the work.¹

The greatest task of the board at this time was to find a man qualified to take the superintendency of the Mission. Certain qualities were needed in the man who would be appointed to this office. He must be a man of strong personality, leadership qualities, ability to represent the Kentucky Mission in the church and have a co-operative spirit. Such a man was found in Rev. A. E. Lehman. He had spent twelve years as a missionary in China and had returned to the United States in 1927 because of political and military disturbances there.²

¹George E. Epp; "The New Superintendent of the Kentucky Mountaineer Mission," Evangelical Missionary World; p.172

²Ibid.; p.173

His experience in Mission work helped to qualify him for this position.¹ After returning to the United States, Rev. Lehman served as pastor of the Evangelical Church at Tacoma, Washington.² On April 10, he was appointed as Superintendent of Red Bird Mission.³

THE EVANGELISTIC MISSION

The evangelistic emphasis was presented in several ways, all of which brought effective results. The weekly emphasis was illustrated by way of a typical Sunday on the Red Bird.

The dormitory life began with a quiet hour, a real inspiration to all. Following this the students went to the dining room where they offered their thanks for a fine breakfast. While everyone was seated around the tables they had their family worship. This was usually led by one of the students, but on Sunday one of the teachers was in charge. At nine thirty the church bell rang, which meant that Sunday School would start in one-half hour. By ten o'clock the basement worship room was filled with children, and the other classes were also well attended. Following the class sessions, all of the classes went to the sanctuary where each class gave a lesson thought or verse. During the worship hour, Rev. Lehman brought an inspirational message. After the noon meal some of the students, who had gone home for the week-end, began to

¹P. H. Eller, History of Evangelical Missions; p.129

²George E. Epp; Op. Cit; p.173

³Ibid.; p.173

return to the dormitories. At two forty five some of them took part in the vesper service at the Hospital. This was a service of praise and prayer, with a short message. The evening meal was again served in the dining room. After this, some of the students prepared their questions or topics for the young peoples league meeting. The league meetings provided a splendid training program for them. After the evening service the young people of the community had the privilege of spending some time in the library with the dormitory students and some of the staff. After a short time the bell rang and they left for their homes or rooms.

Sunday's were full days, but the students and staff alike enjoyed the evangelistic emphasis of the day and "Rejoiced in it."¹

Sunday's were days of evangelistic emphasis more than other days of the week. However, one of the most profitable avenues to reach the parents was through the children. It was also through the children that the future possibilities of the Mission were secured. They had their own prayer groups and story times. A Catechism class was held at Jack's Creek for the children.² As the work was carried on with the children, they in turn would carry their enthusiasm home to their parents.

The feelings of the staff at Red Bird toward evangelistic ef-

¹Anna Speicher; "A Sunday on the Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; p.401

²Anna Speicher; "Workings of the Missions Among Children," Evangelical Missionary World; p.419

forts were summed up in the words of Rev. Weibel:

The Kentucky field joins with others to say that there may be no more worlds of land to conquer, but there is a world of souls to save.¹

With this view in mind, many revivals were held.

Each of the out stations, as well as Beverly, held evangelistic meetings for a week or two at a time. To attract added interest in these meetings, much work was done among the children. Through them many parents came to the meetings and were saved.

A meeting was held at Jack's Creek in the spring of 1931 by the pastor, Rev. Howard W. Porterfield. In the first week and a half, twenty-two souls found their way to the altar for forgiveness of sin. Twenty of these were first time decisions. On the final Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Rev. Lehman was there to be in charge of the services and to bring the messages. On Friday night there were 110 present with five saved. On Saturday two more were saved and on Sunday morning five souls found their peace with God. A total of thirty-four souls were won to Christ during the meeting. After the close of the meetings the common comment heard was "we never saw nor heard it like this before."²

In the fall of 1934 another evangelistic meeting was conducted with Rev. Tim Miller, a singing evangelist. This was the Millers' sec-

¹Roscoe E. Weibel; "Rich in Opportunities," Evangelical Missionary World; April, 1930; VIII; 134

²Howard W. Porterfield; "A New Day Dawns at Jack's Creek," Evangelical Missionary World; April; 1931; IX; 133

ond series of meetings at Red Bird. The students greeted them with the chorus "Let The Beauty of Jesus Be Seen in Me." The Millers' had taught them the chorus during their previous campaign. The meeting consisted of nine services with seekers at the altar at nearly every one.¹

One of the outstanding evangelistic services ever held at Beverly up to this time, was in January of 1935. Rev. F. G. Kuebler, from Indiana, was the evangelist. Urgent prayer requests were sent out to the churches of the area for special prayer for the young people. The day of the revival came on the last Sunday in January. Following the sermon eight came to the altar seeking salvation. At the evening service, more came seeking. Student prayer groups were organized and held each evening in the two dormitories. The students took turns as leaders. They read a Bible verse, made a short comment and then time was spent in prayer. They came voluntarily to the prayer groups and to the services and entered into each one with great earnestness. Many had been praying for a great revival and God answered prayer. Fifty-one came to the altar during the course of the meeting. Many of these were first time decisions. Others came to renew their faith. All of the thirty-seven dormitory girls but one were seeking to follow Christ. Twenty-three of the thirty-three dormitory boys had confessed Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Indeed God did work in Red Bird.²

¹Mrs. A.E.Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; December, 1934; XII; 404

²Mrs. A.E.Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; January, 1935; p.4

The following year it seemed that Satan reigned during a revival. Christians were praying but there were very few decisions. Toward the close of the meeting, with special emphasis on prayer, God's glory reigned supreme. On the last night twenty-five bowed at the altar. Again revival was in evidence at Beverly.¹

Another form of evangelistic effort was the one night evangelistic campaign. One such service was held when Rev. Porterfield and Rev. Lehman visited Double Creek, twenty-five miles below Beverly on the Red Bird. The people had been urging and planning for a service. Eighty were present in the little school house on a Sunday morning. It was the first service held in that place for five or six years. God again blessed in the service. This area was thickly populated for a mountain area and afforded many opportunities. The sad realization was that the Mission was not able to establish a permanent work there.²

Regularly scheduled evangelistic services were not the only opportunities. Other services that brought excellent opportunities for evangelistic preaching among the mountain people were the funeral and baptismal services. A funeral service was usually conducted about a year following the burial. It was more of a memorial service. Those who were not in the habit of going to church were usually present for these services. The emphasis of the Evangelistic preaching presented

¹Evelyn Custer; "A Year at Red Bird," May, 1936; Evangelical Missionary World; p.159,160

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; July, 1932; p. 268,279

the claims of Christ in a straight forward, fervent manner, portraying Him as the Saviour from sin.¹

It was the custom of the Red Bird staff to hold at least one protracted evangelistic meeting each year. One such effort was the pre-communion week of services held by Rev. Lehman in the first week of March, 1933. These meetings were well attended and four students bowed at the altar. In this particular series of services Rev. Lehman tried to lead the students and adults into a deeper meaning and realization of what communion was and is for the individual. On Sunday morning Rev. Miller conducted the communion service which proved a grand climax to the week of meetings.² On the closing Sunday evening of this meeting the young people had charge of the entire service. After the preliminaries of the service, a pageant was presented entitled "The Challenge of the Cross." As a result of this, two students publically consecrated their lives more fully to God.³

Evangelism was not effected by the nations economy. Yet indirectly it seemed to increase when the economy was at its lowest. When the great depression came to the United States in the early thirty's, it also came to Red Bird. Conversions increased even though the ability to supply the pulpits decreased. Because of the great depression, no pastor was stationed at Beech Fork for two years.

¹Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; July, 1932; p.268,269

²Louella Ruby; "The Cross Brings its Challenge to Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; June, 1933; p.186,187

³Ibid.; p.187

Miss Goben and Miss Dimmick carried on the work. Preaching services were held every two weeks when a supply pastor came from Beverly. It was during these days that many of the young people, whose lives had been changed, ably assisted in the worship services.¹

As the depression came to a close, the nation soon found itself in the throws of a world conflict. But the hand of God continued to work on the Red Bird. Souls were saved and the churches grew because evangelism was the main emphasis of the Mission.

THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION

The educational phase of the mission which progressed under the leadership of Rev. J.J. DeWall continued to advance following the appointment of Rev. A.E. Lehman. The Mission Board continued to make appointments to the fields where workers were badly needed. In April of 1930, Miss Alice M. Kruse of Clay Center, Nebraska was appointed to the teaching staff at Red Bird High School. The same year brought the appointment of Miss Misdred Paul, of Johnstown, Pennsylvania, as "house mother" to be in charge of the girls dormitory.² In 1932, Miss Joyce Plaxton of Millington, Michigan was appointed to the Jack's Creek Station when a vacancy appeared there. She had planned to go to Japan but depleted missionary funds of the church made it impossible.³

¹Vera G. Stull, "In Kentucky Land," Evangelical Missionary World; July, 1933; p. 219

²"Recently Appointed Missionaries," Evangelical Missionary World; June, 1930; p. 215

³Mrs. B.F. Zuehl, "New Missionary at Jack's Creek," Evangelical Missionary World; Oct., 1932; p. 410

In 1931 the curriculum for the school at Beverly was altered to provide for a three year Junior High course and a three year Senior High course. By 1935 there were 374 students enrolled in the mission schools. Applications for 113 had to be rejected due to lack of space.¹

The mission teachers played an important part in the educational organization as set up by the Kentucky State Board of education. The mission teachers were paid by the state, hence they received the same salary as the county teachers. Therefore, due to their calling, they were under certain obligations to give more to the students than they could receive in the county schools. Throughout the entire school system the mission teachers made a very definite effort to prepare the student to meet the problems, temptations and doubts which would come to them once they were out of the direct influence of the church and school.²

One of the real situations which caused the mission teachers to do their very best came when they realized the majority of the boys and girls would never be able to attend college or follow vocations outside the mountains. They endeavored to meet this challenge by training young girls in home making for better living in the homes they expected some day to establish. They planned a mountain home that was not beyond the means of any mountain couple.

¹P. H. Eller; History of Evangelical Missions; The Evangelical Press; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; 1942

²Elaine Gobin; "Working of Missions- Educational," Evangelical Missionary World; Nov., 1931; p.417,418

Four girls lived in the home at a time. They were taught how to sew, darn, patch, remodel old garments, cook well balanced meals, learn the care of babies and general home supervision and management. One girl who had had the privilege of this special training made a remark which was typical of the feeling of many:

Why I would rather loose any other part of my school experience and training than part with the help I received in the practice house in school.¹

The staff was vitally interested in the girls and desired that they would have the best homes possible where Christ would be honored and revered.²

Through the work the school was doing it was able to bring influences beyond the boundries of the mission. In the spring of 1934 the mission was greatly pleased when the High School Glee Club received an invitation from the leading citizens of Pineville to present a musical there. They practiced daily under the direction of Miss Alice Strutz.³ Numerous opportunities were opened to the school to enter district contests. The University of Kentucky sponsored a contest in which over 500 students from nine schools entered in debating, oratory, music, public speaking and dramatics. Of five Red Bird students competing, two of these won third places, one in oratory and one in poetic interpretation.⁴

¹Mrs. E.M. Miller; Evangelical Missionary World; Oct., 1933; p. 309

²Mrs. E.M. Miller; "The Need of the Mountains-Trained Home Mothers"; Evangelical Missionary World; Oct. 1933; p.309

³Mrs. A.E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; April 1934; p.116

⁴Mrs. A.E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; May 1934; p.141

One of the students received the honor of representing the school at the State Oratorical Contest in Lexington. He ranked forth among the seventeen contestants.¹ The High School was a member of the state debating league and entered contests with other schools. In the spring of the year they entered the tournaments and usually scored very high.²

Other opportunities afforded for training were given when the students planned for commencement exercise, class day, the alumni banquet, senior class play and many other activities.³

The Mission was justly proud of the number of graduates they produced. In 1932 the graduating class numbered fifteen.⁴ Since the graduating classes were increasing in number each year this inspired the organization of an alumni association. Commencement became a homecoming for the former Red Bird graduates. After the alumni association was formed, each year a supper was held in the dormitory with the alumni in charge and the seniors as guests.⁵ The commencements always brought a sense of sadness because it meant losing some of the young people, whom the workers had grown to

¹Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; p. 197

²Alice M. Kruse; "Youth in Kentucky," Evangelical Missionary World; April, 1931; p. 132

³A.E. Lehman; "Commencement on the Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; May 1932; p.202

⁴Rosa J. Dimmick; "Reminiscences," Evangelical Missionary World; July 1932; p. 274

⁵"Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; June 1936; p. 197

love and appreciate. However the schools continued to grow and there were others to take the place of the ones who had reached the mark for higher attainment.

At the close of each year most of the students returned to their mountain homes to help plant and hoe the corn and work in the gardens. A few of the boys and girls, most of whom had no homes, remained for the summer to help do the farm, garden and repair work, also the cleaning and the canning. The boys were kept busy tending the school crops, repairing telephone lines and other work. The girls cleaned the dormitories, the church and the hospital, washing the bedding for over sixty beds, besides doing the regular work of cooking and canning.¹

Some of the people of the denomination had the idea that the teachers had a real vacation when school was out. They wrote asking what the teachers did during their spare time. School was out the middle of April so that the young people could help with the work at home on the farms. However, it resumed again the latter part of July. During this time the teachers were busy with council meetings, which began as soon as school was out. Then there were Mother-Baby clinics that had to be attended. The teachers prepared dinner for the mothers at noon and also a talk for the afternoon meeting. Choir practice was held each Tuesday and Friday evenings.

¹Mrs. A.E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; July 1934; p. 205

A leader was needed to assist for each Sunday evening Christian Endeavor meeting. Vesper services were conducted each Sunday afternoon at three and prayer meeting each Wednesday evening. Rehearsals had to be arranged for those who gave special music or other special features at each of the services. All of these duties were the responsibilities of the teachers during the summer months. Added to these were the regular routine tasks of mending and sewing for those who were planning to go away for a few weeks of summer school training. The boys and girls who stayed at the mission for the summer had to be supervised in the work that they were doing. Occasionally came a day of reward in the form of a picnic, games in the evening, a taffy pull, or a trip one and one half miles down the creek to "panther rock" where the water was deep enough for a dip.

This was how their "vacation" was spent and the teachers of the mission school in Kentucky knew they would not exchange with anyone their "good ole summer time."¹

There were some very worthwhile results accomplished through the educational work of the Mission. Since the organization of the Mission the greatest emphasis was placed on the development of Christian leadership combined with the educational opportunities possible. Many graduates of the school turned to their own communities for teaching opportunities. By 1932 about ninety per cent of the graduates were attending or had completed college. One was appointed Superintendent of Schools

¹Alice M. Kruse; "The Good Ole Summer Time," Evangelical Missionary World; July, 1934; p.202,203

in Bell County and others were principals of school.¹ The school was very proud of one of the first graduates, Lester Knuckles, for he had become State Representative and worked hard for better school laws for the mountain districts, also for laws promoting peace.²

A "moonlight school" was taught by another former Red Bird graduate. Forty or more grown men who wished to learn to read and write and figure came to this night school between the hours of five and nine. The Government relief committee paid the teacher.³

One of the most satisfying results of the training and influence given the students by the staff workers, was that a majority of the young people consecrated themselves to Christian work. A young man from Jack's Creek fully consecrated his life to Christ and prepared for the Christian ministry. Others desired college training for larger fields of service in nursing, medicine, law and teaching. All who went out from the Red Bird Mission had a higher aim and purpose in life.⁴

¹Rosa J. Dimmick; Op. Cit.; p. 273

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; April, 1934; p.116

³Ibid.; p.117

⁴Mrs. J. J. DeWall; "Some Results of a Decade on the Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; November, 1931; p.414

THE MEDICAL MISSION

From the beginning the medical missionary felt that he was primarily a servant of Christ, and secondarily a physician. At the close of Dr. Heim's first year, his report to the Board of Missions emphasized this philosophy.

The medical missionary is first a missionary and then a doctor. The dominant note of his work is spiritual, rather than humanitarian. His motive is to heal the soul as well as the body. The whole program of medical missions must be subservient to the evangelistic appeal. If it undertook less than this, it would be reducing a high calling to the low level of a secular profession.

