

Baptist Herald

July/August 1982



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*Wherever your assignment has put you, others have labored there before you. You have entered into their labor, like it or not. They may not have had the high I.Q. that you have; they may not have had your talents, opportunities and your brand of theology, **but** they were dedicated to the cause of Christ as you are today. Remember this while you develop your world-shaking plans for your present charge. It behooves us to remain humble, faithful and tactful.*

*"I have planted, Apollos watered;
but God gave the increase" I Cor. 3:6
Paul Gebauer, December 1950*

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Celebrating 100 Years of Missions

This year we begin the celebration of 100 years of mission effort of The North American Baptist General Missionary Society, 1883-1983. This special issue of the *Baptist Herald* is not a complete history of the Mission Society, but the Rev. Harold Lang, associate missions director, has painted with words in a sweeping brushstroke what North American Baptists have done at home and around the world. The Rev. Fred Folkerts, missions director, has assisted in the selection of photographs.

This special issue of the *Baptist Herald* celebrates the ministry of missions and challenges us to continue "In Jesus' Name" to bring the Gospel to a needy world. Sections of the *Baptist Herald* usually included each month are not appearing this month, but will return in the September issue.

It is our prayer that you may let the Lord speak to you as you read of the past and allow him to challenge you for the future.

BJB

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A People with a Mission

United

"Too expensive!"
"Creates a Baptist 'pope'."
"Takes away the autonomy of the local church."
"We'll be controlled by the Easterners."
"We've gotten along well until now. Why change?"

The year—1882. *Der Sendbote*, publication of the German Baptists of North America, buzzed with controversy. Not about the need to reach out for Christ; not about the opportunities or challenge of missions; but how this could be done most effectively.

Should the Mission Societies of the Eastern Conference of the German Baptists and the three districts of the Western Conference be combined into a single General Missionary Society with a General Missionary Secretary?

Many pastors and leaders from the West were suspicious of this new innovation. Life west of the Appalachians was so different from the East. The frontier was real. Towns of any size were widely scattered.

The pioneer was an independent individual, self-reliant, living on his own. He was uncomfortable with the Easterners.

There large cities were developing; industry was flourishing; and life was more stable.

Patiently, skillfully, those favoring consolidation answered the objections. They pointed out that two-thirds of the salary of the General Secretary would be paid by the Home Mission Society of the American Baptists. The English-speaking American Baptists who had been in America for some time supported evangelism among immigrants from various language groups. The German Baptists would be responsible for only \$600 annually of the salary, \$150 from each district or area.

The General Secretary would not travel indiscriminately across the country. He would stay several months in each area. He was not to be a traveling preacher but a coordinator. Unity would be a step forward.

General Missionary Society Formed

Slowly fears were allayed; feelings subsided. On September 26, 1883, by act of the Seventh General Conference meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, the General

"In the event that a General Missionary Secretary is elected, one thing stands fast, that he must devote his entire time to the office."

—J. C. Grimmell, first elected General Missionary Secretary, 1883-1892

Missionary Society of the German Baptists of North America came into existence.

The General Missionary Society was not the first united effort of the German Baptists of North America. In 1858 Augustus Rauschenbusch became the first German teacher at the Rochester Baptist Seminary in Rochester, New York. From this the German Department developed with the purpose of training leaders for missionary work among German-speaking people in North America.

In 1870 the German Baptist Publication Society, Cleveland, Ohio, obtained its charter. It produced a variety of essential materials mainly in the German language.

The creation of the General Missionary Society was another significant step in uniting a peo-

ple with a mission. Who were these people?

All had a German heritage. They came from a variety of countries in Western Europe, where the use of German was widespread. Some came to North America to escape religious persecution in countries where the state church was extremely powerful. Others found a personal faith in Christ after their arrival in the New World.

Together, they were deeply committed to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. As they saw the waves of German immigration, they were aware that an expanding mission field was continually arriving on their own doorstep.

Grimmell Elected First General Missionary Secretary

At the 1883 Conference, the Rev. J. C. Grimmell, pastor of First German Baptist Church, Brooklyn, New York, became the first General Missionary Secretary. Within a few weeks of his election, Rev. Grimmell undertook an extensive tour to Wisconsin, Minnesota, Dakota, Manitoba, Illinois and Pennsylvania.

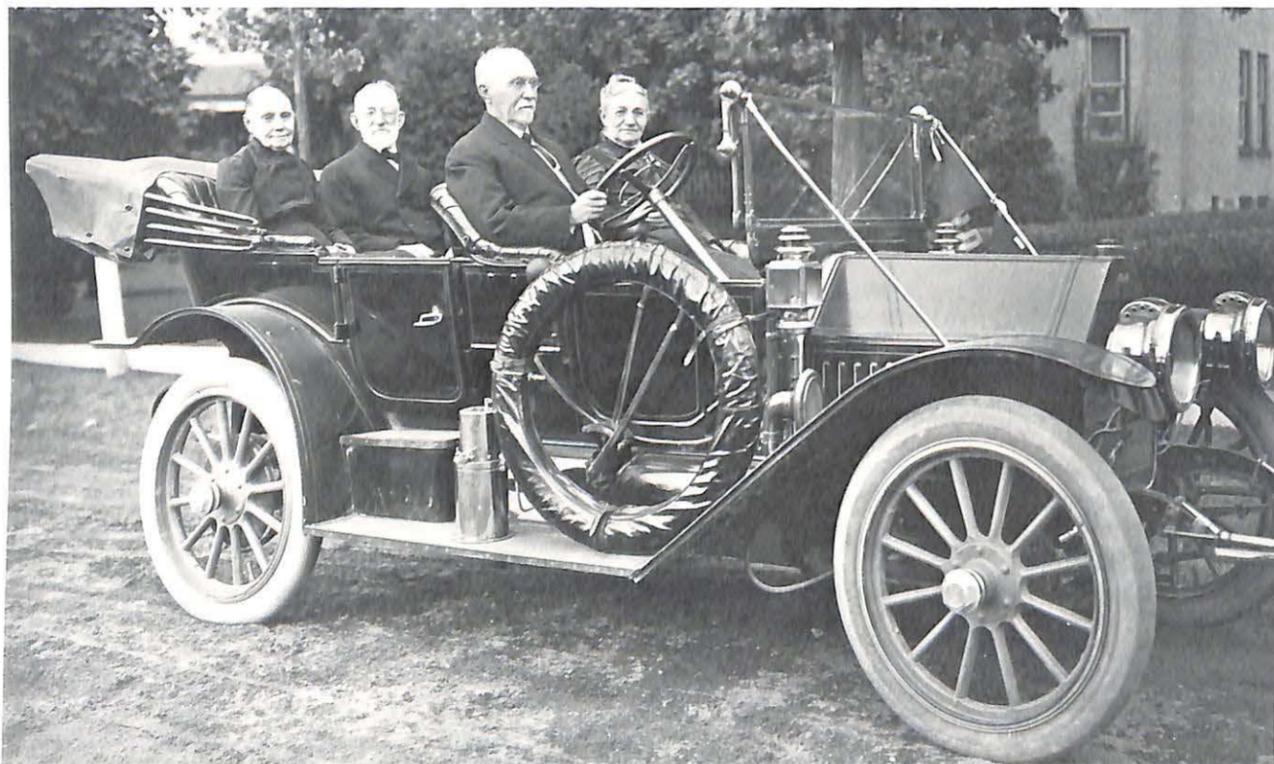
Three years later, Rev. Grimmell reported at the next Conference in Detroit, Michigan, in 1886, that 29 new churches were organized; 28 new churches were built; four mission churches became indepen-

dent; 55 home missionaries were being supported; and 2,191 members were added.

The total Conference membership increased from 10,000 to 13,000, and the total number of churches grew to 161 from the time the first church was organized in 1843.

But Rev. Grimmell faced problems. Even before his report to the General Conference of 1886, a lack of funds forced him to return to full leadership of his church in Brooklyn.

For seven years, from 1885-1892, he sought, as best he could, to both pastor a church and direct the mission thrust. As he completed his ministry as General Missionary Secretary at the General Conference meeting in 1892, he pled, "In the event



General Missionary Secretary G. A. Schulte and wife in front seat with the Rev. and Mrs. Eduard Gruetzner at Hanover, ON, in 1911 on the occasion of the Gruetzners' 60th wedding anniversary.

A People with a Mission

Cameroon

The closing decades of the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of a new European nation. Germany was coming to its own. It felt any nation of significance needed to have colonies. So Germany eagerly joined the race to complete the carving up of Africa.

On July 14, 1884, Colonel Gustav Nachtigal, emissary of the German government, signed agreements with coastal chiefs of the African country of Cameroon (Kamerun). As a result, Germany claimed this land as its colony.

English-speaking Missionaries Volunteer for Cameroon

Baptist mission work in Cameroon had begun 40 years before. Incentive came from Baptist Christians of African ancestry who had been taken as slaves to Jamaica. Now freed, these devout Christians longed to revisit the land of their birth and bring the Gospel to Africa.

