



CONCORDIA COLLEGE
FOUNDED IN 1862 BY
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD



Concordia College

EDMONTON ALBERTA

LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

Dedicated to the

ALUMNI

IN THE SERVICE OF GOD.



Go therefore and make
disciples of all nations---

MATT 28:19

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PRESIDENT EMERITUS

by Albert H. Schwermann*

Concordia College, Edmonton, 1921-63

Concordia College was born on October 31, 1921. The opening service was held in the school of St. Peter's, at that time our only congregation in Edmonton. Thirty-five students answered the roll call. We had leased the Caledonian Temperance Hotel at 10875-98th Street. Here were the living quarters and the classrooms. Another building at 9529-110th Avenue provided space for the college dining room, kitchen, infirmary, and the living quarters for the family of the president. During the first year Mrs. Schwermann had charge of the meal service.

In the successive years, with a respective enrollment of 52, 48, 65, and 68, grades ten, eleven and twelve were added. Rev. Alfred Rehwinkel, pastor of St. Peter's church, assisted during the first year. He joined the teaching staff in 1922, as did Mr. John H. Herreillers of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, whose career as an outstanding mathematics teacher in Alberta extends to this day. Rev. Walter A. Baepler of Winnipeg joined the staff in 1923.

For an enrollment of 65 in 1924 we found additional space in a residence at 9522-110th Avenue. The following year this was relinquished in favor of the second story of the Vinegrove Apartments at the south east corner of 96th Street and 109th Avenue. (Note: Anyone interested in these historic places is advised to view them soon. One of these years they will be torn down to make way for new structures.)

The students led a rather Spartan existence. Three times a day they had to walk to the dining hall, a distance of four blocks, rain or shine or sleet or snow. Good exercise! We arose at 6, had morning devotion at 6:20, breakfast at 6:40, study period from 7-8, 45 minute class periods from 8:45 to 12 and from 1:45 to 4, study period from 7-9, then evening devotion, and lights out at 9:30.

Students paid about \$130 per year: \$80 for board, \$5 for medical fees and a repair fund, \$2 for athletics, and some \$40 for mattress, books, electric lamp, etc.; no tuition fees for students preparing for work in the church. With such low fees we had to rely heavily on the support from the members of our churches. And this came in great abundance. Every fall the members in the Stony Plain area sent us a carload of vegetables and victuals. Throughout the years supplies for our larder came in from many congregations.

*Dr. Schwermann was born on June 13, 1891 at Jefferson City, Missouri. After his graduation from Concordia College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana in 1910 and from Concordia Seminary in 1913, he served the Mellowdale, Alberta parish as traveling missionary from 1913 to 1916. Then he was active as pastor in the Wetaskiwin-Brightview parish from 1916 to 1921. In 1916 he was married to Miss Hilda Hintz of Chicago. He became a Canadian citizen in 1923, and since 1942 he has been an alumnus of the university of Alberta.



Dr. Albert H. Schwermann

We completed our stay in rented quarters on December 23, 1925. A short thanksgiving service was held in the old administration building, where we had spent four years and two months and where a total of 126 had been enrolled. A class of 13 was graduated from the high school department on June 29, 1925; at which occasion Jacob L. Ulmer delivered the salutatory and Albert F. Reiner the valedictory. Of their number Walter Rosnau, later a River Forest graduate, was the first to enter the service of our church as Christian day school teacher in Stony Plain (1927) and Philip Unterschultz became the first graduate pastor, at Rochester, Alberta (1930).

Of our first students (1921) 12 entered the ministry or teaching profession, and 8 are still active in the church today.

Plans for New Buildings, 1924

When in 1920 the Synod at Detroit resolved to establish a college in western Canada and empowered its Board of Directors to select the location, it also appropriated \$50,000 for a building, exclusive of \$22,000, which the churches in Canada had promised to gather for the purchase of real estate. But these plans were delayed.

For many years our members in Saskatchewan and Manitoba had taken a keen interest in the founding of a college. Convinced that a college would serve the church more adequately in Saskatchewan, these brethren addressed a petition to the Synod at Ft. Wayne, Indiana, in 1923, that the institution be moved from Edmonton to Saskatoon. The Synod referred the matter to its Board of Directors for adjudication. The Board made its final decision on September 10, 1924 - in favor of Edmonton.

President Dr. F. Pfothauer and Mr. Henry Horst arrived in Edmonton on November 20, 1924, to advise the local Board of Control in building matters. (Mr. Horst was a contractor who at one time built a sub-division, complete with utilities and 460 well-appointed homes, in 117 days; and later the Philadelphia subway.) As soon as they had left the train, they were taken to about a dozen sites.

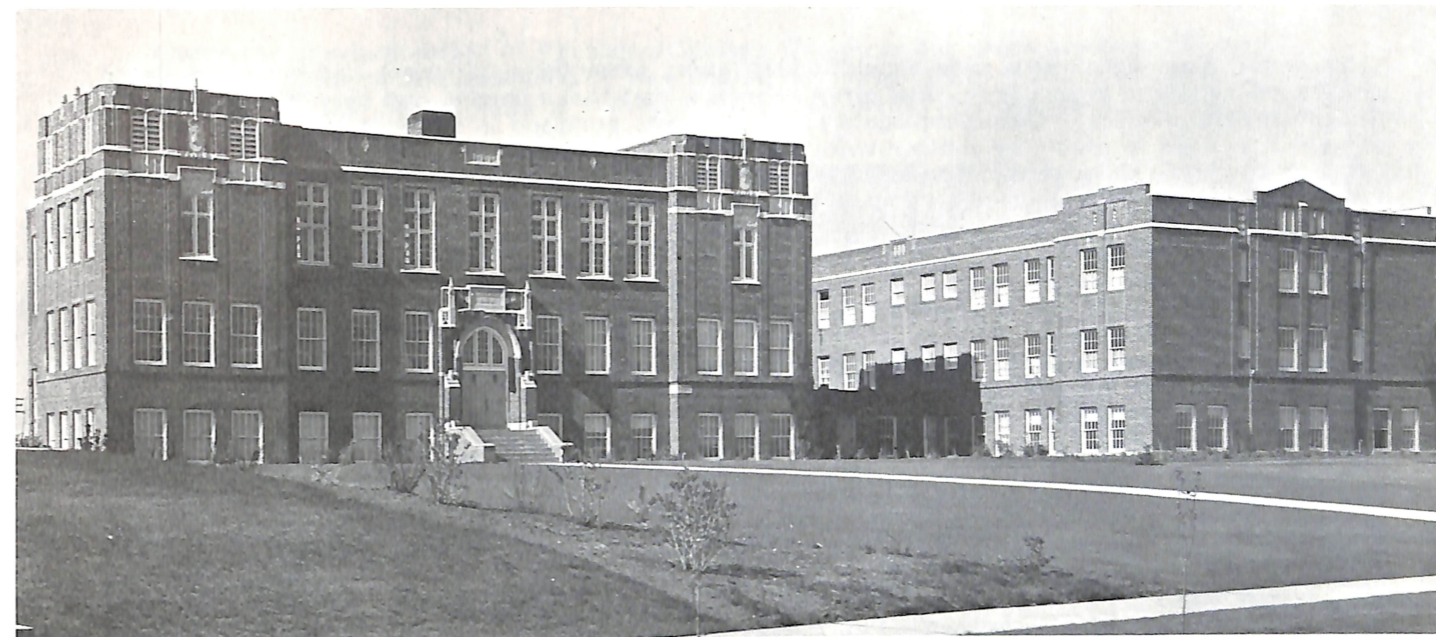
Without doubt the most beautiful property they saw that day was Summit Point at the McKinnon Ravine near 98th Avenue and 142nd Street. This would have been a magnificent location for the college. But it was several miles from the nearest utilities, more miles from St. Peter's church, and without transportation facilities. So the Board agreed to buy another excellent property, the Fraser estate (together with several lots owned by the city) covering in area 9.11 acres, at the cost of \$13,800. This price included mineral rights, ownership of which prevented coal companies from mining underneath the property. Situated on Ada Boulevard and Seventy-first Street, this location is reputedly one of the finest in the city. It lies high above the beautiful valley of the North Saskatchewan River, borders the scenic Highlands golf course, and adjoins the Exhibition Grounds and Borden Park. At present the city is planning to build a bridge across the river several blocks east.

