American Folk Hymns
in Three Nineteenth-Century United Brethren Hymnals

by Ellen Jane Lorenz Porter, Mus. D., Ph.D.

At age 19, Edmund Simon Lorenz was called to Dayton, Ohio, to compile the first formal hymnal of the United Brethren in Christ Church. So far, the church had had only small collections of hymns with tunes. "Immediately on my arrival," wrote Lorenz in his book The Lorenz Family,¹ "I was appointed musical editor and asked to write some new tunes for the forthcoming hymnal...So I began my career in which I have continued for over 58 years."

In his long career he wrote many gospel songs (some with his original texts), and six books about hymns and church music in general, which were widely used in seminaries. He served several United Brethren churches as pastor and was president of Lebanon Valley College in Pennsylvania.

During all this time, he was producing hymnals and songbooks for the United Brethren Church. His varied experiences in church music led to his successful founding of Lorenz Publishing Company in 1890; it is, in greatly expanded form, now one of the largest in its field.

An examination of Lorenz’s three major early hymnals reveals a unique and important feature: his interest in the preservation of the revival folk hymns of the early half of the nineteenth century, which were being replaced elsewhere by the newer gospel songs.

The campmeeting spiritual grew out of a particular situation and need which I have described in my book Glory Hallelujah.² Camp meetings arose in the early nineteenth century and hymnals were not readily available. Hymns from Europe were known and American hymns were created. But the desire for participation led to the development of folk hymns which featured a refrain or an interrupting refrain which all could know and sing. Some of these refrains attached to particular mother hymns while others floated free to join a variety of hymns. Some older readers of the Telescope-Messenger may remember singing these in revival services.

That Lorenz was impressed by the beauty of the folk hymn is evident in the account of the first one he heard, as recorded in his book Practical Church Music¹. "Less than thirty years ago I heard the following spiritual still sung spontaneously in southern Ohio. It has the genuine pentatonic characteristics which mark aboriginal music....The effect was very powerful; it had great dignity as well as force.”

The tune is given below; the present author has never found it elsewhere in this form. Lorenz was among the few early compilers of denominational hymnals to recognize the beauty and appeal of folk hymns, and was consulted by George Pullen Jackson for help in the field of revival melodies.
Hymns for the Sanctuary and Social Worship, with Tunes

Few denominational hymnals of the last quarter of the nineteenth century contained revival spirituals. There are twenty in Hymns for the Sanctuary. The General Conference of the church had ordered "a book of hymns with music, adapted to congregational, revival, and social meetings....Special thanks are due E. S. Lorenz for original contributions, and for important assistance in the preparation of this work." The preface states the objects of the compilation, which included: (1) The promotion of spiritual worship in the use of sacred song; (2) The cultivation of a hopeful and happy type of religion and (3) Adaptation to the wants of the people. "The worthiness of these objects, and the extent of their accomplishment in this book, are respectfully submitted to the favor of an intelligent public."

In a century when credits for tunes and words were often absent, Hymns for the Sanctuary gives many, some with dates. In contrast to the earlier southern tunebooks, with their wealth of folk hymns, there are no shape notes, the melody is always in the soprano, the four part harmony is conventional, the range of the voices is moderate. But like the southern tunebooks, there is only one line of text between the staves, succeeding stanzas are placed below the music. Also below the music are the words of hymns that also fit that tune (a really practical ideal).

Many of the tunes are reprinted from The American Tune Book, some folk tunes among them. Some tunes are credited as "Western Melody" (the "West" at the time the tunes first appeared being Kentucky and Ohio frontiers) or "American Melody," usually indicating the Appalachian region. A few secular ballads are given sacred words (a common practice in the camp meetings, where no hymnals were available).

Favorites among such were Home, Sweet Home and some of the Stephen Foster melodies. Prominent in Hymns for the Sanctuary are the tunes by Lowell Mason and William Bradbury. Mason paid little attention to the American folk hymn. His ties were to European models. Bradbury not only included folk hymns in his Sunday school song books but copied their format in his own hymn tunes, notably "Jesus Loves Me," with its repetitive chorus.

Songs of Grace

Lorenz's small hymnal of 1879 shows a great increase in his inclusion of folk hymns, of which there are forty-four. The full title of the book is Songs of Grace, for Revival Meetings, Prayer Meetings, Camp Meetings, Praise Meetings, Missionary Meetings, etc., For Sanctuary and Home. The editors (Isaiah Baltzell was co-editor) express confidence that "a smaller, cheaper, and more convenient book than Hymns for the Sanctuary will be welcomed, to contain all the popular standard hymns, and tunes, revival songs and choruses and others used for social meetings."