Among the first to volunteer to accompany the Rev. John Clarke and Dr. G. K. Prince to establish mission work was the Rev. Joseph Merrick, pastor of a large church in Jericho, Jamaica. Clarke and Prince had, in 1840, made an exploratory tour of the West Coast of Africa and recommended establishing mission work at the Island of Fernando Po, just 20 miles off the coast of Cameroon.

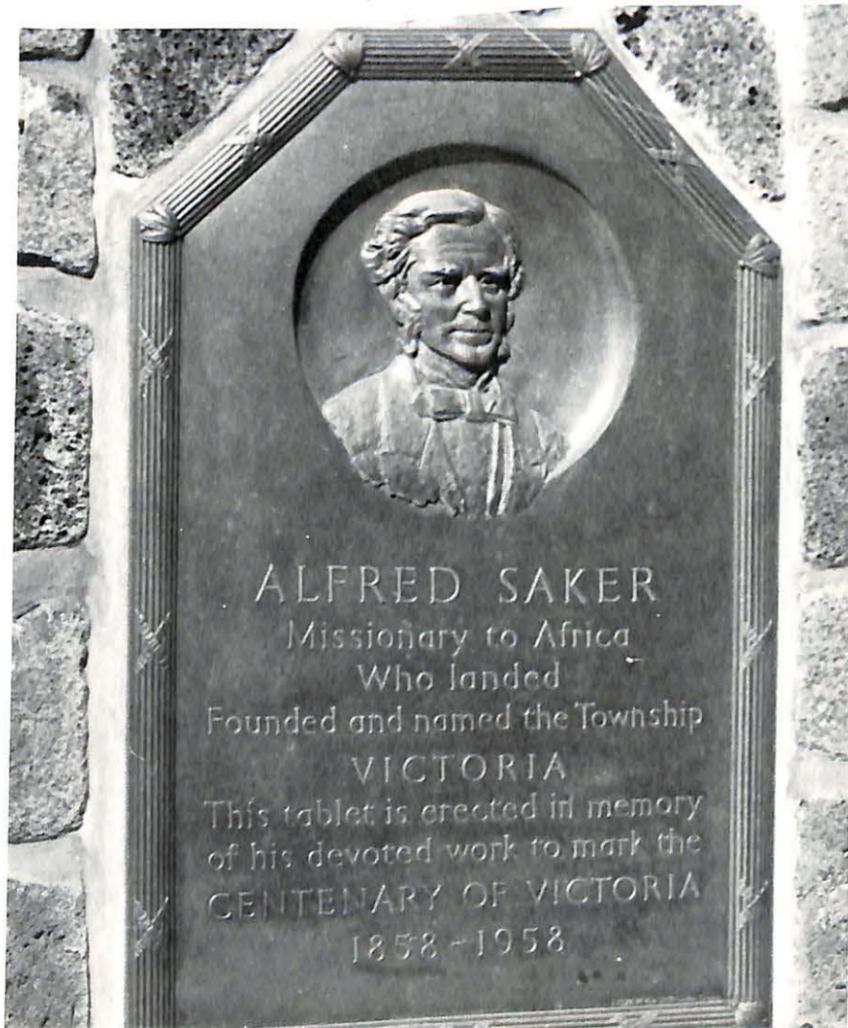
Soon after his arrival at Fernando Po in 1844, Rev. Merrick journeyed to the mainland to

establish a Christian witness there. He studied diligently to learn the language and later established a printing press at Bimbia.

Among others who volunteered in England was Mr. Alfred Saker. Mr. Saker worked on the island of Fernando Po initially

but made frequent trips to the mainland. When, because of the Catholic Spanish government of Fernando Po, persecution of Baptists arose, Saker and his group of Baptists needed to find a new home. Sailing along the coast, they established the town of Victoria in 1858.

Clark, Prince, Merrick, Saker—these and their fellow missionaries from England and Jamaica were all related to the British empire. They hoped that the entire area would be established and continue as a protectorate of Great Britain.



Centennial monument erected on the oceanfront where pioneer Baptist missionary Alfred Saker landed in Victoria, Cameroon. Alfred Saker, missionary to Africa, who landed, founded and named the township Victoria. This tablet is erected in memory of his devoted work to mark the centenary of Victoria, 1858-1958.

But Great Britain was no longer anxious to extend its vast colonial empire. When Germany claimed sovereignty over the Cameroon, Great Britain withdrew.

Cameroon Comes under German Control

When Cameroon became a German colony, it raised the problem of what the English Baptist missionaries should do. They realized that they would no longer be welcome in a country now under the influence of a different European power. The English Baptists withdrew from Cameroon. To whom could they entrust their work?

The Baptists of Germany, still a small and struggling group, did not feel they could take over the work that the Baptists from Great Britain had begun. As a result, the mission stations were given over to the Basel mission, a German-speaking mission in Switzerland.

Since this mission was Presbyterian in its beliefs and church policies, there was considerable friction between the mission and a number of the churches that had been established by the English Baptists. Soon native Baptist churches asserted themselves. These appealed to the Baptists in Germany to take up the work.

Steffens—First German Baptist Missionary

As the Baptists of Germany seriously considered this possibility, there came a letter from Augustus Rauschenbusch, professor of the German Department of the Rochester Baptist Seminary. An excerpt reads:

"There is a young man in our seminary in Rochester who will graduate next spring and who

is anxious to become a foreign missionary . . . He has a pleasing personality, is a devout Christian, a good conversationalist, and above all very active in Christian work. He is



Mrs. Anna Cappell Steffens
Missionary in Cameroon 1891-1901

possessed by a desire to go to the Cameroons. He is healthy and a very likeable person."

The man to whom Professor Rauschenbusch referred was Mr. August Steffens from Trenton, Illinois. Steffens had previously written to the Baptists of Germany concerning his willingness to serve as a missionary in Cameroon. Stirred by accounts of German colonization, he saw the opportunity of witness there.

However, it was the letter by

Professor Rauschenbusch that prompted action by the German committee. As a result, on March 27, 1891, a young American, who himself had immigrated to the United States,



August Steffens, first missionary from the United States sent by the Baptists of Germany to Cameroon, baptized 136 believers in the first year and five months of his ministry.

became the first missionary of the Baptists of Germany to enter the Cameroon.

At the end of 1891, shortly after he and his young bride, Anna, arrived in Cameroon, he wrote to the mission in Berlin: "Our experiences here have far exceeded our expectations . . . From every side, the black inhabitants are flocking to us and look upon us as God's very own people. Every day young men come to us and have the tears stream down their black



Central Conference meeting in Baileyville, Illinois, in 1897.

that a General Missionary Secretary is elected, one thing stands fast, that he must devote his entire time to the office."

Schulte Becomes General Missionary Secretary for 23 Years

The Conference tried again. The Rev. G. A. Schulte became the full-time General Missionary Secretary on August 1, 1893. He continued in this capacity until his death 23 years later.

Mission Field Arriving in Ports of North America

Immigration! German-speaking people came from Russia, Bulgaria and many other countries of Europe as well as Germany itself. German immigrants, often from a totally irreligious background or from state churches with little emphasis on a personal relationship to Jesus Christ, were a continuous mission field. They arrived in the ports of North America, spreading out to the cities, the plains and the prairies. An unprecedented mission opportunity—persons from unevangelized foreign countries were moving to the New World.

Baptists, disparagingly regarded as a strange sect in Europe, took up the challenge of evangelism. German Baptists, with considerable help from the American Baptists, faithfully strove to make an impact for

Christ: "Harbor missions" in port cities, evangelists on the Dakota and Manitoba prairies, prayer groups in Chicago and Detroit and assistance for construction of churches in Wisconsin.

The evangelistic zeal of the German Baptists was inspiring. Few in number, poor, often ill-trained—they felt compelled to share their faith. They were truly a people with a mission!

God blessed their efforts. In those early years, there was an average of eight new churches a year. More than 1,000 new members were added to the German Baptist churches yearly through baptism, an annual increase of approximately 10 percent.

A Growing Worldwide Vision

From the very beginning, German Baptists showed concern for overseas missions. In North

America, they were closely related with the American Baptist Home Mission Society. It was natural that, in looking to overseas service, there would be cooperation with the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society.

In the 1870s reports came from American Baptist missionaries in Southern India concerning the Lord's working among the Telegu people. During the months of June and July 1878, more than 8,500 followed Christ in baptism. This spurred the vision of German Baptists in North America to the possibility of worldwide mission service.

Young people responded. It is significant that among the first missionaries to go out from German Baptist churches were children of founders of the denomination. Miss Emma Rauschenbusch, younger

daughter of Professor and Mrs. Augustus Rauschenbusch of the Rochester Baptist Seminary, left for India and the Telegus in 1882.