Several smaller buildings were included in the purchase and also a large eight-room house said to have been erected in 1908. This was remodelled at a cost of \$1939 and served from August 28, 1925 to December 1957 as the home of the president. It was situated immediately south of the present Guild Hall. In 1948, 1.86 acres of land on the west side of our property was bought at a cost of \$5580.

Laying of Cornerstone, July 5, 1925

After the Board had chosen the well-known architectural firm of G. H. MacDonald and H. A. Magoon to take charge of building operations, the beginning was made May 20, 1925. In a bi-lingual (German and English) service led by Pastor John C. Mueller, the ground was broken by the president of the college. For the cornerstone laying on July 5, 1925, also the pastors and lay delegates of the Alberta-British Columbia District were present. From their convention at Stony Plain they, together with fellow Lutherans, were conveyed the 25 miles to Edmonton and return by special train.

A copper receptacle in the cornerstone contains the following: English Bible, German Bible, Book of Concord, English-German Catechism, June 1925 copy of our church papers, Catalog of Synod's Educational Institutions, Synodical Reports of the Missouri Synod, Manitoba-Saskatchewan District, and the Alberta-British Columbia District, from 1920-24, containing chief dates and resolutions in the development of Concordia College, Statistical Yearbook, Lutheran Annual, Rules and Regulations governing students, History and Constitution of the Missouri Synod, pictures of old college buildings used as temporary quarters from 1921-25, The British North America Act 1867, The Alberta Act, The Edmonton Charter, Booklet Edmonton 1877 - 1920, map of Edmonton, copy of The Edmonton Journal, greetings from Mayor K. Blatchford, and the Order of Service for the Cornerstone Laying.



Dedication, January 10, 1926

Then came the day of days - January 10, 1926 - the day on which our first Concordia in Canada was dedicated to the service of the Triune God. The weather had hitherto been unusually favorable for building operations. Would it hold? Saturday night it began to rain, and on this basis it was safe to predict - in an Alberta January - snow and sub-zero temperature for the following day. But on Sunday morning the sun arose in all its splendor and in a cloudless sky graciously smiled on us till dusk. Forty-three above zero was the maximum for the day, one that the Lord had made.

Since the chapel provided for only 200 people, accommodation was found for more than 800 other guests in all available rooms of both the Administration Building and the boys' dormitory. Here the visitors were amazed to find a public address system - quite a novelty for those days. Joy was added to the dedication by the presence of some seventy pastors and several teachers of the four western provinces, who held a pastoral conference in the college from Thursday to Monday.

On the following night pastors and students assembled in the chapel for an academic celebration in which (according to an old custom in Synod) only the Latin language was used for the address as well as for the hymns and prayers. Prof. W. A. Baepler had chosen as his theme, "The Importance of a Knowledge of Classical Languages for a Minister of the Gospel." Whether all those present understood the professor's address need not be discussed here!

The total cost of our new college plant, including real estate and some remodeling, was \$146,873.

Concordia was now 5 years old, and during these years our gracious God had been kind to us. This was the Lord's doing; it was marvellous in our eyes!

New Residences and the Tax Case in 1930

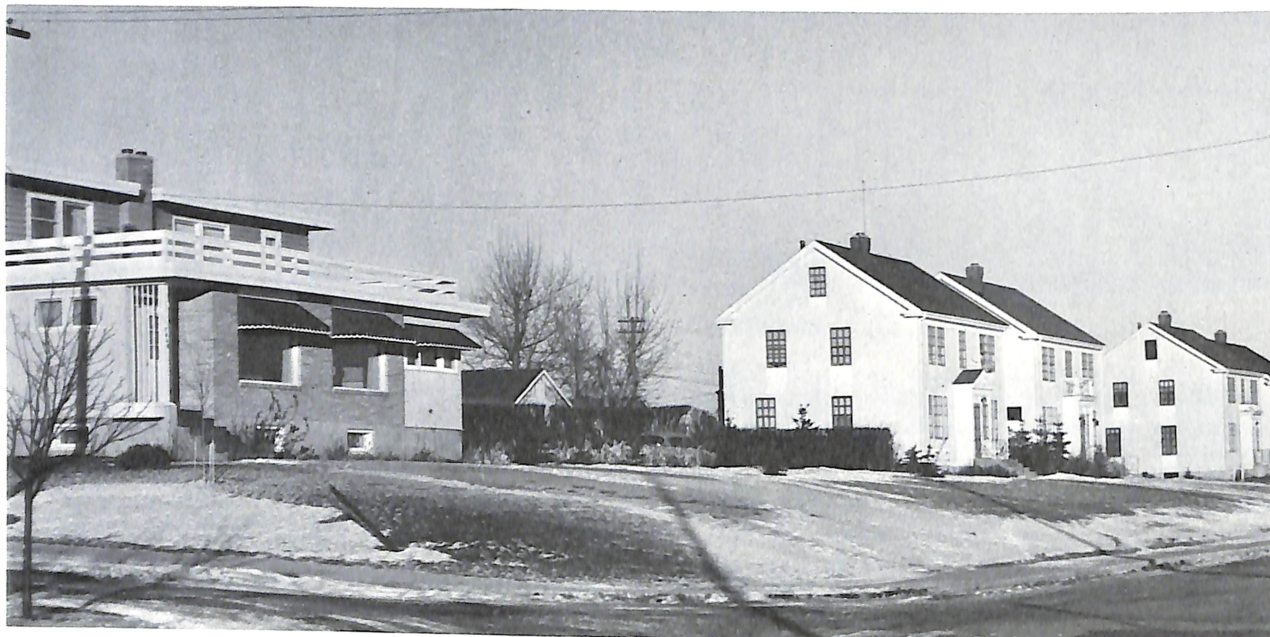
In 1929 a building committee composed of Rev. E. Eberhardt, Prof. M. W. Riedel, and Mr. John Armbruster, authorized by Synod's Board of Directors, began to plan new residences for our teachers, who has till now lived in rented homes.