No pill without a prayer, no operation without co-operation with God and first calling upon Him for his guidance. In the office, at the clinic, in the hospital, the nursery, lumber camps, the school rooms, in the homes and the rough and long weary miles of travel on horseback, we have tried to mix evangelism and medicine in such doses that would not only heal the body but bring light and life to the soul.¹

His faith in God had carried him through many near disasters, and contact with diseases. One evening the surrounding area of the mission had had a hard rain and the night was black as pitch. Dr. Heim had been out across the mountains and the workers were beginning to wonder if he would be able to return. The creeks were quite swollen from the heavy rains. Around one o'clock at night they saw the flicker of a light and could tell by the movement it was carried on mule back. The stubbornness of the mule and the ever watchful eye of God saved them from going over an embankment. Once again the doctor

¹Dr. H.S. Heim; "Workings of Missions-Medical," Evangelical Missionary World; Nov. 1931; p.416,417

returned home safely.¹

Dr. Heim realized the need of medical care for the mountain people. It was heart-breaking to see the tragic results of "The Great White Plague" among the youth. This was better known as tuberculosis and was an insidious and relentless destroyer. The germ of T.B. made its attack upon its victim early in life through the kisses and caresses of an affectionate but afflicted parent, relative or friend. If it were as sudden in its manifestations after exposure as measles, the people would not have exposed themselves or their children unnecessarily. But because it was so deceptive and held in restraint for varying lengths of time, whole families were exposed and became potential victims of the disease. The most fertile field for this dreaded disease was among the poor. Practically all of the mountain people were poor, so consequently it made them an easy prey for it.

Due to the increasing economic needs, the health of the mountaineer was made all the more precarious. The food of the average family lacked the essential vitamins and protective qualities to resist disease. The homes lacked adequate sunlight and sleeping rooms. The men feared being found with signs of the disease therefore they would not seek medical aid early enough to effect a cure. Some clung to fatalistic ideas; others were indifferent and refused to co-operate in carrying out a health program where treatments were given in the homes.

While calling on some of the afflicted families, the doctor found many sad situations. In a poorly, built, one room cabin lay a

¹Mrs. H. S. Heim; "The Diary of a Doctor's Wife," Evangelical Missionary World; August, 1932; p. 311

young women on a bed in the corner. The look of youth had long faded, evidenced by her feverish, anxious expression. She was in the final stage of the disease and only nineteen years of age.

In another home they found a mother of ten children waging a brave but losing battle against the disease.

In fighting T.B., the doctors engaged the whole-hearted support of the State Department under the direction of Dr. L. E. Smith, a retired missionary from Africa. All exposed children were given the tuberculin test. A survey of home conditions was made, and suggestions for improvements were given. Visits were made to the homes of suspects at three month intervals. Clinics at the hospital were held twice a year, where examinations were made and x-rays taken. The active cases were admitted to the T.B. ward. Surgery and artificial pneumothorax were offered the cases requiring such. A general health program was carried out to improve living conditions and to build stronger bodies.

They met with disappointing as well as gratifying results. Nevertheless, they wished to continue to make it possible for the youth of the mountains to have the same chance to fight this destroyer as others had.¹

Other clinics were set up for the prevention and spreading of the disease, and to educate the people of the mountains on how to care for the minor illnesses.

¹E. J. Knoph; "The Destruction That Wasteth at Noonday," Evangelical Missionary World; January, 1933; p. 9,10

In 1927, a Red Bird Mother's and Babies Clinic was organized. At these clinics the babies were weighed and measured and their normal weight determined. They were given medical attention and periodical physical examinations by the doctors. Any necessary treatment was given, and the correction of existing physical defects made or the individuals were encouraged to have them made. All infants and children of pre-school age were immunized against the diseases: typhoid, diptheria, and smallpox. They tried to safe-guard the child in his early years and to have him in the best possible condition when he would be ready for school. When the clinic first opened there were seven in regular attendance, with an average monthly attendance of four.¹ In April of 1932 there were forty-eight babies registered at the clinic and by January of 1934 they had enrolled 111 infants and children under the age of six years. The average monthly attendance totaled forty-one babies and twenty-five mothers.²

In the spring of 1931 a tonsil clinic was held at the Hospital. Dr. Riddle from Harlan, Kentucky, came to assist Dr. Heim. They removed the tonsils from thirty-two patients in one day. Sixteen of the patients stayed overnight at the hospital. The rest were allowed to return to their dormitory rooms.³

A clinic, to be conducted in all the mission schools, was st-

¹Hazel A. Heim; "Opportunities For the Mothers of the Mountains," Evangelical Missionary World; 1928; p.136

²Ibid.; p.136

³Ruby Swisher; "At the Red Bird Mission Hospital," Evangelical Missionary World; March, 1931; p.100,101

arted and became an annual affair. Each year many of the new children had to be coaxed to let the doctor examine them. At one particular clinic held at Jack's Creek school, blue ribbons were awarded those who met the requirements of the Kentucky Blue Ribbon Standard. This meant the immunization against Typhoid, Diphtheria, smallpox, no correctable physical defects, normal weight and good health habits. After the examination of the students, five ribbons were awarded. A short health program was given by the children and the physician spoke to the parents urging better methods of sanitation in the home.¹

The clinics proved to be a great asset to the mission and to the mountain people. It seemed something happened each day that strengthened the medical work. In 1929 Dr. Heim registered the Hospital with the American Medical Association. In 1930 two new nurses were appointed to the staff. Miss Ruby Swisher from Findley, Ohio and Miss Margaret Patterson from Wheatland, Illinois.² By 1932 there were enough nurses on the staff to require a superintendent of nurses. Miss Rice was appointed to this position. Because of conditions, circumstances warranted the appointment of another doctor. In 1931, Dr. and Mrs. E. J. Knoph arrived on the field and proved to be a great help to Dr. Heim.³

In the early 1930's the Mission began to feel the pangs of the depression. It played great havoc with the medical work. At the quart-

¹Miriam Faust; "Jack's Creek School Clinic," Evangelical Missionary World; May, 1932; p. 195,196

²C. H. Stauffacher; "New Nurses on the Red Bird," Evangelical Missionary World; April, 1930; p.124,125

³P.H.Eller; Op. Cit.

erly Council Meeting which met in June of 1933, a feeling of sadness pervaded the workers as they had to make plans to close the hospital to some. It was not easy to make a choice as to who would be admitted and who would not.¹ Financial conditions were growing worse and, as the funds for operating the Mission became less, it became necessary to release some of the workers.

In the fall of 1933, Dr. and Mrs. Heim left for a two year leave of absence. The lumer train was not running the morning they left so they departed in true mountain style on mules, suitcases held in front or dangling down in feed sacks on each side of the mule. They took their big German police dog, Brownie, with them. But Adam, the faithful mule, stayed on and carried on the good work over the same old mountain trails under the ministering hands of Miss Rice.²

In April of 1934 the Mission was fortunate to acquire the services of a volunteer housekeeper for the hospital. Miss Walser, as well as two nurses, came in answer to a request for volunteers who would be willing to give a year's service for board only.³ In the fall of the same year, Dr. C. H. Kaiser of Hillsboro, Kansas spent nearly two weeks at the Mission helping Dr. Knoph with ear, nose and throat clinics. Nineteen pairs of tonsils were removed, twenty-eight patients were cared for and 450 office treatments were given. Also at this time

¹Mrs. A. E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; p.191

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; p. 323

³Mrs. A.E. Lehman; "Red Bird Notes," Evangelical Missionary World; November, 1934; p. 404

another successful Caesarean operation was performed. Later Dr. Knoph spent two days at Bright Shade out-station fourteen miles away. Of the eighty-five patients treated there, four of them needed major operations. Four other distant points in the same territory were just as needy and depended on Dr. Knoph for all medical help. He had responsibilities equalling two or three doctors.¹

How grateful the needy people of the mountains were for the Hospital. One woman operated on couldn't stop singing the praises of Dr. Knoph and the nurses. She told the people that the doctor could take chunks of flesh and bones and sew them up and "they will grow, almost." While she recovered from her operation, Dr. Knoph performed a Caesarean operation on a young mother. The mother told of how the doctor prayed before the operation, taking his patients to the gates of heaven for healing.²

Sunday afternoon services were held at the hospital where the patients could enjoy the songs, prayers and the message through their open door ways. They received the word as a great blessing while lying on beds of sickness. Back home in the hollows they would talk of the wonderful hospital, "most like Heaven," for months afterwards.³

By 1936 the depression had subsided and the Mission began to regain its normal aspect. On October 23, health day was held at Jack's