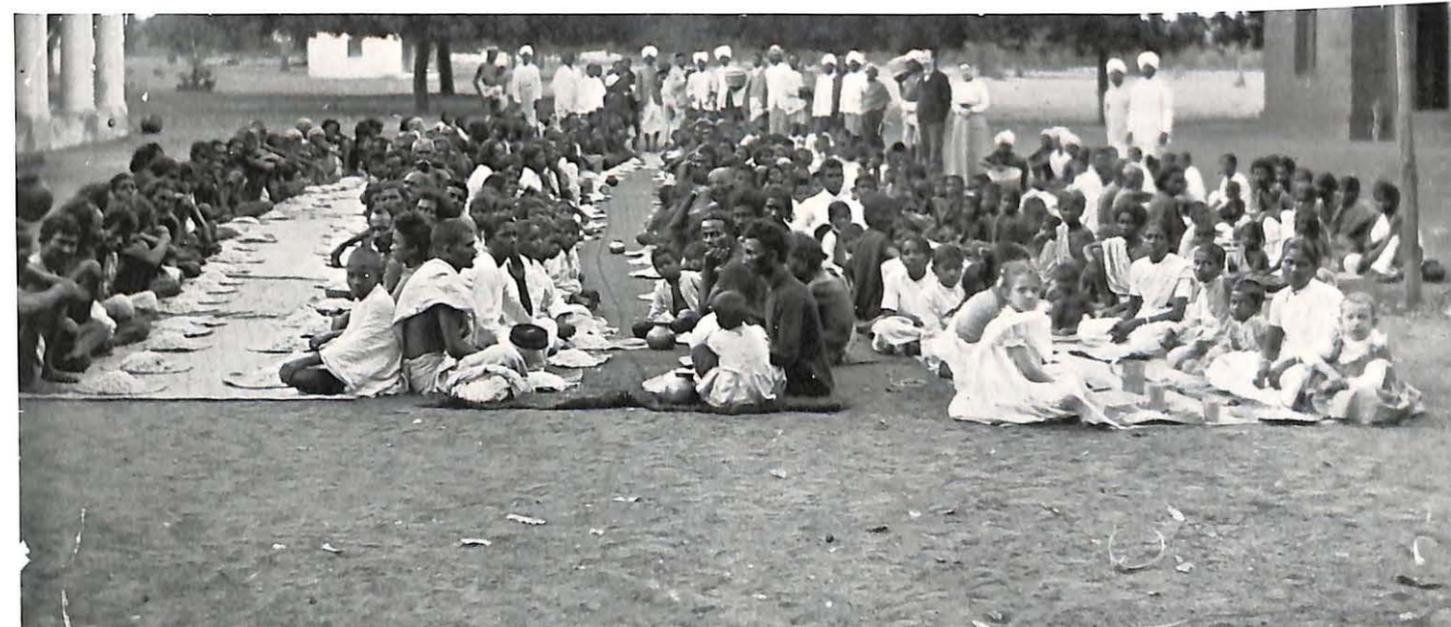
Shortly thereafter, Mrs. John Heinrichs, the youngest daughter of pioneer pastor, the Rev. Konrad A. Fleischmann, served in India along with her husband. Leaders showed the way in supporting their own children as part of the world-wide mission.

Direct Support for European Evangelism

Simultaneously, there was an increasing interest in mission work among German-speaking people in Europe. This, in fact, became the favored work for direct support by the German-speaking people in North America. This interest was natural.

There was a link between the German-speaking people in the United States and Canada and those in Europe. Many in the new world had relatives and close friends still in Europe. There also was the possibility that some of those who became Christians in Europe would later immigrate to North America and join the churches already established here.

Although the initial purpose for the formation of the General Missionary Society was the evangelizing of German-speaking persons in North America, there was a worldwide vision from the very beginning. This vision would grow. □



A native feast prepared for mission workers and famine coolies June 4, 1900, by the missionaries at Ramapatam, India, in honor of their son Edgar, whose birthday and recovery from scarlet fever were thus celebrated.—J. Heinrichs, missionary.

faces as we tell them of the love of Jesus for them."

Three months after his arrival, August Steffens had his first baptismal service of 24 Cameroonians. A few months later, 78 more were added. Within a year and five months, he had baptized 136 believing Christians.

Then in July of 1893, came the following cablegram:

"Steffens is dead.
Shall I come home?"

—Anna Steffens.

Just before his death, August Steffens wrote to Rev. Eduard Scheve, director of the work in Berlin:

"My dear brother Scheve, when you receive this letter, I shall no longer be among the living. I am very weak. I have loved you as a father loves his son. I love the Cameroon people with all my heart. The little house I built here for Anna

and myself, I present to the mission. Please take care of Anna; she has been a faithful wife; and we were so happy."

Missionaries' Lives Taken by Disease

August Steffens was the first of a number of Baptist martyrs in Cameroon. These North



Missionary Carl Bender (left) and his wife Hedwig (Clobber) (right) as they attended the wedding of the teacher David Williams and his bride at Soppo. The Williams are parents of Mrs. Beatrice Nokuri, now president of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Women's Union. Second from left is Mr. G. L. Haddison, father of Daisy and Hannah Haddison, who were members of the "College Singers" and "Cameroon Choristers," respectively.



The first mission house was built in Victoria, Cameroon, by August Steffens. Pictured are early missionaries Mr. and Mrs. Suevern at left and Mrs. Anna Steffens at right.

American Baptist missionaries were struck down not by spears or bullets but by disease along the coast of Africa known as the "white man's grave yard."

All these, nearly the entire initial missionary force sent to Cameroon by the German Baptists of North America, paid for their commitment to Christ with their lives, four within a ten-month period—a people with a mission!

Bender Appointed to Cameroon

When, in 1899, another young American, measuring a mere five-foot-three inches tall and weighing scarcely 110 pounds, applied for missionary service, he was continually warned, "You'll die there."

"You don't look like a strong man."

"You're too small in stature."

"I'm afraid of consumption."

But, the Rev. Carl Jacob

	Arrived in Cameroon	Died
August Steffens	Dec. 8, 1891	July 4, 1893
Mrs. Pauline Suevern	June 13, 1894	March 18, 1897
Peter Wedel	Nov. 11, 1895	Aug. 10, 1897
H. C. Enns	January 1897	July 5, 1897
Maria Enns	January 1897	Jan. 3, 1898
Anna (Steffens) Suevern	Dec. 8, 1891	May 17, 1901
(Widow of August Steffens and wife of Emil Suevern)		



Dr. Leslie Chaffee, first medical doctor sent by the North American Baptist Conference to Cameroon served there from Dec. 4, 1948, to 1965. He and his wife returned in 1973 to Cameroon, where he died. Chaffee is pictured with the Fon of Nsaw at the dedication of the Banso Baptist Hospital on April 2, 1949. Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Hildebrand of Stafford, Kansas, were the first "laymen-in-action" as they went to Cameroon in 1950 to build an addition to this hospital, missionary homes, school buildings and a chapel.

Bender was not easily daunted.

"I shall not die, but live and proclaim the works of the Lord."

This was the theme of his farewell message in the church in Berlin on his way to Cameroon. In 1899 Rev. Bender began his missionary service in Cameroon.

The predictions were not completely unfounded. Through nearly 30 years of missionary service, Rev. Bender repeatedly suffered from the effects of tropical disease, but he continued on. He gained great respect and admiration among the Cameroonians for his commitment, his wisdom, and his love for the people.

In 1935, he died as a result of black water fever. Today his grave stands at the entrance of the Soppo Church, which he con-



The Rev. Stephen Nteff (left), the Rev. Peter Jam, and the Rev. Gary Schroeder (right), evangelism secretary, contributed much to the development of Christian leadership training courses. Missionary Schroeder supervised the production of materials in which pastors were trained, and they, in turn, trained their church members. Rev. Schroeder was killed in a car accident on February 12, 1970, in Cameroon.

structed in the area where he worked so faithfully.

In more recent years, others have died in service. Dr. Leslie Chaffee and the Rev. Gary Schroeder are continually remembered by their graves in Cameroon. □

"I shall not die, but live and proclaim the works of the Lord."

—Carl Jacob Bender

A People with a Mission

Expanding

As exciting things were taking place in Cameroon, there was activity in other areas of the world. Young people from German Baptist churches in North America were feeling the call of God to serve in many places.

They went out under various mission societies. They served in Burma, China, India, and the Philippines under the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society.

Others served with the Canadian Baptists in Bolivia, Sudan Interior Mission in Nigeria and China Inland Mission in China. The German and English publications of the growing denomination vividly pictured the progress of their work.

Meanwhile, churches at home were reaching out to German-speaking peoples flooding the New World. Gradually the churches no longer depended on the American Baptists to aid in the expanding work.

Kuhn—General Missionary Secretary—1916-1946

In 1916 after 23 years of faithful service as General Missionary Secretary, the Rev. G. A. Schulte died. The Rev. William Kuhn became the new secretary until 1946. Between the two missionary secretaries they served more than 50 years.

