

Rena Mauerhan

HISTORY
OF THE
CALIFORNIA BRANCH

Woman's Missionary Society
of the
Evangelical Church



Compiled by
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"Constrained by the Love of Christ"

Motto of the California Branch

Adopted in 1912

History of the California Branch Woman's Missionary Society

Early in the history of the Evangelical Church the women had the urge to help in the work of spreading the gospel to all parts of the earth. Gradually the idea took shape in the minds of the leading church women to form an organization that would aid them in this great cause. Back in the year 1839 a group of women in Philadelphia started a woman's missionary society. This was the first organized effort of this kind in our church.

However, it was not until 40 years later that the General Woman's Missionary Society of our church was formed. This general organization gave a mighty impulse to the urge in the hearts of our church women to work for the cause of Christ among the millions of spiritually needy of the world. Missionary societies were started in many local churches. Soon Conference Branches were organized and in the next 40 years the wave of missionary enthusiasm reached great heights.

Much of this enthusiasm was due to the fine leadership of able women who directed affairs during those early years. Working slowly and carefully, against stubborn opposition and deep-seated prejudice, they gradually won their way to recognition. Outstanding among these early leaders were women like Mrs. E. M. Spreng, who was at the head of affairs for many years; Mrs. E. J. Y. Pryor, who was the first General President, and Mrs. W. H. Hammer, who was a general officer and fine leader. There were many others whose names we cannot mention but who deserve great credit.

Among these leaders Mrs. Spreng stands foremost. Her strong personality and unusual ability were great factors in the early development of the Missionary Society. With untiring zeal, which overcame prejudice and opposition, she gave herself to the task, and her contagious enthusiasm inspired other women to become interested in this cause. She gave unsparingly of time and energy, visited many sections of the church and helped to organize local societies and Conference Branches. She came to California several times and helped to create interest and cultivate a desire for a Conference Branch. It is worthy of note that, while she was entertained at the home of Rev. and Mrs. F. Cordes in Los Angeles, she so imbued Mrs. Cordes and other women with the idea of organizing a Conference Branch, that these women set to work to bring this about.

The Evangelical women of California had the vision of such an organization for a long time before this. Now this vision was to be a reality. The compelling motive for this was the earnest desire to do something definite for the glory of God and the salvation of men. Back of it all was strong prayer and consecration to the Lord's work. The fact that many local missionary societies had been started and Conference Branches organized in other parts of the church gave great impetus to this movement on the Pacific Coast. Many of the church leaders, especially Bishop Breyfogel and Mrs. Spreng, kept urging the women to continue to form local societies and work continually toward a Conference Branch. Occasional visits of these and other general officers served to keep the interest alive. Many of the leaders of our women in California saw the importance of having local woman's missionary societies and also of a Branch organization. Among these Mrs. F. Cordes, Mrs. G. Husser and Mrs. W. H. Althouse were specially prominent, and others followed their leadership.

Under the direction of Mrs. Cordes the women of Los Angeles First Church formed the first local Woman's Missionary Society in the California Conference in 1906 with a membership of 20. By 1908 this society had 56 members. In 1907 Santa Ana, under the leadership of Mrs. G. Husser, organized the second society with 20 members. During the next year five new societies were started, namely at Sacramento, San Francisco Emmanuel, Anaheim, Porterville, Los Angeles Bethel (Central Avenue). San Francisco Salem followed in 1910.

In the summer of 1910, Rev. F. W. Voegelien, who was then the Presiding Elder of the Conference and who had been a missionary in Japan for many years, sent a call to the above named eight societies to send delegates to a convention to be held at the Santa Ana Camp Grounds for the purpose of organizing a Conference Branch. On the 13th of August 14 delegates, representing seven of the eight societies, came to this gathering. They were as follows: Mrs. W. H. Althouse, Mrs. Katherine Benzinger, Mrs. J. Burkhart of Los Angeles First; Mrs. D. B. Koenig of Los Angeles Bethel; Mrs. G. Husser, Mrs. W. Lingelbach, Mrs. W. Passer of Santa Ana; Mrs. Sophia Mauerhan, Mrs. Libby Johnson, Mrs. W. Pannier of Anaheim; Mrs. H. Peterson, Mrs. F. Ackerman of Porterville; Miss Lillian Schmalle of San Francisco Emmanuel; Miss Frieda Ziegler of San Francisco Salem. Sacramento sent no delegate but asked Rev. Cordes to represent them. Rev. Voegelien presided and Mrs. Benzinger acted as Secretary. Editor G. Heinmiller of Cleveland was present and spoke. It was voted to organize a Conference Branch W. M. S. and the regular Constitution of Conference Branches was adopted.

The following officers were elected for a term of two years: President, Mrs. G. Husser; Vice-President, Mrs. W. H. Althouse; Recording Secretary, Mrs. F. Ackerman; Corresponding Secretary, Miss Frieda Ziegler; Treasurer, Mrs. W. Lingelbach; Supt. Junior Societies, Miss Lillian Schmalle. California Branch was now launched on its way. The Executive Committee was authorized to send a delegate to the Biennial Convention. Rev. Voegelien was appointed to help organize Local Societies. Two Rallies were arranged for between Conventions, one in the South and one in the North. An offering was taken at this organizing Convention amounting to \$11, and 24 persons pledged \$10 each to become life members.



