

THE MIDWESTERN ASSOCIATION OF CHEMISTRY TEACHERS IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Historical Statement

E. L. Haenisch,
Wabash College

As a part of the centennial celebration of Monmouth College in 1952, the chemistry department, under the leadership of Professor W. S. Haldeman, invited to the campus as guests of the College for a conference on teaching of chemistry, faculties of a large number of neighboring institutions. In issuing the call for this conference, Professor Haldeman stated, "It is ironical that many of us have labored so long in the same geographical area and during this time have gotten to know so little of one another. If this conference serves to widen and deepen our acquaintance and to give us insights with respect to our work, it will have been a worthy feature during Monmouth's anniversary year."

The Monmouth group patterned their program in miniature along the lines of the workshops so successfully sponsored each June by the Division of Chemical Education of the American Chemical Society, the main feature of which is intensive discussion in small groups. Edward L. Haenisch of Wabash College was asked to serve as director of the conference which selected as its theme, "An Evaluation of the Teaching of College Chemistry in Liberal Arts Colleges."

Ninety representatives from 53 colleges (principally midwestern liberal arts colleges, but including a few state institutions which were neighbors of Monmouth) attended the meeting. They heard challenging addresses delivered by Dean Harry F. Lewis of The Institute of Paper Chemistry, Professor Alfred Garrett of Chic State University, and Dr. E. H. Volwiler, President and General Manager of the Abbott Laboratories. They formed six discussion groups organized around common teaching and administrative problems.

The response to this type of meeting was so great that at the concluding session on Saturday afternoon, November 15, 1952, those in attendance spontaneously decided to form some sort of a permanent organization which would hold a similar meeting at least annually. There was an immediate invitation from Dean Lewis to hold the 1953 meeting at Appleton, Wisconsin. This was accepted and the following organizing committee was elected with one representative from each of the states to be included in the organization.

Illinois - Ben T. Shawver, Monmouth College (Secretary)
Indiana - Edward L. Haenisch, Wabash College (Chairman)
Iowa - James B. Culbertson, Cornell College
Michigan - Gerrit Van Zyl, Hope College
Minnesota - Perry A. Moore, Hamline University
Missouri - Delta W. Gier, Park College
Wisconsin - Frederick J. Mathews, Beloit College