A highlight in Rev. Kuhn's early ministry as General Missionary Secretary took place in 1919. The General Conference in Chicago, Illinois, determined to

raise a million dollars for denominational purposes during the following three years. As Dr. Kuhn writes,

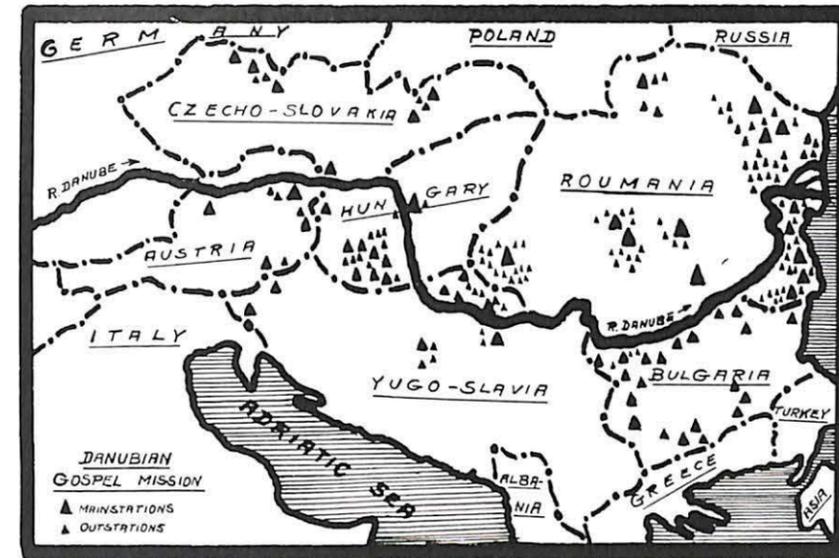
"This project had not been premeditated by any committee. There was a spontaneous enthusiasm about this matter that almost guaranteed its success. Already at that General Conference, a considerable part of the million dollar offering was pledged."



Dr. William Kuhn, general missionary secretary, (left) and Dr. Martin L. Leuschner, editor, toured Europe with the Rev. Carl Fuellbrandt of Austria and director of the Danubian mission. On this tour, they organized the mission work for German Baptists of North America, a work carried on through European pastors and evangelists.



Dr. William Kuhn signs receipts for contributions received toward the three-year million dollar project (1919-1922) for Conference mission work. Dr. Kuhn said: "There was a spontaneous enthusiasm about this matter that almost guaranteed its success. Already at that General Conference, a considerable part of the million dollar offering was pledged."



At the peak of the mission work, German Baptists of North America supported 89 pastors and evangelists in the European countries of Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Switzerland, Rumania, Yugoslavia and Germany. Money was given for relief and evangelism of German-speaking people in Europe.

In 1922 at the following General Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota, it was reported that \$1,056,273.06 had been received! Enthusiasm turned into actuality. The German Baptists were responding to their mission.

Part of the mission was reaching out to hurting people.

World War I had caused devastation and indescribable suffering in Europe. German Baptists contributed sacrificially for needs especially of German-speaking people in Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Russia as well as Germany itself. Relief ministry following this war

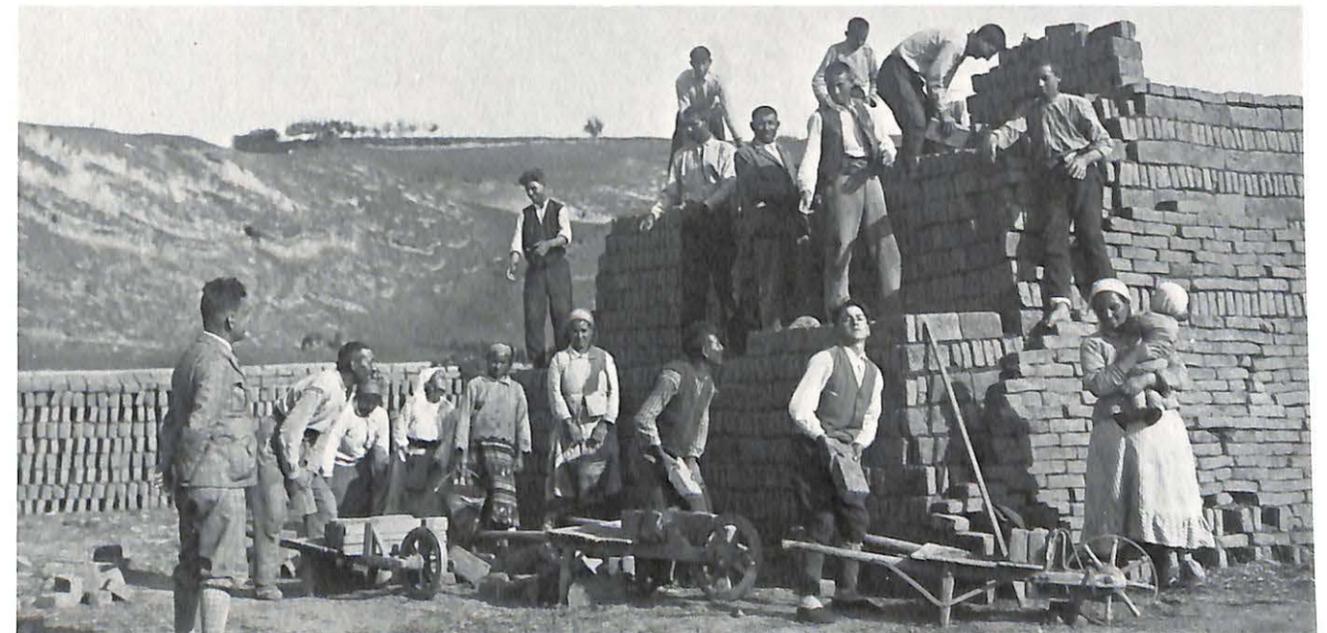
amounted to more than a third of a million dollars.

Evangelism in Europe

Another part of the mission was an evangelism emphasis in various countries of Europe. In 1920 Dr. William Kuhn travelled in Europe to examine mission possibilities there. Two years later, the Rev. Carl Fuellbrandt of Austria visited the United States, attending the General Conference. Plans were drawn.

Following the Conference, Dr. Kuhn accompanied Rev. Fuellbrandt, who was director of the Danubian mission, to Europe to organize the work. In some ways, the European work was the "mission field of our own" for German Baptists of North America. This work, however, was carried on through European pastors and evangelists.

At its peak in 1935, 89 workers were supported in the European countries of Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Switzerland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, as well as in Germany itself.



The first Gypsy Church in the world was organized and built in Golinzi, Bulgaria.

A People with a Mission

War-Its Impact

First Gypsy Church Organized

The work among the Gypsies of Bulgaria was unique. In the village of Golinzi, the first organized Gypsy Church in the world was established. Christians in North America were thrilled to hear the reports coming from this work. The Rev. Georgi Stefanoff, pastor of the Church, reported in 1939:

"In April we had thirteen evangelistic services, six prayer meetings, four meetings for men and three communion services. For all these 26 gatherings, the chapel was filled as at no other time in its history. More than 20 Gypsies were converted for which we are especially thankful to God. After the service on April 2, there were 11 Gypsies who asked for our prayers, and all of those prayed themselves for God's salvation and

forgiveness of sin . . . On Easter Sunday morning, five Gypsies gave their hearts to Christ. They stood up and brought their joyous testimony that they wanted to follow the risen Christ, their Lord."

Thus the work progressed on many fronts. At home churches of German Baptists in North America were multiplying. Established churches were growing; new churches were being established.

Now financially independent, they gave freely in money and personnel to mission enterprises abroad. Support was given for relief and evangelism of German-speaking peoples in Europe. Missionaries were sent to Cameroon through the Baptist Missionary Society in Germany. Through various groups missionaries ministered in other parts of the world. German Baptists through

interest, finances, and personnel were part of a global mission. □



Rev. Georgi Stefanoff, pastor of the Gypsy Church in Bulgaria, pictured with his family.

As war clouds began to gather in 1935, German Baptists reached another landmark in their broadening mission. Previously, all missionaries sent to Cameroon from German Baptist churches in North America had served under the Baptist Mission in Germany. In 1931, the Rev. Paul Gebauer began his missionary ministry with this arrangement.

In 1935 as Gebauer prepared to return for a second tour, he was authorized to develop the Mbem and Mambilla areas under the German Baptists of North America. Now the German Baptists definitely had their own overseas mission field.

Dr. and Mrs. Gebauer were soon joined by Miss Edith Koppin in 1936, and by the Rev. and Mrs. George Dunger and Miss Laura Reddig in 1938. The work began with a holistic approach. Medicine and education as well as evangelism and church plan-

ting—all were woven together.

Then the war came. All Baptist missionaries from Germany itself had to leave, never to return. For German Baptist missionaries from North America, it meant depletion of numbers and concern for the future.

Enthusiasm Building for Missions in Cameroon

As the war neared its conclusion, a new enthusiasm for missions was building in North America. Reinforcements were urgently needed to go to Cameroon as soon as possible.

On May 14, 1944, at the Missionary Young People's Rally of the General Conference held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Dr. William Kuhn presented nine new missionaries to the excited audience. In response to the call for volunteers given by Dr. Paul Gebauer, five more young people came forward and were included in the prayer of consecration.

By June of that same year, at least a dozen other young people had contacted Dr. Kuhn concerning the possibility of missionary service. The first of the post-war wave of new missionaries went to the field in 1945.

In 1947, the first of a series of booklets concerning missionary



Laura Reddig, missionary nurse for 40 years in Cameroon, began her ministry at Mbem, Cameroon, to those who needed medical and spiritual help.



Rev. Carl Fuellbrandt spoke at the dedication of the church in Golinzi on September 28, 1930. Matthew 11:28 appeared on plaques on the front of the church in the Gypsy language and in Bulgarian.