MRS. G. HUSSER
1910 to 1914

The next Convention was held July 24-25, 1912, at Napa in connection with the Y. P. A. Convention. The reports showed 12 local societies, and the membership had increased for the first year to 217 and the second year to 264. Eight of the societies were represented by delegates. The money contributed for the first year amounted to \$873, or \$4 per member; the second year it was \$1202, or \$4.57 per member. There were 44 life memberships and three honorary memberships; 43 subscriptions to the *Missionary Messenger* and 145 to the *Missionsbote*. At that time the German language predominated in the Conference and all reports were given in that language. This language condition caused considerable difficulty, for while most church services were German, there were a few fields like

Melrose Avenue and one or two others that were entirely English. Beginning with 1916 the convention minutes were kept in English.

At this Convention in 1912 a Branch Motto was adopted, namely: "Constrained by the Love of Christ." A proposition of the General Officers that the Branch support a special missionary was not favored, as it would give the appearance that we favor one above the others. The officers elected were: President, Mrs. G. Husser; Vice-President, Mrs. W. H. Althouse; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Theo. Schauer; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. G. G. Schmid; Treasurer, Mrs. W. Lingelbach; Supt. Mission Bands, Miss Lillian Schmale; Supt. Little Heralds, Mrs. G. A. Wild. It was decided that, after 1914, Conventions should be held every year. Much progress was made in the next two years. The number of societies increased to 16. Every church in the Conference had a W. M. S. except the one at Victor.

The 1914 Convention was held at the Santa Ana Camp Grounds. Eleven societies were represented. San Francisco and Napa sent delegates from the North. Mrs. Husser gave an interesting report as President. All preachers were advisory members. Reading Circles and Birthday Offerings were encouraged. Rev. Voegelien presented the cause of a suburban Mission at Torrance, near Los Angeles, and it was voted to support this Mission. There were now 16 societies with 349 members; \$1161 was raised for all purposes. Mrs. Husser, the first President, and Mrs. Lingelbach, the first Treasurer, were given a vote of thanks for their work during the four difficult years of the beginning. Rev. Voegelien's work received hearty appreciation. Bishop Horn was the Convention speaker and was a great inspiration. The local societies brought banners to decorate the Hall.

Officers were elected for one year as follows: President, Mrs. F. Cordes; Vice-President, Mrs. G. Husser; Rec. Secretary, Mrs. W. H. Althouse; Cor. Secretary, Mrs. G. G. Schmid; Treasurer, Mrs. G. A. Wild; Supt. Mission Bands, Mrs. M. Joerg; Supt. Little Heralds, Mrs. C. Braun. A special word of appreciation is due Mrs. Husser, the first Branch President. She was well qualified to lead the Branch during the first four years. Her fine spirit and consecrated leadership gave splendid direction to the new Branch. At this Convention in 1914 she turned the presidency over to Mrs. Cordes, while she became the Vice-President. Mrs. Cordes proved to be an able leader and in the four years of her presidency the Branch had a healthy growth. Mrs. Cordes had been prominent in the W. M. S. work in previous years. Her contact with the General Officers, especially with Mrs. Spreng, proved to be a valuable asset. She visited many of the local societies and kept in free correspondence with local officers. She was ably assisted by Mrs. Husser, Mrs. Althouse and the other Branch Officers. Too much credit cannot be given to these early leaders in our Branch.

At the end of Mrs. Cordes' term of office in 1918 there were 17 societies with 395 members. The total amount of money raised in the last year was \$2117—\$5.13 per member—which was a fine record. Some new societies had been formed like Burbank, San Bernardino, Melrose Avenue, and several others.



MRS. F. CORDES
1914 to 1918

Much attention was being paid to work among children, and new Mission Bands and Little Heralds were started in a number of places. This work had been started in previous years, right from the beginning of the Branch. Although it developed slowly and sometimes seemed to lag, yet it continued to grow and bore rich fruit for eternity. Miss Lillian Schmalle was the first Superintendent of Mission Bands, or Message Bearers, as they were then called. In 1912 Mrs. G. A. Wild was chosen to this position. Work among the Young People also received much attention. In 1915 the first Missionary Circle was organized at Santa Ana with 12 members. The next year Mrs. J. P. Ash was chosen as Superintendent of Circle Work. Soon a number of other Circles were organized and the work among the young people grew. From this time on the work of the California Conference Branch was fully organized in all its departments.

Regular mission study was carried on in every society, and the reading of missionary papers and books was encouraged. Much valuable missionary information was gathered. The fact that Rev. Voegelien had been the Superintendent of our missionary work in Japan, and that outgoing and returning missionaries usually tarried on the Coast for a while, helped greatly to increase missionary interest among our people. The visits of Bishops and General Officers, and the holding of the General Conference of 1915 in Los Angeles, all were an encouragement to our Evangelical folks in California. Mrs. E. M. Spreng, by her visit to California, did much to promote the W. M. S. work.

At the Convention in 1918 Mrs. W. H. Althouse was elected as Branch President and held office for seven years. Mrs. Cordes was Vice-President for six years and Mrs. F. H. Doescher for one year. Mrs. Doescher was Rec. Secretary for five years and Mrs. G. G. Schmid for two years. Mrs. W. C. Schmidt was Cor. Secretary for one year. Mrs. E. L. Weatherwax for two years and Mrs. A. J. Boelter for four years. Mrs. G. A. Wild was Treasurer and Miss Amelia Hieber Supt. of Circles for the entire term of seven years. Mrs. E. H. Heiser was Mission Band Supt. for three years under Mrs. Cordes and one year under Mrs. Althouse; while Mrs. F. Draeger, Mrs. G. Schmid and Mrs. P. Kluth for the other six years. Mrs. C. Braun was Supt. of Little Heralds during this time.