¹Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; November, 1934; p.404

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; February, 1934; p. 117

³Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Op. Cit.; p.117

Creek. Assisting Dr. Knoph and Miss Rice were Dr. Yurner and Mrs. Cornett of the Leslie County welfare. Following the examinations, the children gave three plays on health. In spite of the many inoculations given, it proved to be a profitable and enjoyable time for all.¹

After spending seven years of consecrated service at the Mission, Dr. and Mrs. Knoph left Red Bird.² Dr. Raymond Nelson was appointed by the Board of Missions to replace Dr. Knoph. He arrived in the summer of 1936 and stayed until his resignation in 1940.³

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MISSION

The great depression of the 1930's was a blow to the economy of the Red Bird Mission as well as the nation. Because of it, some of the work of the Mission had to be curtailed. Although it seemed the work should be going ahead students were being turned away.⁴

In 1930 the Board of Missions had to reduce the mission's appropriations by \$4,000. This hampered the work but the staff workers assumed part of this reduction. They subscribed \$2400 out of

¹Edna E. Fritsch; "Health Day at Jack's Creek;" Evangelical Missionary World; January, 1936; p.10,11

²Dr. E. J. Knoph; "Percussion Notes of Kentucky Mountaineer Missions," Evangelical Missionary World; June, 1936; p.190

³Kansas Circle Activities; Evangelical Missionary World; August, 1936; p.269

⁴Rosa J. Dimmick; Op. Cit.; p. 273,274

their reduced incomes so that the work would not suffer too much. The salaries of the workers were reduced, without complaint, from twenty-one to forty-six percent.¹ Even the reduced salaries were not enough to offset the deficits of the missionary enterprises of the Evangelical church. Four faithful workers had to be withdrawn from the field. All the workers as well as the Board of Missions, felt it was a time of standing still, if not actual retreat. All were willing to sacrifice so the work could be maintained as nearly as possible on a normal scale. In June of 1933 the salaries had not been paid for two months and there were no promises of definite income for the future.²

The workers were effected by the depression but not nearly as much as the people of the mountains. In good times there was little money among the mountaineers but now there was none at all. There was a great demand for clothing and in the winter of 1931 only half as much came to the Mission as usual. Children's clothing was needed most of all and it was they who suffered most severely from the cold.³

Crops were good during the first two summers of the depression but there was no sale for the commodities. Therefore families

¹P. H. Eller; Op. Cit.; p.129

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; 1933; p.191

³"Used Clothing for Kentucky," Evangelical Missionary World; p. 412

with plenty of food were unable to secure enough money for clothing.¹ When the people came to the Mission for clothing they seldom were able to pay in cash. Because of this the Mission operated on a bartering basis and accepted eggs, chickens, potatoes and other produce in exchange for the clothing. Since the Mission was unable to produce all of the foodstuffs it needed, this was a boost to their budget as well as a help to the people. Only in the cases of great poverty was the clothing given away.² Once in awhile there were those who were able to pay in cash. This money went into the budget appropriations for the Mission.³

To add to the despair of the economic welfare of the Mission, Rev. Porterfield's house and all its contents burned in the night during a severe thunder storm. Only a few dresses and some bedding were saved. The fire awakened the family from a sound sleep and they had only enough time to escape through a window. A mountain family very kindly took them into their home until temporary shelter could be secured.⁴ The incident prompted the Women's Missionary Society of the Evangelical Church to begin saving Lincoln pennies for the rebuilding of the home of Rev. and Mrs. Porterfield. Even though times

¹"Used Clothing for Kentucky", Evangelical Missionary World; November, 1931; p. 411

²A. E. Lehman; Op. Cit., p. 412

³"Used Clothing for Kentucky", Op. Cit.; p. 411

⁴Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; p. 268

were hard for everyone, there was still the willingness to share. Some of the Missionary Societies throughout the church had miscellaneous showers to help replenish the many needed articles lost by the Porterfields.¹

The depression proved to be a time of testing the economic status of the Mission. However, everyone was willing to help and sacrifice so the work could be carried on. During the summer vacations some of the students stayed at the mission to help with the work. The girls did cooking and housework at the dormitories and the hospital. The boys were kept busy with road building, gardening and general repair work. One of the high school boys acted as Sunday School Superintendent.²

It was discovered that the most effective help that could be given to the mountain people was to teach them to help themselves. This was done during these years with the help of Federal Relief Aid. A National Youth Administration Conference was held at Jack's Creek. The girls met in a school house where they were taught sewing, essentials of good cooking and the care of babies and children. This program enabled the girls to make clothes for themselves and their families. They were required to put in forty-four hours a month

¹Mrs. J.S. Stamm; "Lincoln Pennies to build New Missionary Home,"
p.5 Evangelical Missionary World

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World;
p.268

and were paid seven dollars for it. The boys had a program with similar work. They were taught improvement of buildings and grounds, planting of trees and seeds and many other practical things. They were required to put in the same amount of time as the girls and were paid the same for it.¹

Another factor which helped the economic condition was the reopening of the lumber company which had been closed for over a year. This meant jobs and food and clothes for a number of families.²

Regardless of the many heartaches and trials of life during the depression, the mountaineer people possessed the rare ability to look beyond their hardships and enjoy themselves. Frequent social gatherings during these hard times helped them to weather the financial storm.

It was during this time that a program was inaugurated to have a social hour for the students every Saturday evening. There also were literary programs presented. These consisted of plays, debates, readings, orations and musical numbers. Sometimes there were games and refreshments.³ On one of these Saturday evenings,

¹Joyce Plaxton; Evangelical Missionary World; July, 1936, p.228, 229

²Mrs. A . E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; June, 1933; p. 221

³Alice M. Kruse; "Youth in Kentucky," Evangelical Missionary World; April, 1931; p.132

the students who attended the "Moonlight School," furnished the program.¹ This group kept a very appreciative audience of about 300 all laughing with their humorous songs, recitations and antics. A new world had opened to many of the middle aged parents who had never had the opportunity to develop their talents.²

In June of 1935 one of the greatest social events to occur at the Mission was the first wedding ceremony ever conducted at the Red Bird Church. Miss Alice Strutz, who had been teaching in the High School for six years, and Perle Estridge, who graduated from the Red Bird High school with the class of 1930, and later from Western Union College, were united in marriage. For awhile they continued their work in the mountains.³ Then they went to a Presbyterian school in the mountains but later returned to Red Bird where he is now principal of the school.

A survey of the community of Beverly was conducted to assist in ascertaining the needs of the people in future planning of the Mission work. This was done primarily for the benefit of the Beverly station. It covered a radius of three miles with the center being the Beverly station. This way no mountains had to be crossed. The following information was sought in the survey: age of each member of

¹This was a night school conducted for parents who had never had the privilege of attending school.

²Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes; Evangelical Missionary World; p. 116

³Mrs. A. E. Lehman; Red Bird Notes, Evangelical Missionary World; August, 1935; p. 301,302

the family, literacy, Sunday School attendance, church affiliation, number of children, those attending school, the amount of land and forest owned and if the family had a cash income. They also noted the home conditions and special family needs.¹ The results of this survey helped the Mission to categorize the needs of each family and determine in what way they could be met.

The Mission grew in many ways and Rev. Lehman pointed out some of these in his tenth annual report. In 1921 the property of the Mission consisted of one small dwelling and a few acres of land. By 1931 there were twenty-eight workers and the property was valued at \$143,850. At the time of this report there were seven congregations with a combined membership of 299. A great spiritual impression was made upon the communities and upon individuals. A man born and raised in the mountains who held an office in the State and later in a Federal post in Washington, D.C., said this about the work:

It is almost incredible that such a stupendous and far reaching work could be accomplished in such an apparently unpromising section in so short a time.²

At the close of another ten years of progress, there were five organized congregations with a total combined membership of 439 and 31 staff members.³

It seemed the Mission did not show a large gain during the

¹Lydia B. Rice; "A Message From the Cumberlands," Evangelical Missionary World; October, 1932; p. 392

²A. E. Lehman; "Item From Annual Report of the Kentucky Mission," Evangelical Missionary World; November, 1931; p. 413

³P. H. Eller; Op. Cit.; p. 129

1930's but it was building confidence and becoming more established in the communities where work was being done.

Due to World War II the economic advancement was brought to a minimum during the last five years of Rev. Lehman's superintendancy. It was impossible to do many things in the way of building and maintainance work, due to lack of materials and money.