Paul Gebauer organized the mission for North American Baptists in Cameroon and was active in evangelism in the grasslands for nearly 30 years (1932-61). He is shown with Fulani women whose life and culture were a part of Dr. Gebauer's anthropological studies through the years.



Dr. George Dunger trained church leaders in Mambilla, which at that time was in Cameroon. Now it is part of Nigeria.



Nine missionaries were commissioned for service in Cameroon, Africa, during the General Conference at Milwaukee, WI, May 1944: (left to right, back row) Edwin and Verna Michelson, Earl and Lois Ahrens, Paul Gebauer (returning to Cameroon following military chaplaincy), Laura Reddig, Verna and Donald Ganstrom, and Myrtle Hein (front right center) bidding farewell to Evangeline Wegner. Hilda Tobert is not pictured.

personnel on the field was published. The title: *Now We Are 22!*

Following the war, all the former German mission stations were turned over to the North American Baptist Conference (as the German Baptists were now known). The Conference then officially organized the Cameroon Baptist Mission.

Dr. Gebauer, returning to the field after the war, served as field secretary of the Cameroon Baptist Mission until his retirement in 1961. Work continued in the areas of education and medicine as well as in evangelism and Bible training.

By 1952 there were 37 missionaries in Cameroon. Continually increasing numbers were involved in missions there. In 1964 short-term missionaries joined those serving under regular appointment.

Sensing the Need in Japan

During the war, many American servicemen became exposed to the people of Asia for the first time. Some of these servicemen came from North American Baptist churches. Although they were in the Pacific to fight a war, they became aware of the spiritual needs of the people. Increasingly, it seemed that the land of Japan might be open for missionary effort.

As the war ended, General Douglas MacArthur, commander of the Allied Forces and Occupational Army in Japan, appealed for missionaries to be sent to Japan. He felt that the people would be receptive to Christianity and that thousands of missionaries were needed urgently.

Meanwhile, back in the United States, changes were taking place within the structure of the General Missionary Society. Dr.

William Kuhn, after more than 30 years of leadership, retired from service in 1946. He was replaced by the Rev. Helmut G. Dymmel as Missions Secretary, and then in 1951 by the Rev. Richard Schilke. Immediately Rev. Schilke had the responsibility to determine whether the North American Baptist mission should expand to a new continent and a new country, Japan.

Early in 1951 Rev. Schilke received a letter from a young lady, Miss Florence Miller. While a student at Moody Bible Institute, Florence had become acquainted with a book written by Amy Carmichael, *Things As They Are*.

This book depicted a dream in which Amy saw a procession of people marching toward a precipice. Because they were blind, they were unaware of the danger that lay ahead. One by one they fell over the precipice.

Close by, another group of people sat on the grass singing, laughing and making daisy chains. They were blissfully unaware of the fate of these, unconcerned that they were perishing.

Florence was deeply convicted by what she read in this book. She thought of what she was doing as a Bible school student taking in all the Biblical teaching, enjoying all the Christian fellowship with other students, but having little concern for those who had never heard of the coming judgment and need for personal faith in Jesus Christ. That night she promised God, she would go to a place where the name of Christ was not well known.



Dr. Richard Schilke served as General Missionary Secretary from 1951 to 1979.

Feeling a tug to the land of Japan, she corresponded with Rev. Schilke as well as others. The decision had not yet been reached whether North American Baptists should open work in Japan.

About the same time, another



Miss Florence Miller (center) with Miss Kitahara who became their household helper (at left) and Miss Yoshiko Yamamoto (at right) who helped Miss Miller start the first North American Baptist mission station in Japan in Ise in 1953.

couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jay Hirth, began corresponding with Rev. Schilke. Mr. Hirth had been in Japan as a serviceman with the Allied Occupation Army. He felt strongly the call of the Lord to return to this land as a missionary.

These volunteers felt God's call. They expressed their willingness to go. But should a new field be opened?

Decision Made to Begin Work in Japan

After careful consideration, the decision was made. Consent was given. In 1951, the Rev. and Mrs. Jay Hirth and Miss Florence Miller became the first North American Baptist missionaries to Japan.

In Japan, Florence Miller's work began through contact with one Japanese girl. Her name was Miss Yoshiko Yamamoto. Many of Yoshiko's family had died during the war. Because of the war, Yoshiko was not even able to get an elementary school education.

At 15 she went to work and live at a spinning mill. There, through evangelistic meetings

conducted by a missionary, Yoshiko came to know Christ. She became a zealous witness. Because she refused to work on Sundays, she was dismissed from her job at the spinning mill.

When Florence met her, Yoshiko was a complete stranger, speaking no English. But both felt God had brought them together. They agreed to work together in opening the first North American Baptist mission station in Ise. Yoshiko's friend, Miss Kitahara, who had also been dismissed from the spinning mill, became their household helper.

Yoshiko helped Florence in visiting, preparing messages and in teaching Sunday school. She was a natural storyteller and gifted in dealing with children. With the indispensable help of Yoshiko, Florence Miller established the first church.



In Copenhagen, Denmark, the Baptist Church distributed clothing from German Baptists in North America to German Baptist refugees in Denmark.

The work in Japan has not been easy. Through 30 years of effort, growth has been slow. At the present time, there are eight churches with nearly 300 baptized Christians. Though the growth has been slow, it has been steady. Those who have come to a point of decision know the meaning of making Christ Lord as well as Savior. Commitment usually comes after literally years of exposure to Christians and the Christian witness. Once it is made, it is a lifetime commitment.

Relief—Again a Primary Concern

In Europe the war had devastating effects. New and improved agents of destruction worked their havoc in the European countries, particularly Germany. Hundreds of thousands of refugees seeking to escape communistic control, fled from the East to the West Zone of Germany. Myriads of people, including many German Baptists, lost virtually everything—relatives, homes and material possessions.



Miss Gretchen Remmler, secretary, and Dr. William Kuhn display some of the relief ministry at the General Conference in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in 1949.

The relief ministry once again became a primary concern. By the thousands, CARE packages were sent to alleviate in some small way the tremendous suffering. Through sacrificial giving and volunteer labor of North American Baptists, hundreds of thousands of parcels were sent out in the years following World War II. In each parcel was included the simple message, "Im

Namen Jesu."

The Rev. William Sturhahn, the official representative of the North American Baptist Conference for relief work in Germany, observed the distribution of relief supplies and assisted in making immigration arrangements. Letters indicated the effectiveness of this ministry.

"With much joy and thanksgiving we received your parcel. You



Persons involved in administering relief work at the North American Baptist Office were Roland Ross, comptroller, (back row, left to right); Dr. Martin Leuschner, promotional secretary; Dr. Frank Woyke, executive secretary; the Rev. Helmut Dymmel, general missionary secretary; and Dr. William Kuhn, former general missionary secretary, (seated).

should have seen the radiant faces of our children, especially that of our youngest boy of four! He could not contain himself, jumping up and down and clapping his hands as we unpacked all those wonderful things. Again we have experienced God's love. His arm is long enough to enfold and keep us."

"God knows how much we need everything your parcel brought us. When we are at the end of our own strength, he always finds ways of helping. We had to leave our home in East Prussia, lost everything, now we are refugees. One treasure we shall never lose, namely Christ, and we trust him to lead us safely through the dark days that lie ahead."

"Immediately after your parcel arrived, the family gathered around to see what had come. What amazement, what rejoicing! Within my heart, I heard a

voice say: 'Our brethren in America have not forgotten us.' Our fellowship in Christ Jesus is worldwide; it crosses the wide ocean. You have given us new strength and hope. You have proved to us again that Christ is the true shepherd of his people."

"Thank you a thousand times for your gift. My own eyes were filled with tears, and the eyes of my two children sparkled with joy when we saw those precious things. God must have known that we had not had meat nor fat in four weeks. It is a hard lot to be a refugee on the face of the earth; but to be a pilgrim on the way to our heavenly home is joy and blessedness."

Packed by volunteers at the denominational office in Forest Park, Illinois, a continuous stream of essentials found its way to those in need: Clothes, tin meats, fats, cocoa, dehydrated soups, coffee, dried peas, rice,

canned fruits, dried prunes, and raisins. In one three-month period in 1948, a staggering total of 413 tons of relief goods were sent to Europe. All this "In Jesus' Name."

There was another side to the end of the war in Europe. Many countries where North American Baptists had supported mission work were now closed. The iron curtain was real—no resumption of work in Bulgaria, Rumania, or Poland . . .



Dr. Sandor Haraszti (refugee Baptist pastor from Budapest) and the Rev. William Appel deliver Christmas packages for children at a refugee camp in Vienna.

the list goes on. Only Austria was left.

For a number of years, money was sent to support local pastors and evangelists in Austria. After 30 years, Dr. Carl Fuellbrandt retired as Director of the Danubian Mission in 1954. The Rev. William Appel, an experienced American pastor, served as director of the Austrian work from 1956 to his retirement in 1960. As Baptists in Germany began to become financially able, the work in Austria and its support were turned over to them. □

A People with a Mission

Ministering to Minorities

The Indians close to the northern churches in Canada and the Spanish-Americans living at the southern tip of the United States—each living at the extremities of the North American Baptist work—were minorities often neglected and ignored. North American Baptists learned to see needs close at hand as well as halfway around the world.