Preparatory to the construction of these homes, arrangements were made with the city land department to exchange, on even terms, the eleven lots at the north end of our property (along 112th Avenue) for eleven more serviceable lots along Ada Boulevard, across Seventy-first Street. That was a profitable trade for both parties. Our lots, which in those days were worth some \$200 to \$500 each, are valued today at many thousands of dollars.

The Edmonton Charter exempted the following lands from municipal and school taxes: "The land not exceeding four acres of and attached to or otherwise bona-fide used in connection with and for the purpose of any university, college, high school, public or separate school, seminary of learning or hospital owned by a corporation . . . so long as such land is actually used and occupied by such institution but not if otherwise occupied."

Before proceeding with any plans for new residences, Mr. Hy. Horst and our Board were determined to find out whether our residences would be exempt from taxation. In other words: are teachers' residences considered to be "buildings used in connection with and for the use of colleges" and therefore exempt? In a written communication the city assessor said that they would be. (Cp. Yearbook 1946, p. 13)

It came, therefore, as a rude shock in 1930 when, after the residences had been completed, our Board received notice from this same assessor that these houses had been placed on the list of taxable property. Our complaints and arguments resulted in the decision of the city's legal department to place the matter before the Supreme Court of Alberta in the form of a test case. The trial judge decided in our favor; we won. The city appealed to the Appellate Division of Alberta; we lost. We submitted the case to the Supreme Court of Canada in Ottawa, where on February 6, 1934, we lost, three judges against us and two in our favor. Since then our residences have been taxable.



FACULTY ROW: The four professors' residences are shown to the right. On the left is the president's home.

Co-education Introduced in 1925

On August 11, 1925, our Board was confronted with the request to enroll a Lutheran girl who wanted to become a Christian day school teacher. The request was granted. This action was sanctioned by Synod in 1926 with the resolution "to approve the work which is now carried on, and the continuation thereof ... That Synod permit also the institution in Edmonton to enroll girls in the same way for the purpose of educating them as teachers for our parish schools, but that also in this case the number of female students must not exceed 20% of the total enrollment." Proceedings 1926, 76.77)

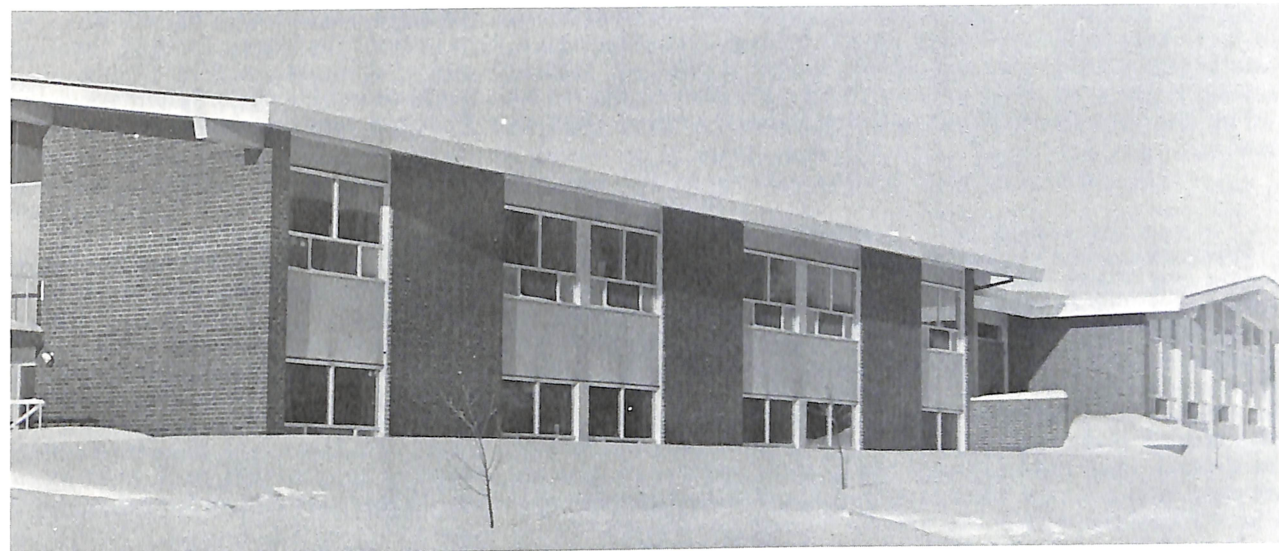
The girls found lodging in the homes of our teachers from 1925-28. Two old houses, bought with the property in 1924, were then joined, west of the administration building, and converted by our teachers into a girls' dormitory. The girls lived here from 1928-31. Miss Melanie Lange of Claresholm, Alberta, served as matron from 1928-30. When the co-ed enrollment had dropped from 12 to only 4, in 1930, Mrs. Schwermann took over the supervision.

It had become evident that girls preparing for the teaching profession did not receive adequate training in a school in which the curriculum had been designed for ministerial students only; and a limited staff did not permit the introduction of a number of courses required as prerequisite for normal training. Co-education was dropped in 1931.

More Co-eds in 1941

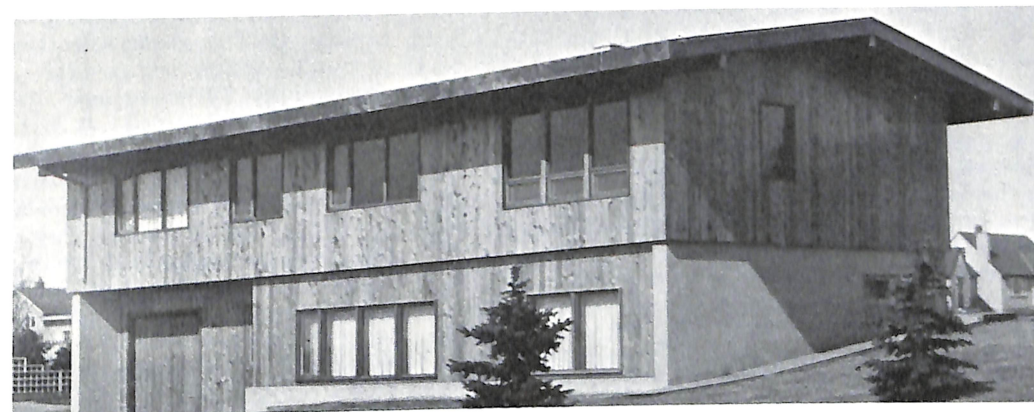
After the introduction of the provincial high school courses, co-eds enrolled again. Five appeared in the fall of 1941; and then their number grew to 13 in 1942, 15 in '43, 22 in '44, and 28 in '45. They received their meals in the college dining room and lodging in homes near the college. During the year 1945-46 eighteen had residence in the homes of our professors, where they paid \$7.50 per month for room rent.

