

HISTORICAL STATEMENT

THE MIDWESTERN ASSOCIATION OF CHEMISTRY TEACHERS IN LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES

Chapter I*

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 Ohio 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

During the ensuing year this organizing committee, by correspondence, struggled with such problems as qualifications for membership, possible participation in a co-operative scheme with the JOURNAL OF CHEMICAL EDUCATION,

and what sort of dues to levy. It soon became apparent that these problems would eventually have to be settled by the membership itself. At a meeting in conjunction with the Chicago A.C.S. meeting the Committee did decide to limit the invitations to the 1953 meetings to liberal arts colleges in the seven state area except for such guests as Dean Lewis elected to invite.

An enthusiastic group of chemistry teachers gathered at The Institute of Paper Chemistry, Appleton, Wisconsin, on October 16 and 17, 1953. They were cordially entertained by the Institute and Lawrence College. The details of this meeting are a part of the report which contains this historical statement. Summaries of the Monmouth discussions were sent out in October 1953 to all who attended that conference. These proceedings were also distributed to those at Appleton.

At a business meeting which concluded the 1953 program the following action was taken.

- (1) The qualifications for membership were unanimously adopted as:
"Active membership in the Association shall include those persons who are teachers in direct charge of courses in chemistry as regular faculty members in the non-tax supported, primarily liberal arts colleges in the seven state area set by the Monmouth meeting. Persons not directly engaged in the teaching of chemistry in such colleges but definitely interested in the Association's program may be elected by a majority vote of the council to associate membership."
- (2) The present organizing committee was reelected to formulate a constitution and to present it at the next meeting.
- (3) An invitation to hold the 1954 meeting at some convenient time in the fall on the campus of Grinnell College was accepted.
- (4) The Secretary was unanimously authorized to circularize department heads in the colleges concerned and ask them to collect and send in \$1.00 dues from each staff member who wanted to join the Association.

*From the report of the Second Annual Meeting of The Midwestern Association of Chemistry Teachers in Liberal Arts Colleges, held at The Institute of Paper Chemistry and Lawrence College, Appleton, Wisconsin, October 16, 17, 1953.