The name most often associated with work among Indians of Canada is that of the Rev. Fred W. Benke of Edmonton, Alberta. The Rev. Reinhard Neuman, who himself served faithfully as missionary among the Indians for nearly 15 years, described his early travels with Rev. Benke:

"My first trip with Brother Benke was to the northern country of Valley View, Alberta. Unlike most preachers who had raced through to their destination, Mr. Benke took time off to stop here and there to contact some half-breed Indians along the way. Like Jesus who had the multitude with and about him, he took time to see the individual and to talk with him, as if he were like Zacchaeus in the tree.

"The trip which he made to Nordegg in the mountains will never be fully understood nor known. He made it alone with his car only to contact one whom he felt was hungry for the living bread and thirsty for the living water. It was soon afterward that an Indian ate

drank of this life-giving substance and was saved. This man was Joe Rabbit of Nordegg, Alberta, first Christian Indian to be baptized by us.

"It is no wonder Brother Benke was broken down in health. Doctors tell us that his heart was half dead when he



The Rev. Reinhard Neuman (left) was the first missionary to live on the Montana Reserve. Chief John Bear (center) opened the door for Rev. Benke to minister to the Indians there. This led to the appointment of a full-time missionary couple, the Neumans. The work expanded to the Bull Reserve where Missionary Raymond Harsch located (right).



Pastors from neighboring North American Baptist churches would come to the Reserves to help conduct adult Bible schools. In February 1964, the Rev. William Sturhahn, the Rev. W. W. Sibley, the Rev. Phil Grabke, and Missionaries Reinhard Neuman and Ray Harsch conducted the Bible school on the Bull Reserve. Mr. and Mrs. John Bull (grandson of Chief Frances Bull) are seated in center front. Students from the Christian Training Institute, Edmonton, and youth from the Calvary Baptist Church, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, assisted the missionaries on weekends and during the summers.



Benke Memorial Chapel (in background).

was living. If a man in that condition could do what he did, how much more ought we to be able to do with all our heart alive unto the Lord! Although Brother Benke was not highly educated in secular schools, he possessed a learning which he could not receive anywhere. The school to which he went was Jesus' school. Because of so many years he spent under the teaching of Jesus, he became like him."

Through the vision of Rev. Benke and others, attention was turned to possible work among Indians in Canada. The Missions Committee of the Northern Conference showed concern. There was one man who strongly opposed to the very last an organized work on the Indian field. This was Rev. Benke himself. His reason for opposing it was this:

"You cannot do much among Indians in an official and organized way. The best way to work with them is simply to go in and befriend them yourself. Give them whatever

ministry you can and leave them to themselves."

The Committee, however, felt the work should be more organized.

First Missionary to Indians Appointed

In 1946, Miss Twila Bartz became the first of 20 missionaries to the Indian field. Work was conducted on the Montana Reservation, Bull Reservation, and Muscowpetung Reservation.

God blessed the ministry, but there was a variety of difficulties. One of the greatest problems was to find continual missionary personnel. For the sake of effectiveness and continuity, it was decided to turn the work over to the Northern Canada Evangelical Mission, specializing in Indian work. This was done in 1971.

A Ministry to Spanish-Americans in Colorado

Farther south, North American Baptists felt concern for those of Spanish-American descent living in the San Luis Valley of Colorado.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1944, at the same service when new missionaries were commissioned for work in Cameroon, the Rev. and Mrs. J. J. Reimer were presented as missionaries to work among these Spanish-American people. Poverty,



Missionary David Keiry ministers to Spanish-Americans in Center and Del Norte, Colorado.

alcohol, disease—many of the conditions faced in the Indian work—were prevalent in the Valley as well.

The ministry begun by the Reimers continues to the present time. It, too, has been a difficult work, involving dangers and disappointments as well as victories. Through the years, congregations in three towns have



Helen Lohse served for a time as missionary to the Spanish-Americans in Center, Colorado.

developed: Del Norte, Center and Monte Vista.

Along with church-related ministries, a Baptist Health Center at Monte Vista meets health and maternity needs. Clothing distribution, thrift shop, distribution of food supplies and assistance in housing—all this and more are vital parts of the ministry. The Rev. and Mrs. David Keiry have served for 25 years. Dr. and Mrs. Earl Ahrens, following 18 years of service in the Cameroon, went to the Valley in 1963 where they are continuing their ministry. Miss Katherine Hunt is the nurse/midwife at the Baptist Health Center in Monte Vista, Colorado, since 1976.

Missions on the Mexican Border

At the height of the war in the Pacific, a young sailor serving as a gunner in the United States Navy was aboard his ship. As he looked up from his position, he saw a Japanese plane diving straight at him. Its bombay door was open. He was in such a posi-

tion that his gun could not hit it, but the plane could hit the ship. This gunner knew that in just seconds the plane would destroy the ship, and he would be blown to pieces.

He screamed into the wind, "God, help me!"

As he faced certain impending death, he heard the shattering burst of an explosion. He saw the plane, hit by anti-aircraft fire, veer off into the ocean and disappear in the waves. Suddenly there was absolute silence.

As he thought about his experience, Raymond Castro made a commitment to God:

"Lord, now that you have helped me, I promise that I will serve you full-time."

As a result, this sailor, a Latin American Christian and Golden



Missionary Earl Ahrens, Monte Vista, CO, not only ministers to the spiritual needs of Spanish-Americans, but also to their physical needs through a food distribution program and construction of low-cost housing.

Gloves boxing champion, dedicated his life to Christian service. Almost a decade later, in 1954, he became a home missionary for the North American Baptist Conference, beginning work in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas just north of the Mexican border.

This Spanish-American work, supported especially by the Southern Association of North American Baptist churches, has continued and grown. Organized churches minister at Edinburg and Rio Grande City, Texas, with missions also in Mexico.

Both churches presently have pastor/missionaries who came from Mexico and are serving people of their own background: The Rev. and Mrs. Lindberg Ake and the Rev. and Mrs. Juan Luna.

Inner-city Ministries

Other North American Baptist churches have ministered to ethnic groups in urban areas.

Defying the flight of churches to the suburbs, here and there individual congregations have remained and adapted their outreach to changing neighborhoods.

These now include ministries to Spanish, Portuguese, Blacks

and Orientals in the New York/Newark area, Philadelphia, Sacramento, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Often the churches are small and the finances uncertain, but the congregations courageously respond to God's call to mission. □



Robert and Maryscella Sandoval served Garcia's Ranch Baptist Church in Rio Grande City, Texas, for 15 years from 1963 to 1978 and reached over the border to minister in Camargo and Villa Nueva, Mexico.



"Lord, now that you have helped me, I promise that I will serve you fulltime." In 1954 Raymond Castro (left) became a home missionary beginning work in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

A People with a Mission

A Look Around

A trip around the world begins at home. Sometimes in focusing on what is happening overseas, developments in local churches are ignored.

In the 1950s the influx of German immigrants, spurred by the conditions in Europe following World War II, began to slow down. Language changes continued to take place within the churches. The vast majority of North American Baptist churches were now all English.

The North American Baptist Conference originally served German-speaking people in the United States and Canada. By

the 1950s within the urban churches, many members did not have a German background. What now?

It was at this time that several new movements began to take place in the churches in North America. The General Missionary Society had always been involved in supporting pastors and evangelists, providing chapel building funds, aiding churches not yet financially independent, and providing for retired ministers and their wives. Now it accepted the challenge of new areas of outreach.

Expansion through Church Extension

The Missionary Society saw opportunities in areas of church

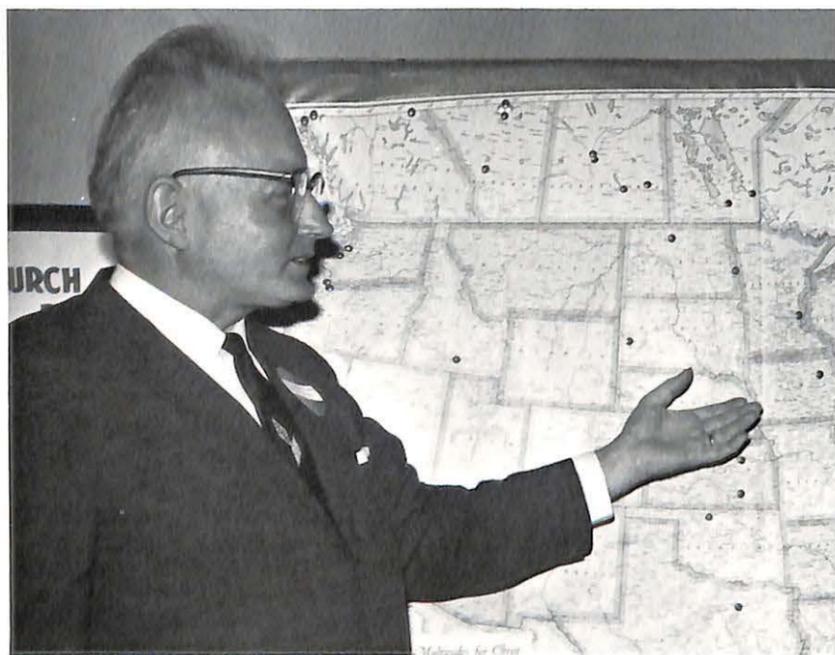
extension. With rapid urbanization taking place within the country and suburbs of large cities springing up seemingly overnight, there were vast areas of the population that were unchurched or underchurched.