Under the administration of President Walter Wangerin our most serviceable girls' dormitory, known as Eberhardt Hall, was dedicated on April 29, 1956. It has accommodation for about 40 co-eds plus a suite of rooms for the dean of women. Its total cost was \$113,500.



EBERHARDT HALL

For the accommodation of more girls, the president's home, erected in 1957, was added as an annex to the girls' dormitory in 1963. At that time President Frantz moved out and took possession of the home which up to then had been occupied by the Schwermann family on Ada Blvd. and 71st Street.



THE ANNEX

Concordia's Courses of Study

At its founding in 1921, Concordia's policy was to have a course of studies similar to the one used in our American synodical colleges, and it was to conform as much as possible to the one used in Alberta's high schools. This meant to serve two masters. Over the years this twofold aim has caused difficulties since it has not always been easy to keep these two in harmony.

Already in the early thirties the faculty gave serious study to accreditation. However, since Synod was contemplating a reorganization of its educational system and the provincial Department of Education had in mind to make extensive changes in the high school courses, no action was taken until the later part of the thirties.

Encouragement to seek such accreditation was given by the fact that some of our ministerial graduates were refused admission to universities because they had not received their training in an accredited school, and also by the fact that the synodical Board for Higher Education had suggested in 1937 that "each institution should meet the state or regional requirements for graduation from high school." Accordingly, the provincial course of studies as prescribed for the high schools of Alberta was introduced in 1939. To conform to this course, grade nine was eliminated from Concordia.

The freshman college class was added in 1926; the sophomore class in '27.

Provincial Final Examinations

Several subjects in the provincial finals were written by our first co-eds only, around 1929. Beginning with 1940, these annual Grade XII examinations became obligatory for all students. The first results were a cause for rejoicing: our students passed 84% of those subjects in which they were examined and thus obtained a high school diploma. In 1943 the results placed Concordia second highest among all high schools of Alberta, and this pace continued for a number of years. Our chief competitor was the University High School; we had no success in surpassing them. And Westglen High in Edmonton was another thorn in the flesh!

Inspections

Inspectors of the Department of Education visited us occasionally in the early years, for instance in 1924, '27, and '30; and since 1939 every year. We were grateful for their courteous and constructive criticism, and for their words of recognition.

In addition to Concordia's thorough work, the inspectors commended the absence of boorish behavior in the classroom and the students' neat appearance. This neat appearance impressed also our synodical inspectors. In fact, they suggested at times that we had "set the stage" for their visit. But such was not the case. The members of our faculty appreciated humor and laughter in the classroom, but "monkeyshining" was taboo. In the classroom the chapel, and in the dining room all students were to be properly dressed. If such men as lawyers and doctors always appear publicly in proper apparel, there was no reason why future physicians of souls should appear as beatniks.

It must be admitted that we received encouragement for this rule from the following quotation concerning the North-West Mounted Police in southern Alberta. I found it in the twenties, and it remained under the glass top of the desk until I vacated the office in 1954:

Fort Macleod, 1876

The Assistant-Commissioner directs that the dress and appearance as well as the demeanor of the men of the Force should on all occasions and in all situations be such as to create respect for the Corps they belong to, and he would like to see the men - if possible - properly dressed when they go beyond the precincts of the Fort,
- Daily Orders

Our New Gymnasium-Auditorium 1953

Today a well-equipped gymnasium is an essential part of every educational institution. It was not always thus. At Concordia Seminary in St. Louis with its 200 to 300 students we had a room in the basement large enough for two handball courts; and a number of us used the parallel and horizontal bars in the attic. Consider what the immortal J. Percy Page (now our venerable Lieutenant-Governor) did with his world-famous girls basketball team, the Edmonton Grads. From 1915 to 1940 the Grads played 522 games, won 502, lost 20; they whipped all comers on the continents of North America and Europe, played 29 games in four different Olympics and won them all. All their training these girls received in a room at the Edmonton McDougall Commercial High School, in floor area not as large as Concordia's is today.

The truth of the matter was that in the early years of our existence most public schools had no gymnasium, much less our Concordia. There were some at our synodical institutions, but those were erected with funds gathered in the local community. Synod's policy up to the 1940s was: as a Synod we do not build gymnasiums; this must be done by the local constituents.

The best we could do in our new buildings was to offer our student body (which in various years numbered more than 100) a room 25 x 37, north of the dining hall. This was used for handball, ping-pong, and social activities. There were no facilities for physical education and gymnastics, musical activities, audio-visual instruction, and larger social gatherings.

Our chapel was an all-purpose room used for daily devotions, and in addition for classes, meetings, dramatic rehearsals, choir practices, and public gatherings. After a pep talk at the beginning of the school-year, a half dozen or more students would seek piano teachers, only to be told after a number of weeks by these same teachers to quit because they were not practicing enough. How could they? They had no suitable place to practice.

With the passing of years conditions became more desperate, almost intolerable. Well do we remember January and February 1949. That year we had 123 students, of which 90 boys filled the dormitory to the rafters. Before Christmas they found recreation on the skating rink and the ski hills. But after New Year we had an uninterrupted cold spell lasting 46 days. The greater part of this time the mercury was between 30 and 40 below. Occasionally some bolder spirits ventured out, but came in with frozen feet, necessitating an enforced vacation in bed. Recurrently, student leaders came into the office with the doleful plea: What CAN we do for recreation?

Whenever we timidly suggested to synodical officials that we ought to have a gymnasium, the reply was: ask your congregations to build one. But that took courage. "I forbid my son to take part in baseball." "I did not send my boy to college to take part in non-sensical gymnastics." When such letters arrived in the office, it was difficult to screw the courage to the sticking point. But we did proceed. Our Board appointed a building committee consisting of Rev. Ph. Janz; Prof. H. F. Witte; Mr. C. Kuhnke, secretary; and Dr. A. H. Schwermann, chairman. We began to plan a building to cost \$20,000. When this sum was gradually raised to \$50,000, it was in some instances considered to be altogether unreasonable.

The ideal solution to our problem would have been two buildings; an auditorium and a gymnasium. But that would have entailed a cost of perhaps \$300,000. So we had to combine the two into a multi-purpose building. The architects in the Department of Education told us that we would have to anticipate at times a conflict of interests. Similar information came from the National Council of Chief State School Officers, New York, from whom we received valuable advice. All agreed that such a building, even with its occasional conflicts, was far superior to nothing.

Another problem was the floor: shall it be a polished wooden floor, or shall it be covered with mastic floor tile? The latter appeared more practical since the floor was to be used for many different purposes. In this not only our architects, but also the dean of the Physical Education Department in the University of California, Berkeley, concurred. And so Synod's Board of Directors asked us to use mastic tile.

Gradually our Board evolved the plans for a gymnasium-auditorium 66 x 112 as it stands today, after constant consultation with Synod's expert architect, Mr. Edgar Buenger, chief consultant for the Mayo Clinic, and our Edmonton architects G. H. and John A. Macdonald.