(In those days, "social meetings" meant any kind of informal church meetings.)

The first eighty-four hymns are in conventional layout, followed by over one hundred hymns arranged in quite a different way: the left page contains several tunes and their accompanying texts; on the right page are a large number of hymn texts, most of which may be sung to a tune on the left page. Credits for music and words are consistently given, and the notation is more modern than in Hymns for the Sanctuary.

The Otterbein Hymnal

Lorenz's third and most important hymnal was The Otterbein Hymnal, in which there are twenty-three folk hymns. It was first authorized in 1898 and had a long and successful life. In the preface the senior bishop writes, "Rev. E. S. Lorenz, well and favorably known throughout the church, has accomplished his task" and declares that he found nothing to criticize. "It is
pre-eminently a United Brethren hymn book, providing as it does for every phase of our characteristic church life. It contains the solidity and stateliness of the standard hymns of the ages, with the life and sprightliness of the modern gospel song.

The most recent songs are here for the young people, while the older members of the church will hail with delight the re-appearance of old songs dear to the hearts of many of us because they are precious and good, and because our mothers sang them.”

E. S. Lorenz added that “to be useful, hymns must express the peculiar type of Christian life characterizing the denomination it is to serve.” He holds that the United Brethren emphasize “the necessity of Christian experience and the recognition of revival effort.” To meet these needs, “hymns and tunes of the highest artistic merit stand side by side with songs whose practical and spiritual purpose must atone for lack of literary and musical grace.”

Charting of the folk hymns appearing in these three nineteenth century hymnals shows not only that the largest number appeared, as one would expect, in Songs of Grace but also persisted into the Otterbein Hymnal.

The hymns or tunes which appeared in all three are “Cleansing Fountain” (“There is a fountain filled with blood,” which persisted into the most recent United Methodist Hymnal), “Come to Jesus” (“Come to Jesus; Come to Jesus just now” and with 17 verses saying “He will save you,” “He is able,” etc.), “Come Ye Sinners,” “Drooping Souls,” “Dunbar” (a tune name), “I Do Believe,” “Loving Kindness,” “My Days are Gliding By,” “Nettleton” (the tune to which “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” is sung, and which persists into the new United Methodist Hymnal), “O How I Love Jesus” (“There is a name I love to hear”) and “Oh think of the home over there.”

The preservation of the folk hymns, often designated as “American Spirituals” was only a part of Edmund S. Lorenz’s contribution. In the Otterbein Hymnal were included many of the classical hymns, many of the new gospel songs, and forty gospel songs by the editor. His openness to the campmeeting spiritual reflected his awareness of the range of musical resources and his sensitivity to the United Brethren experience.

Notes

1 A microfilm copy of The Lorenz Family is in the United Theological Seminary archives.
3 Practical Church Music (New York: Revell, 1909), 100.
5 Songs of Grace, for Revival Meetings, Prayer Meetings, Camp Meetings, Praise Meetings, Missionary Meetings, etc., For Sanctuary and Home (Dayton: United Brethren Publishing House, 1879).
6 The Otterbein Hymnal: For Use in Public and Social Worship (Dayton: United Brethren Publishing House, 1890).

Central China memories
by Calvin H. Reber

The Central China Mission of the Evangelical Church must be the most reported work of any of the predecessor missions of the United Methodist Church. The United Theological Seminary archives have four separate book length reports of missionaries who served there.

The most scholarly and complete is the 263 page doctoral dissertation of Frederick W. Brandauer entitled The History and Development of the Central Mission of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. This was prepared for the S.T.D. degree awarded by Temple University in June 1953. Dr. Brandauer, who with Mrs. Brandauer, served in that mission sought to utilize all available materials to provide a careful historical record from the parallel interests of both the United Evangelical Church and the Evangelical Association which led to the separate East and West Hunan missions being founded early in the 1900s.

He deals with the currents in China and the United States which affected the mission history to the development of the indigenous church and the withdrawal of missionaries in 1950. The completeness of the work and the extensive
Anniversary book reviewed

*Oakwood's First Century* is the title of a book edited by James S. Hook to provide a history of Oakwood Park, Syracuse, Indiana, in its centennial year (see "News from here and there," T-M, Summer 1993). It is prepared in 8½ × 11 inch format with pages unnumbered but with a listing of the articles included. On the opening page the slogan of the centennial observance is given as "Pride in the Past...Poised for the Future." Articles included dealt with history, camping, Christian education and training Christian educators, lab schools, world mission nights, Chinese family camps, international boy's camp, boat-in worship services, memories, persons memorialized and ordained, early publications and photos.