Through the church extension program, new works began, particularly in larger towns and cities. These were not connected with a German heritage. Rather they were churches established to serve their communities whatever the national background. The work of church extension began in the 1950s under the direction of the Rev. Daniel Fuchs.



The Rev. Lyle Wacker became associate secretary for church extension in 1967. In 1976 the church extension ministry became a department all its own; at which time Rev. Wacker became Director of Church Extension until his death in 1978.

Realizing the importance of this ministry, the Church Extension Department became independent of the General Missionary Society in 1976 under the leadership of the Rev. Lyle Wacker. One hundred and ten churches have been added to the North American Baptist Conference through church extension.



The Rev. Daniel Fuchs was the first Church Extension Director combined with his responsibility as Evangelism Director.

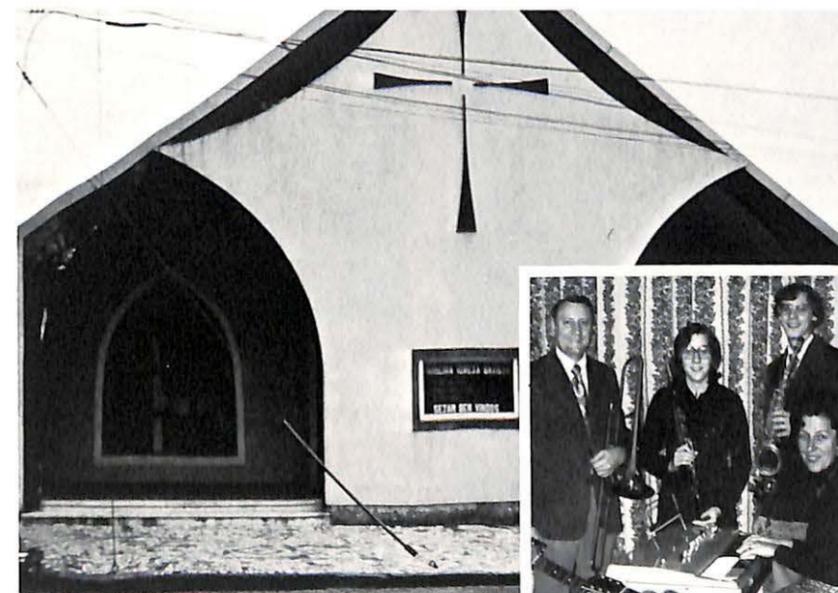
"God's Volunteers"—Youth Evangelism Ministry

"God's Volunteers," a program challenging the commitment of young people to God, began in 1956. Assisting in both new and established churches, the teams of "God's Volunteers" have provided impetus in evangelism and reaching out to others. Begun through the General Missionary Society, the team members agreed to devote a year of their lives to this opportunity. They received extensive training in door-to-door visiting, witnessing, discipling, conducting workshops and singing.

In 1973 "GVs", as they were affectionately known, became a part of the newly formed Church Ministries Department. They are presently known as "New Day." Now divided into music and discipling sections, they continue



In 1956 the Evangelism Committee decided to adopt a new evangelistic method, the "God's Volunteers" program. Under this plan, six young volunteers, who donated their services for the major part of a year, were selected as an evangelistic team. After training for about a month in the early fall, they spent six months visiting churches, spending one week or more with each congregation. The first team consisted of (back row) Mr. and Mrs. Oswald Orthner and the Rev. Daniel Fuchs, evangelist and the first Director of God's Volunteers; (front row) LuElla Wolff, Bonnie Tesky, Katie Michelson and Eunice Kern.



The Rev. and Mrs. Herman Effa, Allen and Jerilyn, were one of the first two N.A.B. missionaries to the State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. They conducted outdoor evangelism services and built this church in Porto Alegre.



to provide musical evangelistic programs and training for North American Baptist congregations.

A New Mission Field in Brazil

From the local churches and pastors themselves came the challenge for a new overseas mission field. North American Baptists had worked in Africa, Asia, and to some extent in Europe. What about South America?

Pastors visiting in South America, Baptist World Alliance sessions in Rio de Janeiro, young people feeling called to ministry south of the border—all these contributed to the urgency of beginning a new work. Following a visit by Dr. Richard Schilke to a number of potential mission fields, North American Baptists decided to begin work in Brazil.



Ralph Nelson, shown here, making a follow-up visit to a family in Brazil. Ralph and Martha Nelson began their missionary service in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, through outdoor evangelistic meetings and the establishment of preaching points in various cities where later a church would be planted. They now serve in the State of Santa Catarina.

This new mission work was not to be carried out independently but in cooperation with the Brazilian Baptist Convention and five other Baptist mission groups. North American Baptists chose the southernmost state in Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul, in which to work. Sending two couples there, the Rev. and Mrs. Herman Effa and the Rev. and Mrs. Richard Rabenhorst, the work began.

Very recently the work expanded to the neighboring state of Santa Catarina. North American Baptists continue to work in Brazil as part of a cooperative effort, supporting the Brazilian Baptist Convention, which numbers half a million in its constituency. Evangelism, church extension, and church growth are the ministries in Brazil.



The emphasis in Brazil for the past three years has been on establishing new churches. The goal for Rio Grande do Sul has been eight new churches in three years. This year the final two churches are being established. Missionary Richard Kaiser (left) is deeply involved in this.



The Rev. Richard Rabenhorst has been the field secretary of our mission in Brazil. He and his family were one of the two missionary families who began our work in Brazil.

"Trans Brazil," an emphasis in evangelism and church planting, has captured the enthusiasm of Brazilian Baptists. Each state has its own "Trans" program.

Trans RS covers Rio Grande do Sul. With a goal of eight new churches in three years, 1982 is the final year. Only two churches remain to be started to reach this goal. Pastors, evangelists, students, and lay people work together so that Christ will be known, loved and honored throughout Brazil.

The Japan Baptist Convention Today

Japan? God is working there, too. The year 1981 saw a one percent increase in membership in North American Baptist churches in the United States and Canada. In contrast, the increase in Japan was ten percent.

A baptismal service for nine candidates was the largest single baptismal service in 30 years of North American Baptist ministry there.

The Japan Baptist Convention, organized in 1967, has eight churches with almost 300 members. It is the goal of the

of Nigeria. Along with this change came the political independence of both Cameroon and Nigeria.



English classes have been taught by missionaries and short-term missionaries in colleges, homes and businesses. Here friendships bring opportunities to invite people to Bible study groups such as this one led by Florence Miller and then to a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Convention to double its membership within this decade.

Capable pastors and Christians provide able leadership. Career and short-term missionaries cooperate with the Japan Baptist Convention in church extension and growth, serve at the newly acquired Christian Education Center, and make contacts through conversational English and English Bible classes. Still small but not discouraging, the Japanese work looks to the challenges of opening doors of opportunity.

Nigeria Added to Mission Outreach

In Africa the quirks of world politics suddenly gave North American Baptists another country of outreach. As a result of a plebiscite in 1961, the portion of mission enterprise on the Mambilla Plateau now became a part

Even as the countries of Cameroon and Nigeria were gaining independence, the churches, too, became increasingly self-sufficient. The Cameroon Baptist Convention was organized in 1954 and the Mambilla Baptist Convention in 1973. They elect their own executive secretary, hold their own General Councils, and elect their own leaders at regular biennial conferences.

In Cameroon in 1970, the schools, which had been originated through Baptist mission work, became part of the Educational Authority of the Cameroon Baptist Convention. In 1975, the hospitals and other medical work came under the Medical Authority of the Cameroon Baptist Convention. Now North American Baptist



The Rev. Wilfred Weick (right) acted for the North American Baptist Mission in Japan at a handing-over ceremony in October 1978, when all church properties were transferred to the Japan Baptist Conference represented by the Rev. Yoshio Akasaka (left). The Japan Baptist Conference was organized in 1967.

A People with a Mission

Looking Ahead

Now We Are 22—1947
Now We Are 55—1952
Now We Are 82—1962
Now We Are 88—1964
Now We Are 109—1969

These publications, describing the personnel of the North American Baptist Missionary Society, give an indication of the consistent increase of mission personnel, expansion into new countries, and introduction of new programs.

As the 1970s began, it seemed as though the mission work was proceeding smoothly on all fronts. Regular and short-term missionaries had gone over the 100 mark, a very commendable number to be supported by a denomination of less than 55,000 members.

It was in the 1970s, however, that drastic changes took place. Someone said, "What satan was not able to do for decades in thwarting mission advance, economics succeeded in doing in a few years."

A Deficit Causes a Reduction

Beginning in 1971, the North American Baptist Conference expended more money than it received from the churches. There were seven years of deficit spending, not significant amounts; yet each added to the other. Reserves, which had been built up, were depleted.

Then came 1978. Inflation in many places overseas proceeded at an alarming rate, pushing cost of living allowances for missionaries in those countries higher and higher. The American

dollar performed poorly especially against the Japanese yen and the French franc. Tremendous losses were experienced in the currency exchange. In that single year, there was a deficit of nearly \$400,000.