MRS. W. H. ALTHOUSE
1918 to 1925

Mrs. Althouse came to the office with rich experience gained as Vice-President, Rec. Secretary and Circle Superintendent. She was a fine Executive and under her leadership in the years 1918 to 1925 the work grew steadily. Every church in the Conference had a W. M. S. and the membership increased. While Fresno and Oakland were discontinued, new societies were organized at Lodi and Torrance. The total membership reached a high point of 545 in 1924. The amount of money raised advanced from \$2117 in 1918 to \$5343 in 1922, then dropped to \$3600 in 1925. Special amounts were raised for Torrance and Glendale, and a large number of life and honorary mem-

berships were secured. In general the giving was very good during those years.

The Branch Conventions were always times of great blessing. As we have noted before, the first or organizing Convention was held at the Santa Ana Camp Ground in 1910. In '12 it was at Napa; in '14 it was at the Camp Grounds; in '15 at Los Angeles First Church; in '16 at the Camp Grounds; in '17 at Porterville; in '18 and '19 at the Camp Grounds; in '20 at Point Pleasant. From then on it was at the Camp Grounds, except in '34, when it was at Glendale. From '35 on it was at Pacific Palisades. At the Camp Grounds and at the Palisades the Convention was always in connection with the Assembly jointly with the Young People's and with the Religious Education groups. Special speakers were secured each year both for the General Assembly and for the W. M. S. Convention. These speakers always brought fine messages and new inspiration. They kept our Branch in touch with the rest of the Church and the general missionary movements of the world. Among these speakers were Bishops Horn, Seager, Stamm, Praetorius, Epp and Stauffacher; Editors Heinmiller and Halwachs; Presidents Kimmel and Heining of the Seminary; Mrs. Spreng, Mrs. Seager, Dr. and Mrs. S. J. Umbreit, Miss Roloff, Miss Berner, Mrs. Ranek and Elmina Ranek—all missionaries—and many others.

During these years Oratorical Contests were begun. They helped to arouse interest among the young women. Giving of banners and the other awards stimulated interest in missionary giving. New Circles and Mission Bands and Little Herald were organized. In 1919 there were 10 Circles which raised \$275. In '25 these 10 Circles raised \$639.

At the Convention in 1925 Mrs. A. J. Boelter was elected as Branch President and remained in office for eight years. Mrs. Althouse and Mrs. O. D. Wonder were Vice-Presidents during this eight-year period. Mrs. G. G. Schmid was Rec. Secretary and Mrs. G. A. Wild, Treasurer. Mrs. S. J. Boelter served one year as Cor. Secretary and Mrs. G. J. Degenkoll served for seven years. Mrs. E. J. Nickel, Mrs. A. H. Butzbach, Mrs. A. F. Kuechel and Mrs. E. C. Herman were Circle Secretaries. Mrs. Zeller, Mrs. Behrens and Mrs. Anderson, Mission Band Secretaries. Mrs. Wonder, Mrs. Schauer, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs. Greenwald and Mrs. Butzbach, Secretaries of the Little Heralds.



MRS. A. J. BOELTER
1925 to 1933

Mrs. Boelter was well qualified to lead the Branch. She had been a Branch officer in Illinois and had served as Corresponding Secretary in the California Branch. The years of her presidency were a time of progress along all lines. Many new activities were undertaken. The organizational work of the Branch and in the local societies was greatly strengthened and became more effective as time went on. There was an increase in interest in mission study and also in the reading of missionary books. In 1927 the new mission study books were presented at the Convention as a preparation for the study in the local societies. Reviews were given of these books, and these reviews have been given each year since then and have become a very valuable feature of the Convention program. A modest beginning of a Branch Library had been made some years before;



MRS. E. BURGI
1933 to 1937
1939 to 1942

At the Convention in 1933 a new group of officers was elected, practically all of whom held office for a four-year term. Mrs. E. Burgi was President; Miss Ignatia Schoch, Vice-President; Mrs. H. F. Cook, Rec. Secretary; Mrs. F. A. Zeller, Cor. Secretary; Mrs. L. K. Schmid, Treasurer; Mrs. E. C. Herman and Mrs. Unita Weiss, Circle Secretaries; Mrs. J. Scherbacher, Mission Band Secretary; Mrs. J. V. Knoll and Mrs. H. R. Matzke, Little Herald Secretaries. During these four years much of the detail and preparatory work was done by the Executive Committee, which helped to

make the work of the Convention more efficient.

At the beginning of the year 1934 a polio epidemic prevailed in Los Angeles, and it was deemed best by the Conference authorities not to hold an Assembly that summer. Consequently the Branch Executive Committee arranged for a separate W. M. S. Convention in our Glendale Church. This was held on July 10-12 and proved very successful. All the societies sent delegates except San Francisco and San Diego. The motto of this Convention was: "The Line shall not Break where we Stand." This was the slogan of the General W. M. S. at this time. A special feature of the Convention was a Pageant called "Through the Years," in honor of the 50th anniversary of the General W. M. S. This Convention voted that hereafter no Branch officer could hold office more than three successive years—the Branch Treasurer excepted.

tion each year and which became an outstanding feature of the Convention program.

In these first 25 years 12 Circles were organized. The largest number of Circle members was 235. The total amount of money raised by Circles during the 25 years was \$13,000. There were 11 Mission Bands with 194 members who raised a total of \$2900. Ten Little Heralds with 146 members raised \$1700. Great interest had been created in the School of Missions and in the Interdenominational work.