When we opened the tenders, the lowest was \$122,000. That took the heart out of us. But Synod was changing its policy concerning refusal to build gymnasiums. A long distance call came from its Board of Directors to proceed with the building. They were willing to contribute to the estimated total of \$175,000 the sum of \$115,000. The churches in western Canada had gathered \$60,000.

Meanwhile, a 20 rank Felgemaker pipe organ had been purchased from Trinity church in Oak Park, Illinois for \$1000. Total cost of this fine instrument, including transportation and installation, was about \$7,500. It was installed by the Pepin brothers. For the Schulmerich chimes the H. A. Schole family had contributed \$675.

The dedication followed on April 12, 1953. Some 1000 people were crowded in every nook and cranny of the building, including a mass choir of more than 200 voices on the stage. Several hundred guests were outside.



The Concordia Platoon of the Second Battalion of the Edmonton Regiment

During World War II (1939-45) the National War Services Regulations required all students (17 years of age and older) to report for military training. The implications of this directive were far-reaching. Assuming, for example, that the war would last ten years, we would not at some future date have any ministerial candidates over a period of ten years. Our Board resolved to send a delegation to Ottawa. Its members were Dr. John W. Behnken, president of Synod; Pres. A. H. Schwermann, and Rev. Frank Malinsky, president of the Ontario District.

On June 4, 1942, the Hon. Mr. J. T. Thorson, Director of War Services, gave us a sympathetic hearing. He spent about 30 minutes in trying to establish the connection between the Missouri Synod and the churches in Germany (where, of course, there was no connection except that we were in doctrinal agreement with the 13,000 souls of the small Free Church of Saxony.) And for the remaining five minutes he listened to our plea for exemption. Self-evidently, such requests came from many church bodies.

These representations had the following results: late in 1942 an amendment was added to the Regulations to exempt all bona-fide students for the ministry, provided they are members of a church body which is eligible to supply chaplains for the armed forces. (About that time our Synod had some 210 full-time chaplains in the American army and navy.) This amendment came too late for the new school year in 1942, and so we lost a number of students that fall.

Henceforth our ministerial students were under no compulsion to enter the armed forces. But when after Pearl Harbor in 1941 the situation began to look grim and the Japanese appeared to be threatening our West Coast, the government thought it imperative to prepare for any kind of emergency. It introduced military training in all schools for students 17 years of age and older.

On January 29, 1943, Col. Walter Hale, doubtlessly one of the finest gentlemen in the Canadian army, Commander of the Reserve Army in the Edmonton area, appeared before our Board of Control together with Sargeant Labman; the following agreement was reached:

Concordia students will form a unit of the Reserve Army, to be known as the Concordia Platoon, and will have drills twice or three times a week. Their pay will be \$1.30 a day for those over 17 years, and 60¢ for those who are younger. Three two-hour drills constitute a day. Uniforms and full military equipment will be issued free of charge.

Members of the Reserve Army will have to take a two weeks' training course at Sarcee Military Camp near Calgary during the summer months.

Henceforth our students appeared as a group of soldiers, in military dress. Instruction was given in and near the college. Occasionally they went out for field practice in an area northwest of the present Clover Bar Bridge, where at times they "attacked the enemy" and "stormed the fort."

Japanese Balloons

It was most kind of the good Lord that He never did permit the enemy to attack us on the West Coast. The fear was very real, however, and caused the construction of the Alaska Highway. At that time the American army officials wanted to take possession of Concordia for administration purposes. For the students they wanted to build an army hut on the campus. But Mr. Rose, the chairman of the City Housing Committee, assured us: "As long as there is any kind of building available in Edmonton, they will not take possession of Concordia College."

The only danger which threatened us from Japan was the so-called "nuisance balloons," released in the Orient and carried by the winds to the United States and Canada. Some of them were recovered by Canadians in northern Alberta. The parachutes attached to these balloons were made of exquisite silk nylon. A member of our church got possession of one of these parachutes with the consequence that their daughter appeared beautifully arrayed on Concordia's stage in a graduation gown made out of Japanese white nylon.

In the Armed Forces

In 1943, fifty-five of our students and alumni were serving in the armed forces: later more of them joined. Several of our Concordians had responsible positions in the Intelligence Service at Ottawa.

Three of them gave the supreme sacrifice: Howard Blatchford, John Hedrich, and Donald Zander.

Philip Janz, Herman Klann, Adolf Otke, Robert Schwermann, and E. George Pearce served in the chaplaincy; later also Wilfred Hyatt and Edwin Regal. These boys experienced again and again the truth of the statement, which originated in those years: "There are no atheists in fox-holes."

Later, in 1951, came a heartwarming letter from Chaplain Capt. (now Lt. Col.) G. Wilfred Hyatt: "As the end of each school-year draws near, I cannot avoid thinking back to Alma Mater and the wonderful spiritual and social experiences connected with it. As the years pass by, a person realizes more and more how much he owes to Concordia and the faithful teachers who prepared him to serve the Master whether it be among the dying heroes in the muddy rice paddies of Korea or in some stately church on our own good continent . . . I should like to make \$100 a year available to be used as a scholarship for needy young men. The Lord has been very kind to me in this war. Although I am still in Korea, I am no longer in the thick of the fighting. I feel that I have experienced as many miracles as the Apostles."

During the war our ministerial graduates had endless difficulties getting into the States. One of them was turned back at Emerson, Manitoba. He could not prove that he was alive! He returned to Winnipeg and with the aid of Mr. T. O. F. Herzer, President of the Canadian Colonization Company, he was, after a number of weeks, finally able to establish his identity. He had been born in war-torn Europe while his parents were fleeing.

On Sunday, November 29, 1942, Winston Churchill delivered one of his famous war broadcasts. Practically every ear in Canada was glued to the radio. He went five minutes overtime, and immediately thereafter station CJCA switched over to the popular Sunday program, "Church of the Air" and introduced the Concordians. As a consequence we had a large audience listening in - at least at the beginning of the program. Quite a number of letters arrived from people unknown to us. One came from a company of soldiers, who had gathered in their barracks around the radio and stayed there until our broadcast came to a close. (Note: Somewhere there still is a recording of that service. If you ever hear it, you will observe a very noticeable bump in the middle of the sermon. That was caused by a child which fell out of bed in the suite of rooms above the funeral chapel from which we were broadcasting.)

Illness

With a lack of suitable remedies and serums and antibiotics such as our world is blessed with today, the care of health among our students in the early years at times caused much anxiety. We repeatedly had to battle with diphtheria and scarlet fever. Suspects were isolated at once in our sick rooms until the doctors had diagnosed the case. If this was positive, the students were transferred to the isolation hospital.

In the thirties we had an especially frustrating epidemic of diphtheria. Student after student came down with it. And these were not boys in the same room or at the same table in the dining hall or some who sat close to each other in the classroom. One day it was one in a room on the first floor, then one on the second floor. One day it was a lower classman, the next day an upper classman. One day it was one who sat at one end of the dining hall, the next day one at the other end. The doctor visited us daily. We called in the city health department; we summoned the provincial department. We pleaded with these men to inspect our buildings most thoroughly and to tell us: What is the source of this contagion? They could find no answer.