There are eleven pages of pictures including one of the steamboat that carried passengers from the railroad station to Oakwood. Interesting aspects include notes from trustee minutes, and the copy of a 1913 brochure listing facilities at that time. Prices were given as follows:

- Rooms in new dorm, with bed—$5.00 per night
- Rookery—one room—two beds—$4.00 per week
- Old Tents—$1.00 per week
- Boarding at the Dining Hall—25¢ per meal
- All ministers half price

The facility has been a center for denominational Christian Education conferences, a camp for mentally retarded children, and between 1950 and 1990 a Chinese family camp, that grew out of a ministry to Chinese students coming to the U.S. for study. Thus the book provides not only a history of this one denominational center but a view of summer activities of the United Methodist Church and its predecessors, the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.

For copies of the book you may call 219-457-5781.

Annotated bibliography make this the place to start for a full history of the mission.

Along with Dr. V. L. Farnham, the Brandauers were the last missionaries to leave after 13 months under Communist rule. Only three months earlier Minnie Gohn Dubs and Jean Kellerman were able to leave. The dates of these departures is significant because two other published perspectives have been provided by Mrs. Dubs and Dr. Farnham.

*Adventures of a Sower* (Dayton, Otterbein Press, 1966) by Mrs. Dubs is an attractive paper-back giving an account of her personal experience from her call in 1908 and her leaving for China in 1912. Having married C. Newton Dubs after the death of his first wife, Minnie Dubs wrote from participation in the ministry of the mission founder and as a woman missionary.

It is a very personal account and covers the longest experience in China of the four writers.

Vernon L. Farnham in 1977 privately printed and published his memoirs as *Serving God in China's Crises* with the indicative subtitle *Being the Life and Times of Vernon L. Farnham*. As an autobiography written primarily for his family, this story begins with his birth and family background but ends on October 28, 1950 when he rejoins his family in Naperville, Illinois, following his departure from China. Dr. Farnham went to China in 1924 and in later years served as head of the mission. By position and natural disposition, he was more interested in political events than Mrs. Dubs and he includes neatly drawn maps as well as pictures of Hunan, Liling and Changsha.

The most recently published memories of Central China also cover the shortest period. Rodney A. Sundberg has written of his China experiences as *The Time of Our Lives in China, 1940-1948* (privately printed, 1993). Sundberg, like Farnham, wrote in response to family requests and stated his intention "to simply tell what it was like to live in China and to try to carry out a vision of a commitment in the chaos produced by a war that was both local and world-wide...and to manifest the faithfulness of God in the lives of ordinary people who trust in him" (Foreword).

He saw his story as that of a closely knit family and his primary source was the daily diary of his wife, Vohnie Marie. At some points when their duties separated them, he puts side by side his and her diary entries. Their service was interrupted by war when Marie and the children left in 1944 and Rodney went home on a liberty ship in 1945. They returned to China in the autumn of 1946 and served there until the Communists approached Hunan in 1948. Written after Farnham's account, Sundberg used his maps and makes other references to that record. He succeeds well in showing one family's experience in that tumultuous time.
What all these books have in common is the picture of a mission work constantly interrupted by disturbances and destruction and how the mission and the missionaries survived them. They end with the last missionary withdrawal in 1950 and all save Dr. Brandauer's are very personal accounts. Their references to other missionaries and Chinese leaders who flit across the pages make one wonder about those other stories and what has happened since 1950.

The uniqueness of the United Brethren: A testimony
by Edward D. Auchard

I was the fifth generation of United Brethren on both sides of the house. My wife can claim a similar heritage. I have been a Presbyterian minister for over forty years. With the passing of time, I have a growing appreciation of the United Brethren tradition.

The United Brethren in general did not have a real historical awareness or a keen theological sense. They focused on Christian experience, but back of that experience was a great heritage. The United Brethren movement had its roots in the spiritual life of German-speaking Christians that were older than their American experience. This movement in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia preceded the coming of the Methodists to the American colonies. The United Brethren in Christ represented a unique interface between the Reformed tradition and the Anabaptist tradition.

Philip William Otterbein was born, reared, and educated in Germany. He was among the more scholarly clergypersons in the Middle Colonies during the last generation of British rule and the first generation of an independent United States of America. His experience at Lancaster was an inner realization of truth taught in the Heidelberg Catechism. That reformed confession begins with the question: “What is your only comfort in life and in death?” The response was: “That I belong—body and soul, in life and in death—not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil; that he protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assured me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.”

This statement became more than a theological statement: It became a living reality in the heart of the young Reformed pastor at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in the 1750s. It is a valid description of the United Brethren message for the next two centuries.