At the 1936 Convention Mr. Ben Weiss taught a study class on Africa, using the book, "Congo Crosses." This was the beginning of Mission Study Classes for credit. At this time the W. M. S. became responsible for inspirational services at the 11 A. M. hour each noon. At one of these Dr. Thomason of the White Memorial Hospital gave a splendid address on "Effects of Alcohol on the Body." Mrs. H. L. Horn, President of the Council of Federated Church Women, spoke on the work of the Council. Mrs. Bell of the African Inland Mission spoke on the work among the pygmies of the Belgian Congo.

On Thursday evening of that Convention a banquet was held with 125 women at the tables. Mr. Jesse Wilson, author of one of our African study books, was the speaker. The Convention observed the 50th anniversary of the *Missionary World*. A recommendation of Mrs. Stamm was presented urging the cooperation with "Farther With Christ Mission" and other propositions of the General Officers.

In 1937 the slogan for the Convention was "Going Forward with Christ in Missions." After the President had read her message, she laid a sheaf at the foot of the Cross, representing the harvest of a year of labor. As each officer and secretary gave her report, a sheaf was laid at the Cross and for each one a light was turned on the Cross. These and the other daily devotions were very impressive. Mrs. T. L. Haines, the first Superintendent of Mission Bands in the Evangelical Church, was introduced. Mrs. Brunemcier reported on the Poster Contest and many fine posters were presented. Mrs. Matzke reported on the Little Herald Posters which related to our mission work in

Japan. She also presented the Kimono project, which was little kimonos with money sewed on them. Mrs. Weiss reported on the Poster Contest of the Circles, showing in a graphic way the value of the posters in the work of the Circles.

The statistical reports showed that the membership had reached the highest point in the history of the Branch up to this time, namely 595. There were 13 Circles with 205 members, 12 Mission Bands with 211 members and 12 Little Heralds with 91 members. Great interest was being created in Circle, Mission Band and Little Herald work. There was a growing spirit of ambition, and under the direction of fine leaders these organizations developed remarkable efficiency. Their programs at the Conventions were of a high order. It is interesting to note that the Missionary Reading Course had proved so beneficial that each W. M. S. and Circle was urged to continue its use. The Program Packet was also proving a great benefit.

Due to the financial depression in the country, the amount of money raised each year during these years had decreased. While the average raised during the 12 years previous was over \$5000, in the years 1933 to 1937 the average amount was only \$3600.

The banquet at the Convention of '37 was one of the best. Over 130 women were seated at the tables, which had been decorated by the Anaheim ladies using a Mohammendan motif, in keeping with the study for the coming year, which was to be "Mecca and Beyond." Dr. C. J. Attig of Naperville gave a fine address on Mohammed and his religion. Rev. D. C. Trapp of Minnesota spoke a number of times during the Convention. The other special speakers during this period were: Bishop Praetorius in 1935, Bishop Stauffacher in 1936. Impressive memorial services were held at each Convention for the departed members. Among those whose memory was highly honored was Mrs. A. J. Boelter, former President, who passed away suddenly on Sunday morning, July 15, 1934.



MRS. IGNATIA THOMPSON
1937 to 1939

At the Convention of 1937 Mrs. Ignatia Schoch-Thompson was chosen as President and held office for two years. Mrs. Burgi was Vice-President; Mrs. Unita Weiss, Rec. Secretary; Mrs. Ruth Schmidt and Mrs. F. W. Boelter, Cor. Secretaries; Mrs. L. K. Schmid, Treasurer; Mrs. E. C. Schneider, Circle Secretary; Mrs. F. W. Boelter and Mrs. H. R. Matzke, Mission Band Secretaries; Mrs. Matzke and Mrs. Neerman, Little Herald Secretaries for this two-year period. The annual Convention reports were always given in a unique and interesting manner. In 1938 they were given in the form

of a play called "Mother Calico." In 1939 the message of the President was based on Romans 10:14-15. On the desk was a group of Bibles in Chinese, Japanese and African languages. Following her message, each officer gave her report in keeping with the theme of the Convention: "Follow Thou Me in the Scriptures."

Mrs. Emily Taylor conducted the W. M. S. course in Missions. Mrs. D. Thingan reviewed the Home Study Book, "The Moving Millions." Four societies attained 100% on the Standard of Efficiency. Red seals were earned by 15 societies on this Standard. The statistics in '38 showed that there were 23 societies with 634 members; 13 Circles with 205 members; 12 Mission Bands with 211 members, and 12 Little Heralds with 210 members. The total amount of money raised that year by the four groups was \$4531. In 1939 the Little Heralds raised the largest amount since their organization, namely \$303. A new

W. M. S. had been organized at Lodi—a Junior Society with a fine membership.

The special speakers in this two-year period were: in 1938, Dr. H. R. Heiminger of the Seminary at Naperville and Miss Susan M. Bauernfeind, Missionary from Japan, with her friend, Miss Masago of Japan. In 1939, Dr. W. C. Harr, Missionary in Africa, and Dr. R. H. Mueller, General Secretary of the Board of Education. Dr. E. C. Farnham of the Los Angeles Church Federation and Mrs. Geo. Bowyer of the Baptist Church Missionary Office gave splendid talks, as did many others whose names we cannot mention. We must not forget the wonderful service of that gifted singer and leader, George Garner.