Even though there were no new churches organized and dedicated during his term of office, Rev. Lehman performed a magnificent task for Red Bird Mission.

Because of age and health he retired in 1946.

SUMMARY

The Red Bird Mission experienced many trying times during the superintendancy of Rev. Lehman. In the early years of his appointment the great depression left its scar there just as it had in many other places of the nation. Following this came World War II which continued to hinder the advancement of economic and material needs. During these years the power of God was never doubted. The faith of the Mission workers increased and they realized more than ever the needs of the mountain people. They sacrificed in many ways so that the work of the Mission could be carried on. Evangelism and Education were stressed. The Medical staff was busier than ever. Gradually financial conditions improved and they could see the advancement in all phases of Mission life. It was a real joy for the workers to walk hand in hand with God as they continued to serve Him among the people of the Kentucky mountains.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORK UNDER SUPT. JOHN W. BISCHOFF

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THE APPOINTMENT OF JOHN W. BISCHOFF

The retirement of Rev. A.E. Lehman made it necessary, once again, for the Board of Missions to seek a new man for the superintendency. They sought for the same qualifications they had in previous appointments. A man of strong personality, leadership qualities, ability to represent the Kentucky Mission in the church and have a co-operative spirit.

This time these qualifications were met by a man who was pastoring the church at Jack's Creek. After accepting the call, John W. Bischoff was appointed to the position in 1946.

Rev. Bischoff is presently serving as Superintendent of the Red Bird Mission.

THE EVANGELISTIC MISSION

It was fitting for Rev. Bischoff to begin his duties as Superintendent of the Mission in the year 1946 because that year closed twenty-five years of Christian service at Red Bird. The war had just recently ended and the Mission was looking forward with anticipation to new efforts under new and effective leadership.

Rev. Bischoff was faced with the task of leading the Mission into new areas of work and beginning another successful quarter century for the Master in the Kentucky Mountains.

Several new missionary families and individuals were appointed to fill many of the new areas desiring service which could not be filled during the war. Many communities were still untouched, and Rev. Bischoff realized what was ahead when he said:

The work of the past has been well done, but right before us the numerous opportunities for greater achievements continually challenge us.¹

One of the new Mission families was Rev. and Mrs. Arthur Russell. They were appointed to the Mill Creek station early in 1946. They were the first resident missionary family to supply this station.² At that time, Mill Creek was placed on the regular station status. A new parsonage was built at the time of their appointment. It was located next to the beautiful little white church. While the parsonage

¹John W. Bischoff; "Looking Ahead at the Red Bird," The World Evangel; October, 1946; XXIV; 15

²Mrs. Arthur Russell; "An Opportunity for Service," The World Evangel; July, 1946; XXIV; 14

was being built, the ministers family lived in an old store.¹

The work grew under effective leadership. In 1956 a youth fellowship was organized with thirteen members. One of the primary emphases of the church was to reach the young people. In organizing the Youth Fellowship, it was partially able to do so.²

A definite evidence of the concern of this new mission station for its young people and children was shown in the spring of 1958. It purchased a truck to provide transportation for the children and young people from their homes to the church. The truck traveled to two unchurched communities.³

In 1948 another needy work was begun in the Greasy Fork community. It was located in Leslie County, east of the Beech Fork center. The work was carried on here for two years without a residence for the pastor. In 1950 new living quarters for both pastor and teacher were built. The pastor taught in the one room school and carried on his work ministering to the spiritual needs of the people.⁴

Another station established during this time was at Middle Fork center, located five miles over the mountains from Beverly in Leslie

¹John W. Bischoff; Op. Cit.; p. 15

²"Let us Pray," The World Evangel; December, 1956; p.340

³"Let us Pray," The World Evangel; May; 1958; p. 162

⁴Our Kentucky Highland Missions; Department of Home Mission and Church Extension; 1952; p. 22,23

county. The work was begun in 1950. A parsonage was built in 1951.¹

The work was effectively carried out under the leadership of Rev. Roscoe Weibel. In 1955 a new chapel was dedicated. This marked a definite period of harvest and growth for the Kingdom.² In 1956 a congregation was organized with six charter members.³ The effectiveness of the work at this center was due primarily to witnessing and living daily according to the admonition "Let all things be done in love."⁴

Stoney Fork center was established in 1951 with a full time pastor. This center was located south of Beverly in Bell county. In 1952 a new parsonage was built for the pastor and his family. The work showed signs of progress and opportunities for advancement.⁵

The most recently established full time station is Beech Creek, located in Clay County.

The Phillips Fork church work began in the early years of the Mission, however it was discontinued due to the lack of funds, Mission personel and residents living in the community. In October, 1957, the people at Phillips Fork voted unanimously to hold regular weekly serv-

¹Ibid.

²"Let us Pray," The World Evangel; January, 1956; p. 10

³"Let us Pray," The World Evangel; August, 1956; p.201

⁴Mrs. Roscoe Weibel; "The Witness to the Good News," The World Evangel; March, 1955; p.85

⁵Our Kentucky Highland Mission; Op. Cit.; p.23

ices and to purchase new song books. This action was the result of a revival meeting and the interest was very encouraging. Rev. Raymond Bjork, music teacher in the Beverly school, was appointed to serve this field.¹

These points of contact have been made through much prayer and earnest sacrifice on the part of many. It was with prayerful determination that the work was carried on even in the most trying times. Justice Grammer expressed the feeling of many of the workers in the following statement:

With the high mountains and the narrow valleys of the Red Bird, there were no wide horizons, no place to look but up, so we learn and try to pass on to others the privilege and power of prayer.²

With the merging of the Evangelical church and the United Brethern in Christ Church in 1946, the Women's Missionary Society became the Women's Society of World Service of the Evangelical United Brethern Church. The Mission desired to have a W.S.W.S. in each of the local churches. In 1952 two new organizations were begun, one at Beech Fork and one at Lower Beech Fork.³

In September, 1955, the Kentucky Branch of the W.S.W.S. was organized during the provisional session of the Kentucky Conference. Dr. Janet Bilbert, Executive Secretary of the W.S.W.S., was present and

¹"Go Tell in on the Mountain," The World Evangel; February, 1957; p. 44

²"We Witness to the Grand News," Op. Cit.; p.86

³Mrs. George Surface; The World Evangel; October, 1952; p.278

conducted the organizational meeting. There were four societies from the Red Bird Mission area which previously were affiliated with the Indiana South Branch. Mrs. Harry Sinks was elected the first Branch President.¹ In the first two years, the branch society made a net gain of fifty-three members making a total membership of 183.²

Through the auxiliaries of the churches and the preaching of the word, men and women were brought to Christ. After making the decision to follow Christ, they had the desire to serve in any capacity in which they were able. One of these ways was demonstrated in the spring of 1955 when Rev. and Mrs. Bauman took their vacation. When they left, they hired a man who had been out of work for a year. He was to plant their garden. He had one daughter attending Red Bird High School, two children at home and a wife who was ill and in the hospital part of the time. When the Bauman's returned from their vacation they paid him for his services. He accepted the money, then returned it with these words:

I haven't had much time to give to the church lately, so I want you to take all of this and put it in the church building fund.³

This act represented real sacrifice, yet it expressed how much Red Bird Mission and God meant to him, his family and community.

¹Mrs. George Surface; "Kentucky Branch W.S.W.S. Organizes," The World Evangel; November, 1955; p. 317

²"A Good Record," The World Evangel; August, 1958; p. 241

³Mrs. M.E. Bauman; "Stony Fork Center," The World Evangel; October, 1955; p. 272

THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION

The educational department had made great progress since the beginning of the Mission. By this time the High School and the four grade schools were operating under the joint supervision of the County Boards of education and the Mission. All regulations for the public schools were observed. State requirements were not only met, but exceeded.¹ The dormitories were filled to capacity each year. Many applications had to be turned away. The outstation schools, Jack's Creek, Greasy Fork, and Beech Fork were experiencing co-operation as they had never seem before. The Board of Missions had been able to keep the teaching vacancies filled due to the call of God upon the individual.

In 1952 a special service was held in the Beverly church to pay tribute to Miss Anna Speicher who had retired at the end of twenty-four years of teaching in the Red Bird school. She came to Beverly in the pioneer days and introduced hundreds of boys and girls to the basic rudiments of knowledge. In addition she also introduced them daily to the stories of the Bible.

Although she was one of the "old Timers" on the staff, she always welcomed promising new methods and ideas for improvement.