In a desperate attempt to stamp out this pestilence, we finally decided to send a swab from every throat of the college community (teachers' families included) to the provincial laboratory. Within 24 hours we were told that we had no active diphtheria, but 10 carriers. All students of the second floor were moved to the first floor, and the ten carriers were confined to the second storey, where they were kept in quarantine. Ten days had passed, and we released them in happy anticipation that our worries were over. Within the next week, we had to send three new cases to the isolation hospital.

You will understand why we were always interested in the words spoken by our fellow Christians in the general prayer every Sunday: "We commend to Thy care all our schools."

Sad Losses

From 1922-27 we had to carry five of our students to the grave. One of them died at home of diphtheria, another one of a heart condition. During the first summer vacation another was found dead in a field. He was leading a horse by a halter rope which he had tied around his waist while opening a gate. The horse bolted and evidently inflicted mortal injuries. Still another complained of abdominal pains at five o'clock in the morning. At seven o'clock our surgeon stated that he had found a ruptured appendix. Later the boy was on the way to recovery and sent back to the college, but had to return to the hospital to undergo two more operations for peritonitis. He passed away shortly before New Year's. This was an unusually sad case for the reason that throughout his illness the boy was fervently longing for his first Christmas vacation at home, in southern Saskatchewan. He did spend New Year's at home - in heaven.

The fifth was a boy who came into the office during a morning recess for an aspirin. He complained of a headache and sore throat. He wanted to return to the classroom, but was told to go to the sickroom. At noon the doctor diagnosed it as diphtheria. The boy was sent to the isolation hospital, and his parents were notified. During the night his condition worsened. The doctor attended him again the next morning. Unable to help, the doctor prayed the Lord's prayer, and before he had ended the prayer the angels had carried the boy's soul into Abraham's bosom.

These were some of the inscrutable ways of the Lord during the first five years. Often we asked ourselves the question: Why? We shall receive the answer in eternal life. But we could never rid ourselves of the thought that in those years in which the foundations were laid for all the future of Concordia, the Lord wanted to burn into our souls the stark truth that our students, too, have immortal souls. And students can die and do die. And hence the very highest and foremost duty of Concordia, far above all other considerations, must ever be to prepare its students for a blessed departure from this world into the bliss of heaven through faith in Christ, the crucified and risen Redeemer. Failing to do this as an institution of our church, it forfeits its right to exist.

Medical Aid

Our first college doctor was the very able Dr. Turcot, who after leaving for the East, was followed by Dr. Quesnel. And then began our most pleasant association with Dr. J. O. Baker, about 1923. When we became acquainted with Him through an R. N., Miss Mary Hennig, he had a small one-man office in the McLeod Building. His practice developed into the highly reputable Baker Clinic, composed today of 22 specialists in five departments. Upon the passing of Dr. Baker in 1956, Dr. A. M. H. McLennan became chief of the Clinic, and since his death last year the renowned surgeon Dr. Walter Anderson is director.

Dr. Baker and his associates impressed us lastingly with the conscientious care which they gave to the students of Concordia - and are doing so to this day. We, of course, guarded ourselves against taking undue advantage of them, for one can hardly deny that doctors, too, are subject to fatigue. Often there appeared to be no good reason to call medical aid when a student complained of some distress - especially before an examination or during a delinquency! But when careful surveillance of the patient dictated medical examination, the doctor came, unfailingly. And when in the "Hungry Thirties" surgery was performed on students whose parents did not know where the next meal was coming from, the Clinic "forgot" that these people had outstanding accounts. The medical care of our students never gave us worries.

Friends in Need

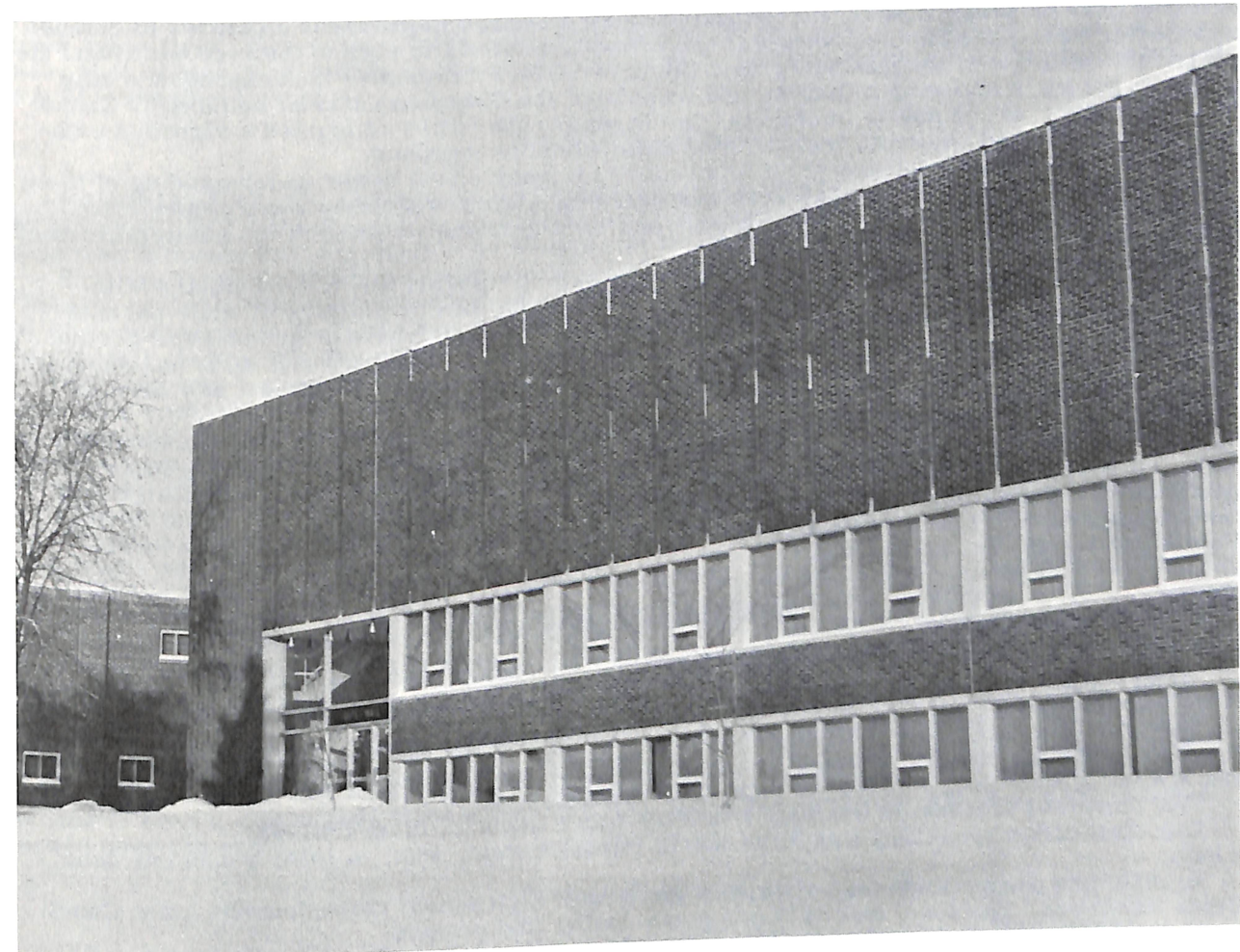
As in many other institutions, financial difficulties gave us no small measure of concern. An ever recurring question was: Where can we save? Where can we obtain funds? True, throughout all the years our church, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, never deserted us. Generously and promptly we received funds from headquarters in St. Louis for salaries and for construction and maintenance of buildings. Yet there were many other needs to be supplied.