At the Biennial Convention it was decided to change the name, "Standard of Efficiency," to "Goals for Growth," which should have four departments: (1) Spiritual Life, (2) Stewardship, (3) Knowledge, (4) Service. This new Standard called Goals for Growth proved very inspiring and effective in the coming years. The poster contests became more interesting at each Convention, and many beautiful and instructive posters were produced.

It is worthy of note that in 1938 the Centennial of the General Missionary Society of the Evangelical Church was observed. In the year 1838, under the leadership of Bishop John Seibert and Editor W. W. Orwig, who was also Missionary Secretary, the first Missionary Society was organized. Mrs. Thompson, in her report, called attention to this landmark in our missionary history. The Committee on Ways and Means at this Convention offered the following Resolution, which was adopted: "Whereas, The 100th anniversary celebration of the General Missionary Society is being observed this year. We recommend that all the societies observe dates from October 6 to November 6 in a special way by missionary prayers, programs and gifts, which shall culminate on November 6, which is Foreign Mission Day. We also recommend that the W. M. S. cooperate with the General Missionary Society in every possible way, and that the young people be encouraged to promote

Kingdom Building during the coming second century of our missionary work.

Mrs. Thompson, in her last message, called attention to the very critical situation in the world at this time, and the forces of evil which endanger the progress of the Kingdom. However, we are heartened by the evident unifying of religious forces in the world as shown, among other things, by the great Missionary Conference in Madras, India. We are also encouraged by the closer cooperation of Protestant forces in our own country as evidenced by the active participation of our Branch in the work of the Federated Council of Church Women, and the great program of the Federal Council of Churches. We know the Lord of Hosts is with us still and His Cause shall triumph.

In 1939 Mrs. Thompson found it impossible to continue as Branch President on account of her public school work. At this Convention Mrs. E. Burgi was again elected President and held office for three years. Mrs. A. L. Horn was Vice-President for two years and Mrs. C. E. Berger for one year. Mrs. Matzke and Mrs. E. C. Schneider were Second Vice-Presidents; Mrs. Unita Weiss and Mrs. P. C. Neerman, Rec. Secretaries; Mrs. F. W. Boelter and Mrs. D. Thingan, Cor. Secretaries; Mrs. L. K. Schmid and Mrs. Unita Weiss, Treasurers; Mrs. E. C. Schneider and Mrs. C. W. Taylor, Circle Secretary; Mrs. H. R. Matzke, Mrs. L. M. Light and Mrs. R. Bechthold, Mission Band Secretaries; Mrs. P. Neerman and Miss Kathryn Behrens, Little Herald Secretaries.

The reports given at the next Convention, in 1940, show a slight loss in membership due to the closing of Napa Mission. However, this loss was fully recovered in the next two years. The giving of missionary money showed a slight increase per member. The reports were again presented by the officers in an original form. At this Convention a lighthouse, representing the W. M. S., was placed on a table in the center of the room. Orange streamers, representing rays of light, went from the lighthouse to each officer, who held in her hand a poster giving a complete summary of the year's work in her department.

In '41 the reports were given in the form of a "skit" called "Turn Back the Clock," written by Mrs. E. C. Schneider.

It was a privilege to have as a guest at this 1940 Convention Miss Verna Hertzler, Missionary in Japan, home on a furlough. She led the devotional services each day, using as her theme: "Follow Thou Me." The theme song was "Bringing in the Sheaves." During the Convention the delegates and friends shared in a surprise shower of food and kitchen utensils for Miss Hertzler, who was to sail for Japan on August 8th of this year.

The Circle, Mission Band and Little Herald reports for the three years, '40, '41 and '42, showed that fine work was being done by the young people and the children. The membership increased considerably. The Circle published a Quarterly News Bulletin. Study books, plays and pageants were being used. Standard of Efficiency charts served to inspire to greater progress. Closer friendship between Circles of different societies was cultivated. Separate Circle Conventions were held for several years. All three of these organizations increased their giving. In 1940 the Mission Band, under Mrs. Matzke's direction, reported the splendid sum of \$363.71.

Special speakers at these Conventions added much to their success. In 1940 Bishop and Mrs. Warner of the United Brethren Church were with us. Mrs. Warner taught a class in Missions, using the study book, "China Rediscovered Her West." Richard Low of the Chinese Presbyterian Church enriched our understanding of China by his talks and by the Chinese banquet which he prepared for the ladies.

In 1941 Dr. Wm. E. Grote of Illinois was the Assembly speaker; and Dr. and Mrs. Ulmer of China brought inspiring messages of their experiences in China. Mrs. Ulmer gave a dynamic address on Sunday afternoon at the missionary meeting in charge of the W. M. S. In 1942 Miss Martha Wolf, Missionary in China, brought a fine message at the banquet about the women of China and the great need of medical work among them. The tables at this banquet were decorated with patriotic colors. Miss Wolf brought another fine address on Sunday after-

noon on the subject of "Building a Road in China." Rev. Phillip Lee and Mrs. Lee of the Chinese Presbyterian Church also spoke and Rev. Lee sang "The Holy City" with telling effect.

During these years many important things were done, among them was a program given at one of the Conventions by Mrs. Matzke about the work for children, in which she gave an illustrated story on "Feltogram," depicting the narrow gate that leads to heaven and the wide gate that leads to destruction. Mrs. Eleanor Hoffman, a public school teacher, gave a fine lesson on the fundamentals of teaching children. Other speakers reviewed the children's mission study books.