Rev. Ira B. Wilson, Red Bird graduate and pastor of the Beverly Church at the time of Miss Speicher's retirement from active missionary service, expressed the thoughts of nearly everyone as he read these

¹Red Bird Mission, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Brochure from Beverly, Kentucky; 1955, p.6

words upon the occasion of the service honoring her just before she left the Mission.

Teacher, molder of our children's lives, as surely as any minister of the Gospel had been called to his task, you have been called to yours. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit,...." (John 15:18) These boys and girls, these young people, these father's and mother's, are the fruits of your labors. Many rise up and call you blessed. You have kindled a light in the heart of many young people. Your life will live on through the lives of those you have touched for your Master. God send us more of your kind to teach and train these precious ones we turn over to be taught, our children.¹

Many were saddened by the departure of Miss Speicher, yet God sent others who carried on in a similar spirit of dedication.

Through the years the schools continued to grow and advance. By 1952 the school properties at Beverly consisted of the two story building, a gymnasium and a maintenance shop. Each year progress was made for the advancement in the lives of the young people. The grade schools at Beverly, Jack's Creek, Beech Fork and Greasy Fork and the Red Bird High School were fully accredited by the state. There were strong departments in home economics for the girls and industrial arts for the boys. Many extra-curricular activities were provided. Learning was acquired by doing as well as studying. All the boarding students shared in the work program to help pay toward the expenses of board and room. Much of the cash provided for their expenses was provided in scholarships from interested individuals, Sunday Schools and Young People's groups.²

In 1954, the Mission was privileged to receive a donation from

¹Mrs. John Bischoff; "Tribute to Miss Speicher," The World Evangel; December, 1952; p.347

²Our Kentucky Highland Mission; Department of Home Missions and Church Extension; 1952; p. 17

Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, President of Berea College, Berea, Kentucky. Dr. Hutchins wanted this donation to benefit the mountain people so he decided to give it to Rev. Bischoff who could determine the appropriate use. After many hours of serious thought and prayer he was led to think in terms of a bookmobile. Through a bookmobile the mountain people would have access to clean, wholesome Christian literature; a bookmobile would reach the more isolated schools and homes in the area. God seemed to put his seal of approval on this new venture. They were able to purchase a 1954 Willys Jeep pick-up truck which was converted into a bookmobile.

Rev. Bischoff approached Miss Esther Elmer, the English teacher and Librarian of the High School, with the offer of becoming the "Bookmobile Lady." She had made considerable progress in learning to drive a jeep and becoming acquainted with the people of the mountains. Also her acquaintance with Library work would be of benefit. After much prayer she accepted the proposal.

Preparations began immediately. During July, August and September of that year they accumulated enough books to begin traveling on October thirteenth. The books were both second hand and new ones purchased with gifts sent in to the Mission for this purpose.¹

Through the years the books for the bookmobile have been provided by friends of the Mission and special funds which were contributed for this work. These books are for all ages and cover a majority of subjects. The most popular ones include Christian Novels, Bible stories, Horse and Dog stories, Biographies, Historical and Bib-

¹Personal Correspondence of Esther Elmer, Beverly, Kentucky, to the author, January 6, 1959

lical fiction, Mystery and Science. Others used frequently, but in smaller numbers are dictionary's, reference books, cookbooks, sports novels, poetry, Bible study, devotional books and conversation stories.¹

The Bookmobile Lady" visits twenty-one schools in three counties and sends books to two other schools, one of them in a fourth county. Only two of these schools are among those sponsored by the Evangelical United Brethern Church at Mission centers. More than 100 homes are served every three weeks. The bookmobile carries approximately 1,000 volumes and in addition lends that many every lending period.

When time permits, Miss Elmer frequently conducts a short "released time" devotional period in the schools. This usually consists of a gospel story, clinched by one or two Bible verses, a song or chorus and a short prayer. Occasionally the children, themselves, have a "special" ready for the "Bookmobile Lady."

This new endeavor provided Mill Elmer with many opportunities for witnessing and leading souls to Christ. She has this to say about her work and experiences:

Of most importance in the promotion of this work is the fact that the gospel story of salvation through Christ is being spread in a number of different ways. Hundreds of the most popular books among the adults contain a clear explanation of the simple plan of God's grace to restore mankind to his fellowship. There have been numerous occasions when I have had unusual opportunities to speak of what Christ means to me just because of what some reader has had to say about a favorite fiction or Bible story book. Stories by authors such as Paul Hutchins, Bertha Moore, Grace Livingston Hill and Sallie Lee Bell have a real appeal for many of these people, since they need the less

¹Esther Elmer; "Books are Friends; Books Make Friends;" The World Evangelist; November, 1957; p. 312,314

difficult involved books. When my schedule is not pressing, these precious moments of contact have been used as a period of soul-searching and at various times, expression of a deep desire to know Christ. There have been times of melting prayer, and rejoicing in the faithfulness of Christ, to forgive and to cleanse. I have come home from many a trip with my heart burdened with requests for prayer on behalf of these dear friends and their loved ones.....not only for salvation, but for victory in times of discouragement and defeat. How wonderful it is to be able to tell of the all sufficient Saviour whose keeping power through the Holy Spirit is unlimited.¹

THE MEDICAL MISSION

The medical work has always played a vital part in the life of the mission. This work continued to meet many needs of the mountain people under Dr. E. W. Schaeffer, who was appointed to head the medical staff in 1946 . Dr. Schaeffer felt the call to give his life to the work of missions when he was eighteen years of age. Shortly after he felt that God could use him best as a medical missionary. After a thorough medical training, he was appointed to the staff of the Red Bird Mission. When he came to Red Bird he said that:

My desire is to save men's souls through the healing of their bodies. I want to help those who need help; to work where I am needed. This, I beleive, is the will of God for me.²

The medical responsibilities of the Mission had not changed much sinse Dr. Heim's term in the early life of the work. Dr. Schaeffer had to make the usual calls anytime, anywhere. However, by this time a few roads had been built in the mountains so that many of the calls could be made by traveling in a jeep, rather than on mule

¹Personal Correspondence with Esther Elmer; Op. Cit.

²Dr. E. W. Schaeffer; "Why I Became a Missionary," Evangelical Missionary World; August, 1946; p.22

back. Clinics continued to be a vital part of the work on each of the stations.

The hospital work took a big share of his time, making it impossible for him to do many of the things that needed to be done on the other parts of the Mission field. The need for more nurses at the hospital made it necessary for Dr. Schaeffer to spend more time there.

In 1956 there were only two nurses on duty. They had the huge task of attending patients twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The need for more nurses was so acute that Miss Alice Smith, the Superintendent of nurses, began teaching a nurses course to four of the high school girls to help fill the urgent need at the hospital. Had it not been for the willingness of these young girls to help, it might have been necessary to close the hospital for awhile. The concern these girls had for their own people prompted them to give their services. They knew that if the hospital closed the people wouldn't know where to go for medical care, for they couldn't afford to go any place else.¹

The need for nurses and help for the doctor was partially met when the Board appointed a public health nurse to the field on November 16, 1957. This appointment met a real need in the health program of the area. Her task was to help with the clinics and to call in the homes. She was able to teach personal hygiene and home sanitation to the parents, thus eliminating many of the sicknesses among the mountain people.²

¹Dr. F. W. Schaeffer; "Opportunities unlimited," The World Evangel; November, 1956; p. 304

²"Let us Pray," The World Evangel; December, 1957; p.342

The Red Bird hospital was the only hospital in an area of 900 square miles, with a population of 6,500. Additional help was needed to adequately meet the needs of a community of this size. The Board approved the appointment of a dentist to assist Dr. Schaeffer in this phase of the work.¹

In any work where equipment is involved, there is always the need for repair and replacement. In 1956 it became quite apparent that the Red Bird Hospital was in need of repair. A committee was appointed to study the need and decide whether to improve the old one or to build a new one.²

The committee made their survey and reported to the Board. The old hospital had been flooded twice in the last ten years. Much work needed to be done if it was to continue to be certified by the State Board of Health.³ To carry on effeciently the Mission could not afford to lag behind in facilities.⁴ Confronted with these circumstances, the board voted that a new building should be erected, but on a more adequate site. The old structure could be remodeled, to be used for administrative offices and for housing workers and guests.⁵

Until it was possible for the new hospital to be built, the staff continued to do outstanding work, even under these circumstances. A

¹"Proposed Red Bird Hospital," Brochure from the General Board of Missions; Dayton, Ohio

²"Let us Pray," The World Evangel; March, 1956; p.76

³"Proposed Red Bird Hospital," Op. Cit.