In all these circumstances perhaps no group in our church gave us so much support as the good women, not only in western Canada, but even in the East. Away back in the twenties, the women in Edmonton formed a College Sewing Circle and came to the college once a month to mend clothes. They invited the students into their homes for Sunday dinner. They did laundry for the boys - first the women in Edmonton and later those in Stony Plain and even Golden Spike and Nisku. In those days when electric washers, dryers, and irons were unknown, this work often required much labor and a real sacrifice. "If you know," was the statement in one report, "that this work together with the own family laundry has required the ironing of as many as 19 and 20 shirts per week, in one instance even up to 40, then you will begin to realize just how much of a sacrifice these good-hearted souls have brought for our students."

Especially during the Great Depression which lasted to about 1941, longer than in the U. S., life was becoming ever more grim. Farm products decreased in value. Our overhead went upward, the enrollment downward. In 1941 it had reached an all-time low with 28 students. (Voices were heard that Concordia ought to be closed; mission work in western Canada should be discontinued because the field is barren.) Parents could not make their payments. Our debt with wholesalers rose until they ultimately demanded cash on delivery. Such conditions were not exactly conducive to high spirits!

Under such circumstances particularly the women came to our assistance. In 1933 they introduced the so-called Shower Day or Donation Day, which since that time has become a semi-annual institution. Provisions for our kitchen have been and are still being supplied

in abundance. Many thousands of dollars were gathered by them in all parts of Canada for requirements of all kinds, in and outside of the school. In fact, one is inclined to regard the Concordia Guild (as it is known today) as a phenomenon. In many organizations of churches and communities the interest rises and falls and often disappears. But the interest in the Concordia Guild has year after year remained at a high level; and this year it is as great as ever. This was doubtlessly, under God, due to the consistently strong and aggressive leadership. We always were grateful for their material support; but there were times, particularly during the lean years, when we appreciated still more their never-tiring enthusiasm, which revived our drooping spirits. Our present administration building, housing administration offices, faculty offices, library, the school's science department, and the student lounge, is named in honour of our Concordia Guild.



Guild Hall, Dedicated in 1959

Concordia Helps to Build the Church and the Nation

Concordia was organized in 1921, when Alberta was 16 years old and after waves of immigrants had come or were coming to Canadian shores. The ministerial graduates of this school were to become pastors among these immigrants, many of whom were Germans. Hence, in addition to English, German was also freely used. As a consequence our school was regarded by not a few as "the foreign college in Norwood." Later this was changed to the "German college in the Highlands." But after our students joined the armed forces and some of them died for their country, during World War II, we gained the public status of a Canadian college.

To speak or to preach German was considered by a number of people to be identified with the Kaiser or later with Hitler. This in turn stigmatized us somewhat as being disloyal to our adopted country; while as a matter of fact you could find nowhere a greater love for our God-blessed country than at Concordia.

To overcome such prejudice, it was of some compensation to be appointed to the membership of the Alberta National War Loan Committee, to the chairmanship of the Building Committee of the local Bellevue Community League, and to other civic endeavors - honors which were accorded me over the course of the years. The same may be said of the coronation medals received from King George VI in 1937 and from Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 in recognition of the contribution made to education in Canada.

But Concordia did much more for the building of western Canada. For this especially one of its staff members was responsible - Dr. Alfred M. Rehwinkel.

The hate propaganda of World War I had placed the German element in western Canada at a great disadvantage. To correct this situation and to defend his people against unfair discrimination, Dr. Rehwinkel organized the German-Canadian Association to bring concerted action to bear on this problem. He conducted mass meetings in different localities to discuss this matter with the people. He met with government officials to secure their cooperation. He contributed articles to the German press. He carried on an extensive correspondence with people in all parts of western Canada. He translated the Canadian national anthem "O Canada" into German for use in public meetings, and in many other ways conducted a vigorous campaign for a fair and equitable treatment of their ethnic background.

But Dr. Rehwinkel's ultimate aim was to lead his people to a better understanding of the meaning of the citizenship that had been conferred upon them when they were naturalized, and to encourage them to take a more active and conscientious interest in the public affairs of their community and the nation at large.

The fact that the graduates of Concordia were able to provide the new Canadians with religious services in their language and instruct the young in the language of their parents and to share with them their way of life helped to make the transition a gradual and normal one. There was no sudden rupture between the children born in Canada and their parents with the Old Country background; and the change took place imperceptibly, without any serious family disturbances.

This was an important social and patriotic contribution the early Lutheran missionaries made in western Canada toward the building of a new nation; and Concordia College has always felt happy that it was able to advance the welfare of Canada through its graduates and particularly through Dr. Rehwinkel. (Selected items mentioned above may be found in the fascinating biography of Mrs. Rehwinkel entitled DR. BESSIE, copyright 1963, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

Some More Recollections

In 1937-38 and again in 1940-41 not a single student discontinued his studies.

When dozens of beautiful evergreens had to make way for the present Guild Hall, they were transplanted by the City in Borden Park.

The first Yearbook was published in 1942. With their many pictures of student life, these yearbooks became popular in many families. A common statement on the part of the youngsters was: "I know you. I saw your picture in the Yearbook."

Our first lady teacher on the staff was Miss Edith Lechelt, from 1948-53.

Our first office secretary was Miss Marie Bassendowski, who, in 1936, put in one hour a day.

In 1956, the senior basketball team won the City B high school championship under Coach Clyde Kaminska. The team lost only one game during that season.

In the 1934 commencement exercises, graduates delivered recitations in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

During 1945-46 two calls were declined - one by Prof. Riep to the presidency of Concordia Seminary, Adelaide, Australia; and the other one by Pres. Schwermann to the presidency of Concordia College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

The children of Concordia's graduates began to succeed their parents when Marvin Janz enrolled in 1948 and Lorraine Maschmeyer in 1949.

The people who gave the longest service in our college kitchen were "Ma" and "Cap" Chris Fuhr. They served faithfully from 1937 to 1959 - 22 years.

In 1936 the students' choir sang Schiller's "Das Lied von der Glocke" by Albrecht Brede. Beautiful!

In 1950 Prof. Arnold Guebert visited historic places in Europe and took a summer course at Oxford University.

The office of the dean was introduced when Prof. Erich Von Fange began his duties in 1955.