Group Rallies had been a feature of the Branch work for many years, and proved a great help, especially to those women who were not able to attend the annual Conventions. In these later years these Group Rallies increased in effectiveness. Goals for Growth were being used as a standard of progress, and at the Conventions, Candle Light services were held in recognition of the societies which had attained the highest number of Goals, and for those raising the most money. Santa Ana had previously received awards for the highest average per member for Conference Missions. In 1941 Santa Ana received an award of a Palestine Bible with olive wood covers as reward for having raised the highest average per member for six years. Burbank raised the highest average for all purposes.

In these three years, 1939 to 1942, 43 members of the Woman's Missionary Society passed away into eternity and were remembered in Memorial services. Among these was Mrs. Louise Lingelbach of Santa Ana, who was the first Branch Treasurer. She was elected in 1910 and served for four years. The list of departed W. M. S. members was lengthening with each year and the Memorial Hall was being crowded with the names of faithful women who had done their work and had gone to their eternal reward.

At the Convention of 1942 Mrs. C. E. Berger was elected Branch President and she served for three years. Mrs. Eleanor Hoffman and Mrs. A. L. Horn were First Vice-Presidents, and Mrs. Chas. Peisel and Mrs. E. C. Schneider, Second Vice-Presidents; Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Cook, Rec. Secretaries; Mrs. Thingan, Mrs. Stierle and Mrs. Bechthold, Cor. Secretaries; Mrs. Unita Weiss, Treasurer; Mrs. C. W. Taylor and Anna Claire Mauerhan, Secretaries of Young People's Work; Mrs. R. Bechthold and Mrs. Vera Korn were Mission Band Secretaries; Mrs. F. Etner



MRS. C. E. BERGER
1942 to 1945

and Mrs. Eliz. Zimmerman, Secretaries of Little Heralds. These were the officers for the three-year term of 1942 to 1945.

Mrs. Berger, the new President, was well qualified to lead the work of the Branch. She came from a missionary family and was very well equipped to impart missionary enthusiasm. The three years of her presidency were marked by steady forward progress. Missionary interest was very good and missionary giving reached a high mark. The report of the Treasurer, given in '45, showed a total of \$10,373.39 raised that year. Of this amount, the Circles raised \$636.32; the Mission Bands \$773.63, and the Little Heralds \$414. For Conference Missions \$2085 was contributed. The total of the Anniversary Fund was \$1591.

The interest in Mission Study was very good during these three years. Fine Group Rallies were held in the North and the

South. The regular work in the local societies was carried on in a very orderly manner. The women showed increasing ability to carry on the business in a successful way. New leadership was being developed and the younger women showed growing interest and ability. Sacramento Community Church was made a W. M. S. project, and the Convention of 1943 voted to help in liquidating the debt on this church. In 1945 the Conference Treasurer, S. J. Boelter, reported that \$1839.47 had been received from the Branch Treasurer. This cleared the debt on this church. The project had been successfully carried out.

At the Convention in 1943 the reports of officers were given in the form of a Court Scene. The Convention theme was: "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God." A skit showing 60th anniversary goals was given. Mrs. A. L. Horn conducted a Leadership Training Class in Missions. The Circle had its own Convention under the leadership of Mrs. Weiss. At the banquet in 1943 Dr. Nelson Dreier, Secretary of Congregational Missions, gave a fine address. During the next year, 1943-44, the Reading Course, under the direction of Mrs. O. C. Johnson, was greatly strengthened and the reading of good books much increased.

The Evangelical Youth Fellowship, which had been started by the Board of Christian Education, was encouraged and grew in the course of this year, and at the Convention of 1944 the Young People's Missionary Circle was incorporated into the Youth Fellowship. At this Convention Miss Martha Daeschner, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the W. M. S., spoke on the Youth Fellowship and its program and organization. Miss Daeschner's presence was a great inspiration and uplift to the W. M. S. and her addresses on promotional work were outstanding in value.

Our President, Mrs. Berger, found it impossible to be present all the time at the 1944 Convention, and the First Vice-President, Mrs. A. L. Horn, conducted the business in a very able manner. She also served as instructor of the Mission Study Training Class. Mrs. Vera Korn gave a model demonstration

of a Mission Band meeting. Mrs. Eliz. Zimmerman gave a skit in the interest of the Little Heralds.

The 60th anniversary of the founding of the Woman's Missionary Society was observed with a program in charge of Mrs. Thingan and Mrs. Burgi. The theme was "The Radiance of the Cross." A special feature was a pantomime of the song, "Fling Out the Banner." A beautiful poster made by Clayton Douglas was hung above a cross which had a gilded chest at its foot. Short talks were given on the Radiance of the Cross by four Branch officers. Then the two pioneer Presidents, Mrs. Cordes and Mrs. Althouse, came to the platform and each was given a corsage. Corsages were also presented to the former Presidents, Mrs. Burgi and Mrs. Thompson, and another to the present President, Mrs. Berger. Miss Daeschner then gave a talk on the "Challenge Facing the W. M. S." After this representatives of the societies came forward and placed the Anniversary Offerings in the Chest. This offering in the Chest amounted to \$1387.31. Besides Miss Daeschner, the special speakers were Dr. I. Lynd Esch of the United Brethren Church; Miss Alma Hanneld, a missionary candidate to China, and Dr. C. H. Archibald of India, who was the W. M. S. speaker on Sunday afternoon.