Otterbein never renounced Reformed theology, though he did discard some rigid interpretations of Calvinism. His primary purpose was the salvation of men and women in a young nation that was beginning to discover its own genius. Otterbein continued to use the Heidelberg Catechism for the Instruction of those converted throughout his ministry of over sixty years. His brother in Germany wrote a commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism that Otterbein imported in significant quantities.

Valuing the heritage

At the request of the Michigan Christian Advocate James Nelson, Leonard Sweet and Newell Wert of United Theological Seminary wrote an opinion piece evaluating the progress of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren merger since 1968. Under the title, “Time to Move In Before We Move On,” they named three EUB deposits in the union which they consider have not been adequately stirred into the mix. These are (1) Intimate distance as a cultural stance: the effort to move toward the world without becoming worldly; (2) Participatory governance: broad familial consultation at all levels of church life; (3) Communal piety: an unspoken sense of belonging together in religious living.

The writers note that contemporary critics of business organization are seeing the need of these qualities which are being neglected by the church, and they urge the denomination's need to appropriate this part of its heritage more fully before moving on. Copies of the article may be secured from the Seminary.
The Reformation was expressed through four major channels: Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed and Anabaptist. The first three have received the greatest attention from scholars. The Lutheran, Anglican and Reformed churches became, in various countries, the established church. The Anabaptists rejected this concept of a state church together with much of its institutional paraphernalia. Anabaptist clergy were less likely to be trained professionals.

The earlier immigrants to the New World remembered the destructive wars of religion that ravaged seventeenth-century Europe. The Mennonites and the Dunkard Brethren (Anabaptists), and the Moravian Brethren (a related but distinct tradition) also remembered stiff opposition and often violent persecution by the state churches of Europe. This created a psychological, sociological and theological chasm between the state church people and the Anabaptist sect people in the early German-speaking communities in the New World.

It is significant that in the 1766/67 “Great Meeting” held at Isaac Long’s barn, which still stands near Lancaster, the speaker was not the scholarly Otterbein but the German farmer-preacher, Martin Boehm. Otterbein’s embrace and his exclamation, “We are brethren,” was more than an expression of personal emotion. It demonstrated a deep spiritual healing.

Both the Reformed Church and the Anabaptists contributed to the growing United Brethren movement. Persons of Mennonite background probably outnumbered Reformed Church people by the early nineteenth century, since the Reformed Church soon developed a definite denominational structure.

The Mennonites contributed a sense that Christians should be a “peculiar people.” The early opposition to slavery and the early commitment to temperance were a part of the Anabaptist heritage. Church membership based on experience and commitment was also an element in their Anabaptist tradition.

The Mennonite farmer-preachers provided an early model for both lay and itinerant ministers in the United Brethren movement. The itinerant system developed more slowly among United Brethren than among Methodists. Francis Asbury was confused by the resistance of United Brethren preachers to episcopal oversight.

An anti-intellectualism developed among some United Brethren. Inspiration and a sense of the call to preach overshadowed emphasis on an educated ministry. While the United Brethren began to develop institutions of higher learning in the 1840s and 1850s, resistance to educational qualifications for ordination existed in the United Brethren Church until the end of its history as an independent body. This was frustrating to bishops and to theologically trained clergy in the denomination and accounted for some of the movement of United Brethren pastors into Episcopal, Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

During the first generation of United Brethren history, from the 1760s to 1800, there was slight emphasis on organization, and German was the primary language. During the second generation, from 1800 to 1841, three major changes occurred: 1) The United Brethren adopted a Methodist form of organization; 2) English began to replace Germany as the primary language of the church; and 3) The United Brethren became a denomination.

The United Brethren had become conscious of their ecclesiastical identity by the end of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. They did not develop a strong and articulate theology. They were not deeply interested in their own history. The absence of strong theological and historical interest weakened the United Brethren Church. The bitter controversy over secret societies between the Civil War and the last decade of the nineteenth century wasted energies that could have been more fruitfully expended in theological reflection, evangelism at home and missions abroad.

There is still reason to explore the United Brethren heritage. The buried treasure of Reformed and Anabaptist origin and the interaction between these influences can enrich the ecumenical church. The controversies that exhausted and distracted late nineteenth-century United Brethren may constitute a warning to the church of the late twentieth century.

The late Dr. Stanley B. Williams over half a century ago, described the United Brethren heri-
tage in phrases that still echo in my mind" "We have no monumental volumes of theology, no Gothic Cathedrals. God consciously realized in the human heart; that is our heritage in the land of the living and our portion forever.”