The Lutheran Choral Society of Edmonton and District of 170 voices (including the Con-

cordia Choristers) gave the first sacred concert in the North Alberta Jubilee Auditorium on April 28, 1957 - four weeks after the auditorium had been dedicated, before an audience of 2300. The Concordia Choral Society, which flourished in 1931 and '32, was composed of faculty personnel and other singers of the city. One night, two hours before a cantata, Mrs. Baepler suffered a painful sprain of her foot, was carried into a car, into the vestry of St. Peter's church, then into the sanctuary behind other singers, and while resting her knee on a chair sang her important solos bravely and beautifully.

Concordia, with the cooperation of district officials, organized, in 1951, "The Concordia Bible Institute - A Night School for Adult Christian Training." Two one-hour lectures were given on 8 successive Monday nights from October to December. Seventy-five attended the first year; 39 the next, and 27 the third year.

A former student visited friends in a dormitory bedroom after 10 o'clock, which was contrary to the rules. As the inspector (who was the present writer) stepped into the room with his flashlight, the visitor made a headlong plunge for safety under a bed; but unfortunately, in the process he got caught with the back of his belt on a bolt, so that he could move neither forward nor backward. The sight of the lad's position was a scream! A picture of it would have taken first prize in any North American photo contest. Another good picture would have been that of four boys sitting in their pyjamas on the cold terrazzo floor in the washroom, at 1 A. M., playing pinochle!

Blazing Headlines

FRED GABERT, OF CONCORDIA LUTHERAN COLLEGE, CHAMPION DISTRICT ORATORY CONTEST - these were the blazing headlines underneath a 6 x 4 picture of the winner. And then followed the long story - 42 inches - in the Edmonton Journal of February 16, 1929.

Said the Journal: "With the applause of more than 2000 people ringing in his ears, Fred Gabert, of Concordia Lutheran College, was named the champion of the Edmonton district, at the conclusion of the finals for this district in the Canadian oratorical contest, held in the McDougall church, Friday night . . .

"Thunderous applause at the conclusion of each 10 - minute speech attested to the impression the speakers made on the audience. And it was a mature audience . . . By far the greater portion of the gathering was composed of adults. In addition to the 2000 people who heard the five young orators in the finals thousands of unseen listeners heard the program over CJCA, the radio station of the Edmonton Journal (only 6 years old.)

"Speaking on 'The Unification of Canada' Gabert, representative of the Teutonic type who have helped to pioneer in this Canada of ours, with the rugged sincerity of his speaking won the judges and the audience alike.

"Here is a country with a sharp cleavage in natural, racial, and religious factors, this boy said, and yet Canadians are surely and steadily overcoming these handicaps.

"Divergent problems must be met and grappled with, but none of them will prove unsurmountable to a people who have already conquered successfully so many difficulties, Gabert prophesied."

Then followed a change of scene to Seventy-first Street from 112th Avenue to the College, at 11 P. M. Here followed perhaps the wildest demonstration ever put on by the students and the faculty men and women, the latter with bewildered children at their side and infants in their arms. To this day we are grateful to Concordia's neighbors for not having called the police to send a riot squad! What a victory! And it was the first time that a Concordian was heard over the radio.

Certain Absolutes

After World War II, Dr. Sidney Smith, president of the University of Saskatchewan made the following statement: "There was a period between the wars when there was nothing in our papers and magazines but debunking, and doubt. We must have open minds. But I suggest they should not be so open that everything which blows in will blow out. We should have CLOSED minds with respect to certain absolutes, certain standards, and certain imperatives."

That is the very educational policy which from the beginning of our school in 1921 has been, by the grace of God, the foundation of all our work. We have the solid conviction that there ARE certain absolutes, certain standards, and certain imperatives. And we firmly believe that these have not originated in the brain of any ancient or modern philosopher nor in the experimental laboratory of any famous scientist, past or present; but that these certain absolutes and standards and imperatives are to be found solely and alone in the eternal truths of the Holy Bible, a Book which we regard as positively inerrant and one in which God speaks from the first word in Genesis to the last word in Revelation.

Foremost among these absolutes is that by his transgression of God's Law every man is

a sinner subject to eternal damnation. This sin is removed not by any ethical conduct, but solely through faith in the God-Man Christ Jesus, Who died for the sins of the world and was raised again for our justification.

May Concordia ever remain faithful to these absolutes and standards and imperatives as long as God permits her to serve!

Recollections - they have brought back to mind so many favors received from family and a host of friends. God was good to me. Goodness and mercy followed me all the days of my life. I am grateful.

Time marches on. In 1954 the Rev. Walter M. Wangerin became the second president, and in 1960 the Rev. Roland A. Frantz the third. The college has an able staff of 14 teachers. Since my retirement in 1963, I have had the opportunity to observe Concordia from the outside. The conviction grows that Concordia is a GOOD school. I recommend it highly to my fellow Christians!

December 1, 1964.

Teaching Staff of Concordia College, 1921 - 1964

PERMANENT STAFF

Albert H. Schwermann	1921-63
John H. Herreilers	1922
Alfred M. Rehwinkel	1922-28
Walter A. Baepler	1923-35
M. W. Riedel	1926-42
Arnold Guebert	1928
Albert R. Riep	1942
John E. Herzer	1943-56
Harold F. Witte	1945
Walter M. Wangerin	1954-59
Erich von Fange	1955-62
Albert F. Reiner	1957-64
Albert H. Miller	1957-62
Walter C. Beck	1957-61
Walter V. Schienbien	1959
Roland A. Frantz	1960
Carlene Helmkamp	1960
Bernhard Lutz	1961-64
F. Loring Younce	1961
Lowell Eckert	1961
Walter Seehagel	1962
Walter Lobitz	1962
Norma F. Schwermann	1963
John Borger	1964
Thomas Buck	1964

TEMPORARY ASSISTANTS

Alfred R. Rehwinkel	1921-22
Herman D. Seyer	1921-22
H. Earl Miller	1924-25
Fred Baepler	1925
Karl J. Arndt	1925-26
Edwin Kretzmann	1926-28
J. Floyd Dreith	1928-30
Melanie Lange	1928-30
Herbert Lindemann	1930-31
Henry J. Boettcher	1937
Walter Schwane	1937
Harold F. Witte	1937-38
Albert R. Riep	1938-39
Herbert G. Turner (choir)	1942-45
Clarence I. Klewer	1942-43
Victor L. Meyer	1942-43
August J. Mueller	1942-43
John C. Yates (P. E.)	1943-44
Floyd Searle (P. E.)	1944-45
Edith Lechelt	1948-53
Arthur Appelt	1948-50
Herman Dorin	1952-54
Irma Lucht	1953-54
Mrs. Charles Sherman (P. E.)	1953-54
Marion Lauder (Music)	1953-54
A. E. Burden (Band)	1953-54
Dorothy Schmidt	1954-57
Clyde Kaminska	1954-56
Kenneth P. Mueller	1953-54
Walter F. Schoepp	1956-59
Donald Thoemke	1956-57
Marlys Ross	1958-60
George Rode	1959



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