⁴John W. Bischoff, "Hospital Calling-We can Answer," The World Evangel; January, 1957 p. 5

⁵"Proposed Red Bird Hospital," Op. Cit.

study was made by the Council of Southern Mountains, an organization made up of workers from similar situations to that of Red Bird Mission. The Council reported that:

As a committee we see that an exceptionally fine job is being done at the Mission in its objective of meeting the economic, spiritual and health needs of this community. We find evidence that the mountain area covered by the Red Bird Mission work has greatly improved over comparative areas in Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee that are known to us, in that the people seem to have a higher standard of health, education and morale. We are very much impressed by the sincerity and quality of all the staff members.¹

When it was definitely decided that there was to be a new hospital, the Women's Society of World Service voted to make Red Bird Hospital one of the objectives of its World Service Day offering in February of 1957.² Funds were pledged from all over the church and cash gifts were sent in. When ground was broken for the beginning work in the spring of 1958, \$169,000 was on hand for the building.

Because of more adequate ground space and for other purposes which seemed advisable, the Board decided the hospital should be built at Queendale center. The doctor's residence will be built there, too, on completion of the hospital.

The new hospital is being constructed on a one floor plan which will provide economic maintenance and sanitary building surfaces. There will be room for eighteen beds, besides the pediatrics ward and nursery. The estimated cost of the building and furnishings is \$275,000. It is hoped that it will be completed in the spring of 1959.³

¹John W. Bischoff; Op. Cit.; p.6

²Ibid.

³Proposed Red Bird Hospital, Op. Cit.

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL MISSION

At the close of World War II in 1945, the economic progress of the Mission began to function once again on a normal basis. Several factors helped to restore this economic stability. Many young men who had been in the armed services returned to the mountains. There were those who had migrated from the mountains for jobs in other places and they were returning home also. These groups helped to make labor more easily attainable for construction work. Materials that were not available during the war were again obtainable. New roads were built into the mountains making it much easier to receive materials from outside the Red Bird area.

The spring of 1946 brought the completion of a gravel road from Crockett to the Mission. This made it possible for automobile and delivery trucks to go directly to the Mission. In 1951 a shorter gravel road was completed across the mountain from Crockett. The trip to Pineville could then be made in thirty-five minutes. These roads made it easier for the people to find outside work. More employment meant better economic conditions for the people.¹

After the war it was possible to carry out plans for building projects that had been detained because of it.²

In 1948 two pre-fabricated houses were erected at Beverly to provide low cost housing for newly appointed missionary personnel. The

¹"Red Bird Mission, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," Brochure from Beverly, Kentucky; 1955; p.5

²John W. Bischoff; Op. Cit.; p. 15

same year a Quonset type building was completed to be used as a maintenance shop for the Mission. It was not until 1951 that plans were carried out to construct a gymnasium and auditorium combination on the Beverly campus. This construction filled a need that had long been felt by the Mission staff to provide adequate space for cultural and social functions of the school.¹

At the site of the hospital, two new structures were built in 1950 and 1951. They were a new doctor's residence and a nurses home. These were both badly needed and much appreciated additions.²

During the years of economic reconstruction one of the most greatly appreciated installations was that of a radio short wave system. A sending and receiving set was installed at each of the outstations as well as at Beverly in the central headquarters and the hospital. The addition of this short wave system greatly enhanced the operational service in every department of the Mission. Telephone service was still at a minimum in much of the Red Bird area. The short wave system was used in times of medical need, disaster or for the announcement of some event.³

¹"Brochure from Beverly, Kentucky; " Op. Cit.; p.5

²Ibid.; p.5

³"How is the Roark baby?" A voice has just asked over the short wave radio system connecting our Mission centers. "Oh, just fine. She is resting well," came the answer of Dr. Schaeffer from the Hospital radio. This conversation brought to mind the call which awakened me at 3:30 A.M. to hear the anxious voice of the doctor saying, "KIL 75 calling KIL 77 or 76-hospital calling Jack's Creek or Queendale." These are the two closest centers to the home of the Roark baby. Both centers answered and soon it was arranged that the word would be sent immediately to the parents that their baby's condition at the hospital required emergency

Regardless of the efficiency of the material equipment, the work was sometimes halted by natural hazards. In June of 1947 a flash flood caused extensive damage at Beverly center. Two cloud bursts close together caused the creeks to swell to enormous proportions. The first house built on the Beverly Campus, and occupied by the doctor, was washed away by the strong current of Cow Creek Fork. One section of the cement foundation of the church was torn away. All the fences were washed out. Trees, shrubbery, flowers and lawns were all destroyed. Much minor damage was caused that took many years to restore. Even after eight years the Mission center was not yet restored to its original beauty.¹

Fires have always been a hazard and have caused great concern for the staff. This was due to the inability to move any fire fighting equipment to the location of the fire in time to be of any benefit. They have caused extensive damage on several occasions. On September 9, 1954 the home of two teachers at Jack's Creek burned to the ground. Miss Eva Agee and Miss Luella Utecht lost everything they had but the clothes they were wearing.²

¹Red Bird Mission Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Op.Cit.; p.5

²"A Request From Red Bird Mission," November, 1954; The World Evangel; p. 306

³(Continued from previous page) surgery and that they should go to the hospital at once. Soon a jeep roared by and its familiar whine died out as it rounded the river road curve on its way to get the parents. It happened only yesterday, but is typical of the service given through our Red Bird medical program in these isolated "hills" of Kentucky. John W. Bischoff, "Hospital Calling-We Can Answer," January, 1957; The World Evangel; p. 5

On January 3, 1958 the general maintainance shop at Beverly was destroyed by fire. The building and all of its contents were a total loss. The loss was estimated by some at \$8,000 and only fifty per cent was covered by insurance.¹

Another fire, causing extensive damage and great inconvenience, was the destruction of the Beech Fork School on November 6, 1958. The school had been turned over to the county school system by the Board of Missions during the preceeding year. However, the church and the community were equal to the need. Temporary arrangements were made for the 160 students to be taught in the Beech Fork and Lower Beech Fork churches and in the old store building. The county planned to build a new eight room modern school house within the next few years. However, now the school will be built as soon as possible to meet the emergency need.²

In less than two months following the fire at Beech Fork another tragic one occured at Middle Fork. Just before Christmas, Rev. and Mrs. Weibel were awakened one night by a bright light in the sky. From the parsonage window they could see that the chapel was on fire. It had already progressed too far to save anything. The beautiful new Chapel had just been dedicated in 1955. Also lost in the fire was a new piano-organ combination less than two years old.

¹"From Beverly, Kentucky; The World Evangel; March, 1958; p.103

²The Telescope Messenger; January, 1959; p. 18

Tragic as these fires were, yet plans were immediately undertaken for reconstruction. The people could see the need for reconstruction if God's work was to continue to make progress in the mountains of Kentucky.

The Red Bird area is basically populated by rural people, hence much of their sustenance is dependent upon their ability to reap from the earth. In order to provide better returns for their labors, the Mission introduced better farming conditions. The promotion was begun at the Mill Creek station in 1951 with the introduction of rabbits, hybrid poultry, bees and goats as the sources of aid in providing better living.¹

Further agricultural development was made when a tract of land was donated by the Ford Motor Company of Detroit, Michigan. This acreage was located five miles up Red Bird Creek from Beverly, and called Queendale after Mr. Queen who made the presentation to the Mission. Along with the land, a Ford tractor was donated for use on the farm.

An agricultural missionary was appointed in 1952 and performed duties similar to a county agent in this isolated area.

With the benefit of the farm, the Mission has developed co-operative industries, utilizing natural resources. It has also fostered initiative and encouraged creative ability among the people which have

¹Our Kentucky Highland Mission; op. Cit.; p.22,23

helped to enlarge family incomes.¹

In 1953 a cattle barn, milking parlor and small central heating plant was built. Later a machine shed, hog house and poultry houses were built.²

In the same year a residence was constructed for Rev. Gordon S. Burgett, the general maintenance supervisor of the Mission. The house was constructed for approximately \$10,000.³

By 1955 other buildings constructed at Queendale were residences for the farm manager and the superintendent of the Mission, and two buildings for summer youth camps and conference.⁴

One of the most interesting buildings at the Queendale center is the Pioneer house. This is the oldest house in the upper Red Bird area. When the property was given by the Ford Motor Company it was stipulated that the Pioneer house must not be destroyed. It was reconstructed in its original form and is presently being used as a Museum.⁵

Home crafts have become a source of economic help to the mountain families. One of the most prominent of these was basket weaving

¹Ibid.; p. 19 and 22

²"Queendale Development," The World Evangel; January, 1953; p. 10, 11

³Ibid.