NEWSNOTES

The Barnette’s Creek UM Church in Kentucky celebrated its 100th anniversary on October 6, 1993, with Rev. and Mrs. Harry Sinks participating in the services. The church located in the middle of the Cumberland District Home Missionary work of the UB Church was given particular attention by Bishops Clippinger and Dennis and the secretaries of the Home Mission Board at that time. Later the church became a part of the Cumberland District which was united with the Red Bird District in 1955 to become the Kentucky Missionary Conference under one superintendent. The Sinks, who served the church from April 1957 to January 1963, now reside at Otterbein Home.

Lake Magdalene Centennial Preparations. In anticipation of its centennial in 1995, the Lake Magdalene UM Church in Florida is gathering and organizing its 100 years of history. Members of the committee have done research in Missouri Conference archives tracing the founder’s reasons for going to Florida. Thanks to family members they have had access to the handwritten journal of the wagon train trip to Florida in 1894. Centennial Committee chair, Lois Abbott Yost, recently visited the Center for the Study of the EUB Heritage since the Lake Magdalene Church is the mother church of the United Brethren in Christ in Florida. The original thirteen members in 1895 have now become nearly 3,000 to make it one of the leading UM churches in Florida. Mrs. Yost has served as chair of Florida Conference Commission on Archives and History and is currently secretary of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History.

According to the United Methodist Reporter for Eastern Pennsylvania, the EUB archives formerly housed at Lebanon Valley College have been moved to the General Commission Archives of the UM Church in Madison, New Jersey. The Archives and History Commission of the Conference is rethinking its task of helping members of the conference to know more about its diverse inheritance. It hopes to have the museum and archives located at Old St. George’s UMC, Philadelphia, include all denominational and ethnic heritages.

GATHERINGS

Ohio Southeast Conference Reunion. The members of the Ohio Southeast Conference of the former EUB Church had a reunion on October 28, 1993, at the Good Shepherd UM Church in Circleville, Ohio. Fifty-seven members and spouses were present. The group gathered first for fellowship and a sharing of interesting personal matters. After an excellent dinner there was open time to visit. All who attended were enthusiastic about the day and another reunion is planned for this year. The Rev. Fred Ketner is president for the year and this report was provided by the secretary, the Rev. Ken Wrightsel.

Illinois EUB Fellowship. A letter from George Jacobs reported the meeting of former EUB ministers of the Illinois Conference and suggested that Dr. Oral F. Landis be asked about this fellowship and its history. Dr. Landis reported that when he retired at church union after 18 years as conference superintendent, the former Illinois Conference was divided geographically into the three existing former Methodist conferences. Most former EUB’s were in Northern Illinois, some were in Central Illinois, and the fewest were in Southern Illinois. Slowly, they began to sense a costly fellowship separation. One of the ministers suggested to him that they get together those who could and would for a time of fellowship and reunion. The first such meeting was held at East Bay Camp, north of Bloomington in the summer of 1981. Dr. Landis served as convener and he has continued in this role. They meet in August on a Saturday before Labor Day. Having served in ministry since 1923, Dr. Landis is now 90 years of age.
Anecdote

In a column called "Matchet's Diary," the English periodical *West Africa* for February 9, 1963, carried the following story.

From Geneva, where he is covering the UN conference on scientific aid to underdeveloped countries, Anthony Smith sent to the *London Daily Telegraph* his recollections of a previous conference of this kind which was held in Israel. And he suggested that the Geneva Conference should bear in mind the warning given to that earlier conference by the late lamented Rev. Solomon B. Caulker, Vice Principal of Fourah Bay. "What is needed, he said, was not a powerful £2,000 tractor, which impresses only the rich, but twice as good a shovel and twice as healthy a worker, with more blood corpuscles and fewer malarial parasites in his arteries. "The people of the countries have to make their countries work. Science cannot present them with ready made answers but scientists must be made to think how medieval communities can best be brought in line with the 1960s. "A tragedy of the conference was that this excellent man was killed in an aircraft crash on his way home. Somehow this symbolized his efforts not to get mixed up with the most extreme forms of the 20th Century. A man who wanted a better shovel was destroyed by the failure of an airliner. What a tragically apt obituary notice."

Older United Brethren will remember Solomon Caulker from his time in the United States in UB schools and his return to service in Fourah Bay College, a cooperative English University College in Sierra Leone.

A Grateful Acknowledgement

Through the gracious cooperation of Garrett-Evangelical Seminary 1,045 copies of the Summer 1992 issue of the *Telescope-Messenger* were sent to alumni from the EUB tradition. As a result 57 memberships were received by GETS and forwarded to the Center. This cooperation is most gratefully acknowledged.