The 1945 Convention was remarkable for the fine devotions each morning led by Mrs. Holzgrafe, the theme being "The Kingdom of God." There were special sessions for the discussion of missionary problems. Mrs. Warner of the United Brethren Church brought cheering information about the merger of the United Brethren and Evangelical Churches. The members of the Greenwald family brought an interesting skit on "The Elixir of Life." It was recommended that the Executive Committee appoint a District Secretary for the North and one for the South who shall have charge of the Group Rallies. It was also recommended that the United Brethren women be invited to join in these Rallies.



MRS. A. L. HORN
1945 to —

The following officers were elected: President, Mrs. A. L. Horn; First Vice-President, Mrs. E. C. Schneider; Second Vice-President, Mrs. Ruth Dreifuss; Secretary, Mrs. Clara Thimgan; Treasurer, Mrs. Unita Weiss; Missionary Education Secretary, Mrs. A. A. Ehlers; Secretary of Young People's Work, Mrs. Emily Bechthold; Secretary of Mission Bands, Mrs. Vera Korn; Secretary of Little Heralds, Mrs. Gaurah Shaw. The following were appointed by the Executive Committee: Poster Secretary, Miss Mildred Mauerhan, who shall look after the poster work of the

W. M. S., Young People and Mission Bands; District Secretary for the North, Mrs. Wilson Taylor; Secretary for the South, Mrs. C. E. Stierle. When Mrs. Stierle moved out of the State, Mrs. Ruth Dreifuss was put in her place.

The new President, Mrs. Horn, was well qualified for the office. Her excellent personal qualities, her wide experience and acquaintance insured for her the confidence and cooperation of the women of the local societies. The excellent corps of officers newly chosen was a great help in the promotion of the Branch work.

The W. M. S. banquet of 1945 was more than ordinarily beautiful. The table decorations were provided by the Anna E. Ash Society of Los Angeles First Church and were in harmony with the general theme, which was Africa. Corsages were also provided by the Anna E. Ash Society. The attendance was

large and enthusiastic. The program was varied and interesting. Miss Edna Schweitzer, who had recently returned from Japan, gave a very earnest message. Miss Verna Hertzler of Japan also spoke. This made it an occasion long to be remembered.

The Memorial Report of 1945 showed that 43 W. M. S. members had gone to be with the Lord during the past three years. Many of these were able leaders in their respective societies. Their memory and their influence linger long after their passing.

Among the important events of the year were the two Group Rallies, one in the North and the other in the South, held jointly with the Missionary Association of the United Brethren. This close mingling of the missionary forces of the two denominations did much to strengthen the bonds of friendship and helped to make the coming merger of the churches easier and more effective.

The Convention of 1946 was a very important one in many ways. It was again held at the Pacific Palisades and was the last one of the Branch W. M. S. of the Evangelical Church. The year 1947 would mark the union of the Evangelical Woman's Missionary Society and the United Brethren Woman's Missionary Association. This would be a great event in the history of American church life.

In her annual message the President, Mrs. Horn, called attention to this coming union of the missionary forces of the two denominations. This holds out a great challenge to us as women of the church. We face grave responsibilities; but we face them not with fear but with joy and courage. At this time of the world's crisis, when all the people of the earth are lost in the confusion of twilight, we must go forward in the gigantic task of trying to bring light into the darkness. Our hope and trust in Jesus Christ who alone can bring in a better day.

The devotional services each day were led by Mrs. E. C. Schneider. She used as the basis of her thoughts the Convention theme: "Kingdom Demands for Our Day." The four great Demands are: Service, Unity, Tolerance and Peace. A number of former missionaries were present at this Convention—Mrs.

Lora Butzbach, Mrs. Cora Brunemeier and Mrs. Ignatia Thompson of China and Miss Verna Hertzler of Japan. Miss Hertzler was the special guest of the Convention and gave an address on present conditions in Japan.

Dr. W. C. Harr, former missionary in Africa and at present Professor of Missions in Evangelical Theological Seminary at Naperville, was the special Convention speaker. His strong personality and splendid addresses made the Convention a most inspiring one. Dr. Harr taught the class on Missions, using India as his theme. His missionary address on Sunday afternoon was an excellent one.

On Monday afternoon, at a meeting led by Mrs. Schneider, the former Presidents of the Branch were present and were specially recognized. They were Mrs. F. Cordes, Mrs. W. H. Althouse, Mrs. E. Burgi, Mrs. Ignatia Thompson and Mrs. C. E. Berger, and the present President, Mrs. A. L. Horn. Rev. and Mrs. E. Burgi read the history of the California Branch, which they had been asked to prepare. They were given words of hearty appreciation for this work. A fine Historical Scrap Book, prepared by Mrs. Berger and Mrs. Greenwald, was presented to the W. M. S.

At the Memorial Service a beautiful bouquet of flowers was placed on the table in honor of those members who had passed away. Special tribute was paid to the memory of Mrs. Theo. Schauer and Mrs. Edgar Hermann, former Branch officers; and to Miss Susan Bauernfeind, long-time missionary to Japan, who had died during the year.

Other features of this last Convention of the W. M. S. were a Demonstration of Children's Work in charge of Mrs. Vera Korn, Mission Band Secretary; reports of Mrs. Emily Bechthold, Branch Secretary of Young People's Work, and of Mrs. Cora Brunemeier in regard to the Poster awards.

The Committee on Organization reported that all societies should operate under the present plan until the union of the two churches is completed and definite programs sent out by the General Officers. Also that an effort be made to raise \$1000

for the Kingdom Service Fund and \$1000 for the Church Building Project of the Ontario Mission.