As North American Baptists gathered for the Triennial Conference in Bismarck, North Dakota, in 1979, the shocking truth came with an indelible impact. The North American Baptist Conference was a million dollars in debt. It is somewhat ironic that exactly 60 years previously at a General Conference there was the goal of a million dollars for expansion in three years. Now, in 1979, there was a different million dollar goal—one to liquidate the million dollar debt by 1982.

Drastic Measures Taken

Drastic measures were necessary, directly affecting missions as well as other Conference ministries. First, there would be no more deficit spending under any circumstances. Emphasis was placed on eradicating the Conference debt.

Then, the overseas missionary force had to be reduced. No missionaries in active service were asked to return home. However, missionaries who retired, resigned or came home for health reasons often were not replaced. As a result, the number of career missionaries on the field and on furlough dropped from 72 in 1979 to 56 in 1980. All fields experienced this cutback, but those most severely affected were Nigeria and Cameroon.

missionaries are working in close cooperation with the local conventions. This is also true in Brazil and Japan.

Emphasis Continues on Training National Leadership

In both African countries, emphasis continues on developing qualified national leadership. Principals of schools, midwives at outlying maternities—more and more responsibility and authority are assumed by nationals. In 1982 the first Cameroonian medical doctor was employed at the Banso Baptist Hospital.

And so, in some senses, a new era of missions is being ushered in. It is an era when the mis-



Theological Education by Extension provides the opportunity for people not able to attend Bible school to receive Bible and theological training. This includes workers in hospitals, schoolteachers, untrained pastors, and other church workers.



Missionaries assist churches in various ways. The Rev. David Burgess, Cameroon Baptist Theological College teacher, and Dr. Dennis Palmer, Cameroon medical doctor at Banso Baptist Hospital, design a building for one of the Cameroon Baptist Convention churches. A missionary's task is diverse.



Missionary Barbara Kieper treks from village to village training village health workers and with them providing primary health care as well as teaching preventative health measures. Village pastors talk to persons as they wait about Jesus Christ.

sionary is working together with and under the supervision and authority of national leadership. The desires and felt needs of the national churches become increasingly important. Working together, missionary side-by-side with the national, the North American "mission" merges with the national convention.

Meanwhile there was a transition in the Missions Department of the North American Baptist Conference.

Dr. Richard Schilke retired as General Missionary Secretary in 1979 following 28 years of distinguished service.

At the Triennial Conference in Bismarck, North Dakota, in 1979, the Rev. Fred Folkerts, who had served as Associate Secretary for Overseas Missions since 1973, was elected General Missionary Secretary. Having previously been a missionary in Cameroon, Rev. Folkerts is well-equipped to direct the mission work during this time of change.



The Rev. Fred Folkerts, missions director, (left) and the Rev. Ralph Cooke, chairman of the Board of Missions discuss items on the agenda for the annual Board meeting.

All these are ways in which the Missionary Society is adjusting to and coping with the economic problems.

When the million dollar debt is eradicated and limited reserves built up, it will be possible to replenish some of the losses in mission personnel through the normal channels of the N.A.B. Conference Budget.

Facing Challenges in the 80s

In the 1980s North American Baptists also face the challenge of how to be increasingly effective in today's world. It is important to look into new avenues of service and ministry. There are unreached peoples around the world and in North America itself. Urbanization overseas, as well as the urban populations in the larger cities in the United States and Canada, call for our attention. North American Baptists need to be on the cutting edge of missionary evangelism and outreach.

We live in exciting and challenging times. Modern technology is available to be effectively utilized for Christ: computers, satellites, and improved means of communication and transportation.

Programs in Theological Education by Extension for training of Christian leaders and Life Abundant Programs for primary health care and evangelism in villages are being developed. These need to continue and grow. Other innovative approaches need to be tried.

In all of this, the input and priorities of the national Baptist conventions and churches are essential. On all fields North American Baptists serve through the local conventions of churches. Each of these now has experienced, mature leaders. They understand their people

and needs. They have much to contribute.

Working relationships between the mission and national conventions are very cordial. It is important that this continue.

Future effectiveness of missions depends on these relationships.

Over the past 100 years, God has been at work within North American Baptist churches and within the Missionary Society to face and rise above the challenges which have come their way. The instability when



Laymen-in-action supplement the missionaries work by providing much needed technical assistance. Ed Quiring from Minneapolis, MN works with a national on an electrical installation in Cameroon.

the Society was first begun a hundred years ago—the threat of death from disease to the early missionaries who went to serve in Cameroon—the disruption of missionary work caused by the world wars—tremendous needs of peoples involved in those wars—the need of changing objectives and attitudes as countries became independent and national conventions were formed—all these presented challenges in the past. God directed in each of these.

He led through the leadership of our mission secretaries:

Rev. J. C. Grimmell	1883-1892
Rev. G. A. Schulte	1892-1916

Dr. William Kuhn	1916-1946
Rev. H. G. Dymmel	1946-1950
Dr. Richard Schilke	1951-1979
Rev. Fred Folkerts	1979-

The future?

The future, what of the future? The opportunities on our mission fields are unprecedented. Relationships with the national conventions are positive. The doors continue to be open to the sending of new missionaries. God continues to speak to the faithful within our

denomination, young and old alike to become part of the reapers in the fields that are white unto harvest. In a very real sense, the future of our outreach at home and abroad is in our hands just as we are ultimately in God's hands.

*North American Baptists are a people;
a people with a mission,
a people with a continuing mission;
but more than that—
a people with an expanding mission!*

A People with a Mission

Me? You mean me?

That's really what it comes down to, isn't it? The *bottom line*.

Me, with my particular set of abilities . . . interests . . . gifts . . . personality . . . perspective.

How do I fit into God's worldwide missionary plan?

Take time to prayerfully consider this crucial question. And as you do, think about some of these options:

Become a Missionary

- Career missionary service
- Short-term missionary opportunities
- Laymen-in-Action programs

Know a Missionary

- Acquire information about one particular missionary or family
- Pray regularly for that missionary
- Write faithfully to that missionary
- Try to become personally acquainted with the missionary while on furlough

Support the Mission Work

- Become informed about the mission work through publications
- Pray regularly for the needs of the mission field
- Give faithfully and sacrificially especially in these crucial times
- Provide hospitality for missionaries as they visit your area

Encourage Others in Missions

- Serve on the missions committee of your church
- Make missions a vital part of your Sunday school class or youth group
- Speak of missions to young people or others who seem suited as missionaries
- Be willing to support those in your own family whom God may call
- Give leadership to a missionary emphasis in your church

The list could go on . . . and on . . . and on.
There are many ways in which you can become actively involved in missions.
But don't just think about it—Get involved!

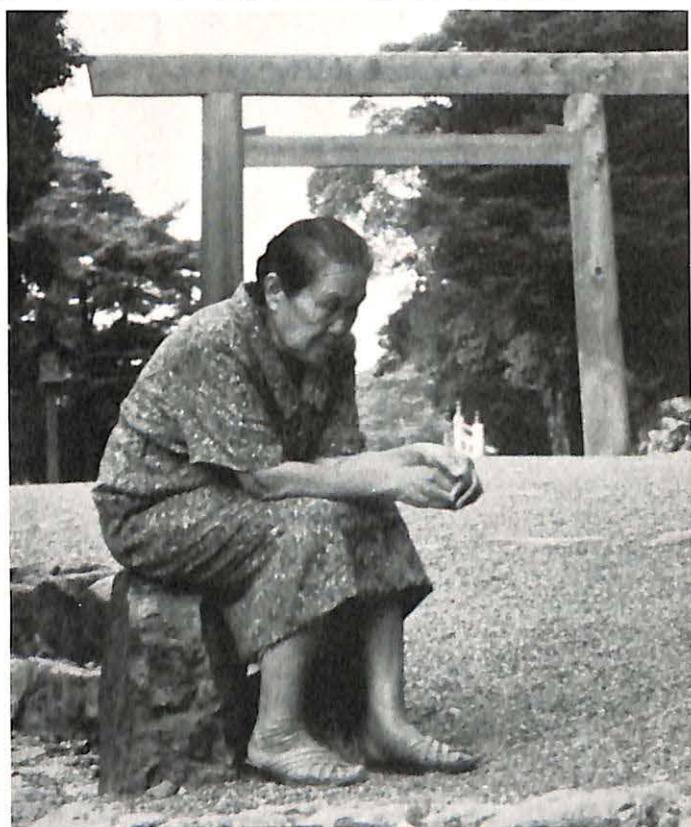
*If you wish further information on your involvement,
have questions concerning the mission program,
or feel God's call to service
please write:*

Missions Department
North American Baptist Conference
1 So. 210 Summit Ave.
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Baptist Herald

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Oakbrook Terrace,
Villa Park, IL. 60181

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*Reaching downward
to those devastated, neglected,
rejected by society
Reaching outward
to the millions speaking
myriads of languages
who still have never heard
Reaching upward
to firmly grasp in faith
the outstretched hand
of God
Reaching, ever reaching,
Stretching every fiber
To save, to love, to serve
We are a people with a mission.
—Harold F. Lang*