⁴Red Bird Mission, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow; Op. Cit.

⁵"Our Kentucky Highland Mission," Op. Cit.; p. 23

which was introduced by Mrs. Herman Seidschlag. The women and young people took enthusiastically to it. Eighty per cent of the profits went to the weaver and twenty percent to the Mission. The baskets ranged in price from sixty cents to \$2.75. Many were sold to visitors at the Mission and distributed throughout the Evangelical United Brethern Church.

THE FORMATION OF THE KENTUCKY CONFERENCE

In 1954 the work of the Red Bird Mission had progressed to the extent that the Board of Missions presented a memorial to the General Conference of the Evangelical United Brethern Church, which stated that: the Cumberland district of the former United Brethern Church and the Red Bird Mission District of the former Evangelical Church of the Kentucky Mission be constituted a Missionary conference, to be known as the Kentucky Conference. This memorial was approved.¹

The provisional conference of the Kentucky Conference met at the Evangelical United Brethern Church in Columbia, Kentucky on September 2, 1955. The chairman was Bishop Fred L. Dennis, serving the central area.² During the second day of the conference, Bishop Dennis announced the appointment of John Bishop, Superintendent of the Mission, as the first Superintendent of the newly formed Kentucky Conference.

The Red Bird district of the Kentucky conference is an outgrowth of a Mission that was started nearly thirty-five years before.

¹Roscoe E. Weibel, Editor; Official Record, Provisional Session of the Kentucky Conference; 1955; p.11

²Ibid.; p.11

SUMMARY

John W. Bischoff came to the Red Bird Mission as a Mission pastor. Because of his ability and capable leadership, he was appointed as Superintendent of the Mission when the need arose. During his time as Superintendent, the Mission was brought through a readjustment period following World War II. After that an expansion program was launched which saw several new stations begun and others developed by the building of churches, parsonages and schools. Queen-dale Farm Center was begun and became a self supporting project as well as providing many needed products for the Mission.

Working through the total program of the Mission; Evangelistic, Educational, Medical and Economic, many lives have been changed and countless souls have been brought from darkness into light.

One example which illustrates the comprehensive nature of the work accomplished is the story of the life and death of Warren Cook.¹ It was through instances such as this that made all the sacrifices, toil, heartaches and hard work worthwhile at the Red Bird Mission.

¹On Friday night, August 30, 1957, the shocking news reached Hyden, Kentucky, from a coal mine ten miles away, that Warren Cook, mine foreman, had been killed by a falling rock as he was testing the ceiling of the mine. That very morning Warren had spent several hours in shingling the roof on the Lower Beech Fork church, helping to fulfil the dream and prayer of several years.

On Saturday a group of men gathered to prepare the church for Warren's funeral. Some braces needed to be removed and others rearranged the interior, sub-flooring cleared, and a ramp approach made to the door.

About 250 people were seated in the unfinished sanctuary and almost that many more heard the service from yet unglassed windows and doorway. Because of a full basement under the building, the windows of the sanctuary were high enough to eliminate the sight, on one side, of the heavy labor day traffic as it traveled Highway 241; on the other to permit a beautiful, peaceful view of large

trees growing at the creek at the base of the mountain side, more beautiful than stained glass.

Warren was a Red Bird graduate and so appreciative of the staff at the mission.....Rev. Bjork, who had worked all summer as head-builder of the church, played the borrowed folding organ and sang "It is Well With My Soul," which was Warren's favorite song.

The pastor, Arthur Russell, preached from the text Rev.2:10, "be faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life." The whole community, crushed under the weight of the deep personal loss were challenged by the pastor to fill the gap - a large one, because of the small membership. Now we need a treasure of the building fund, a teacher of the adult class, an officer of the Evangelical United Brethern men, another voice in the chior, another worker on the building, another to pray for his neighbors, all of these places are left vacant by the passing of one young man.

Many of his fellow workmen will often think of the prayers Warren offered as he gathered his shift together each evening before they entered the mine.

The pastor told the story of King Joash from II Kings 12, who commanded that the priests take a chest and bore a hole in the lid of it and set it beside the altar on the right side to hold the offerings for the repair of the house of the Lord. Every Sunday as Warren came to church, in addition to his large Bible, he carried his adult teacher's quarterly and a cedar chest into which the offerings for the building fund were to be placed. A ten dollar bill and a five - the tithe from his last check, and some notations in his own handwriting and some paid bills were found in the box after the service.

Following the funeral services, little Kathy said, "Mommy, I'll have to carry Daddy's Joash box now." And so it was, little Kathy carried the Joash box to church the next Sunday.
Mrs. Arthur Russell; "Easter: The Triumph of Hope," The World Evangel; April, 1958; p.115,116

CHAPTER V

THE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY

A great missionary endeavor was started by the United Evangelical Church on home soil at Beverly, Kentucky. It was through much prayer, careful planning and hard labor by many faithful men and women that the Mission was able to pass through those very trying first few years. The needs of the mountain people were met through the combined planning of evangelistic, educational, medical, economic and social work. Not one of these phases of the work would have endured by itself.

The hard work of the Mission was made by the prayerful interest of men and women across the nation. The interest they had through prayers instilled an interest in giving and so many contributed liberally to the cause of the Mission. The Women's Missionary Society has always supported the work in a very substantial way.

As the Mission passed through the formative years, it became more stable in its work. However, many hard and trying circumstances were yet ahead in the years to come.

Under the superintendency of Rev. A.E. Lehman, the Mission passed through some of those time. In the early years of his appointment the great depression left its scar on the Mission just as it did in many other places. It seemed that perhaps for a time it was losing ground. Just as the Mission was "getting on its feet" after the depression, World War II came which continued to hinder

the advancement of economic and material needs. During these times the power of God was never doubted. The needs of the mountain people were impressed upon the workers in a new way. They realized what the term sacrifice really meant.

Evangelism and education were stressed and the medical staff was busier than ever. Gradually times grew better and advancement could be seen in all phases of Mission life.

When John W. Bischoof was appointed as superintendent of the Mission, a readjustment period was just beginning. When the workers, mountain people, and the Mission readjustment followed World War II, an expansion program was launched. During this program several new stations were established and much building was done in the material way. The Queendale agricultural center was made possible through a generous gift by the Ford Motor Company and became a great asset to the Mission.

Working through the total program of the Mission: evangelistic, educational, medical and economic, many lives have been changed and countless souls have been brought from darkness into light. It was a real joy for the workers to walk hand in hand with God as they continued to serve Him among the people of the Kentucky Mountains.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The writer has found from the preceding study that the method of missionary work used at the Red Bird Mission was of such a nature as to develop the entire man. The four aspects in man, spiritual, mental, physical and social were all emphasized. This was done to develop a well rounded individual.

2. Most of the missionaries who came to the Red Bird Mission as workers did so with a basic knowledge and training in their specific field. Another training program in which they were able to become better missionaries was received in training as actual missionaries on the field.

3. The writer has concluded that any effective missionary endeavor, which attempts to advance God's Kingdom on earth, will be expressed in a much broader scope than merely on the mission compound itself.

4. To be effective the work of a denominational mission must have a broader range than just the field in which it is working. It must touch the life of the entire constituency of the denomination. In this way it will further enhance the entire missionary program of the denomination. This will in turn stimulate loyalty to the local church and loyalty to Christ.

5. The Red Bird Mission is an example of how a missionary endeavor can become more fruitful and effective when indigenous principles are applied.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Some of the early workers of the Mission are now living in retirement or laboring in other fields. Correspondence could be established with many of these who in turn could help reconstruct many incidents that are not mentioned in this paper.

2. Another possibility for further study may be a thorough investigation of the back issues of newspapers published in the Red Bird area.

3. An investigation of the statistical records and committee meeting minutes that have transpired at the mission would give further material to such a study.

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