The Committee on Social Relations recommended: (1) That all possible aid be secured for the people in the war-stricken lands. (2) That every woman become interested in and well informed about our government and the elections. (3) That every effort be made to combat the evils of liquor and narcotics. (4) That women do all they can to promote tolerance and friendship between the different classes and races in our country and in the world.

Recommendations of the Committee on Spiritual Life set forth the five great emphases, namely Prayer, Self-Denial, Thank Offering, Visitation and Devotional Reading. These things are to be stressed in every society during the entire year.

The Treasurer's Report showed the following amounts raised during the past year: For Kingdom Service Fund \$1944.57; for New Mission Project, \$1000; for Conference Missions, \$1447.24. Grand total for all purposes, \$10,976.51, an average of \$17.42 for each member—a fine record.

The 1946 banquet was one of the best in our history. The attendance was good and the spirit of missionary enthusiasm ran high. The table decorations were furnished by Santa Ana and were very suggestive, depicting jungle scenes in India, since the study of India was the general theme. Dr. Clemens, well-known missionary in India, gave a most enthusiastic and inspiring address on Life in India, using the seven great Symbols of India to illustrate in a very graphic way his thoughts of Indian life.

The following officers were elected for the year: President, Mrs. A. L. Horn; First Vice-President, Mrs. E. C. Schneider; Second Vice-President, Mrs. Ruth Dreifuss; Secretary, Mrs. Clara Thimgan; Treasurer, Mrs. Unita Weiss; Mission Band Secretary, Mrs. Vera Korn; Little Herald Secretary, Mrs. Gaurah Shaw; Secretary of Literature, Mrs. Ignatia Thompson; Poster Secretary, Mrs. E. L. Koenig; Secretary for Northern Area, Mrs. Wilson Taylor; Secretary for Southern Area, Mrs. H. F. Greenwald; Representatives of Youth Fellowship, Arliss Ehlers

and Marilyn Greenwald. Mrs. Horn was elected as Delegate to the Biennial Meeting of the Board of Missions.

The year 1946-1947 was an eventful one for the California Branch of the Woman's Missionary Society, since it marked the close of the 37-year period of separate existence as an Evangelical missionary organization, a period during which splendid things were accomplished by the faithful church women for the building of the Kingdom of God on earth. It also marked the new beginning of an era of activity as the Evangelical Church and Church of the United Brethren became organically united as one denomination to be known from now on as the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

At the Biennial Meeting of the Board of Missions of the Evangelical Church, held at Lebanon, Pennsylvania, October 14-20, the closing chapter of the Woman's Missionary Society was written. Our President, Mrs. A. L. Horn, represented the California Branch at this historic meeting, where our beloved Missionary Society was formally and officially dissolved, and the new Woman's Society of World Service was launched. This was a solemn and historic time. A new era in the church at large had begun.

The union of the Evangelical Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ was finally consummated at the General Conference held at Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on November 16, 1946. Later in that month a Planning Conference of the new Woman's Missionary organization was held at Dayton, Ohio, at which Mrs. Horn also represented the California Branch. Here the policy of the new Woman's Society of World Service was planned and drafted. All the Branch officers of the Woman's Missionary organizations of both churches were present. A wonderful spirit of optimism and unanimity prevailed, and the women entered upon their new tasks with high enthusiasm. Under the wise leadership of the new President, Mrs. J. B. Showers, and the new Vice-President, Mrs. H. S. Frank, the W. S. W. S. started off most auspiciously. Long hours of diligent work and earnest prayers went into this effort

of setting up the program for the new society born under such promising circumstances.

In our own California Conference Branch two Institutes were held during the year, one in our church at Anaheim, and the other in the church at Point Pleasant. In March, 1947, two Joint Institutes were held with the women of the former United Brethren Church, one in First Church (U. B.), Los Angeles, and the other in our church at Lodi. An hour of Methods, conducted by the officers of both Branches, set forth the policies of the new Woman's Society of World Service. Miss Laura Mauk, missionary from Japan, gave a most inspiring address.

Our Branch can report growth in members; and the total amount of money raised broke all previous records, reaching the splendid sum of \$11,512.14. Our special projects were the Kingdom Service Fund, for which we raised \$1814.39, and the Ontario Church Building, for which we got \$1200.

In looking back over this 37-year period of the history of the California Branch of the Woman's Missionary Society, it is fitting that acknowledgement be made of the wonderful leading of the hand of God. This was a part of the Lord's work on earth. His Spirit directed and inspired it. To Him be all the glory! We would also acknowledge the faithful and self-sacrificing work of the women who served in places of responsibility in the Branch and in the local groups. Our Branch was not a large one, but it certainly achieved splendid results. The membership grew from 217 in 1910 to 638 in 1947. The magnificent sum of about \$180,000 was raised for missionary purposes. There is a W. M. S. in every church. Mention must also be made of the great store of information gained during the years by the regular mission study, and the reading of the many fine missionary books and the missionary literature. This gave the women a world-wide knowledge of the field of Missions and created a real missionary zeal among the members.

Numbers and reports are very interesting; but no one can measure or report the real achievements of these years. Only God knows the tremendous value and power of the prayers which have gone up to the Throne of Grace. Only He knows

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how many souls have been led to Christ and inspired to take up work for the Master. What heroic faith has been exercised and what unselfish work has been done by the women in this period of years! This history can record the activities carried on from year to year; but it cannot record the spiritual achievements in the hearts of the people. It may be that eternity will tell how much the work of the California Branch has meant for the advancement of the Kingdom and for the salvation of men and women.