

NBA PRESIDENTS

Faithful Service without Salary

THE FIRST OFFICERS of the NBA were: Mrs. E. D. Hodgdon, President; Mrs. J. H. Garrison, Vice-President; Mrs. J. K. Hansbrough, Secretary; Mrs. L. A. Carlisle, Treasurer; Mrs. O. C. Shedd, Corresponding Secretary; and Mrs. M. E. Younkin, Missionary and General Solicitor.

Since the NBA had been founded by women, during its formative years women served in all executive offices, administering the work with the counsel of an advisory group of men. But as the founders had no desire to keep it a "woman's organization," and as the expanding program continued to enlist the interest of a *constantly widening group*, and called more and more for greater oversight, experience and participation on the part of businessmen, it was natural that men should find a place in the organization.

In 1906, a man for the first time was elected President of NBA—**J. W. Perry**, a businessman of St. Louis. Mr. Perry served from 1906 to 1910, when he moved from St. Louis. Through the years Mr. Perry has maintained interest in the NBA affairs.

In 1910, **W. Palmer Clarkson**, Vice-President, served as general chairman of NBA until 1916, when he was elected President. Mr. Clarkson was classed among the four or five most influential men for good in the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in the United States. Community and church circles honored him. He practiced law for several years in St. Louis, but in 1902 was connected with the Pioneer Cooperage Company of which he was President for many years. His love for children and those in need naturally urged him to give himself to that which would help them. His tender heart moved him to the relief of the orphaned child and the aging sufferer. For 27 years W. Palmer Clarkson sat at the helm of this growing NBA, guiding it through its difficult, formative years, and in 1937 as the NBA settled down to begin the long run of its second half century, he relinquished his post to a younger man, continuing to "stand by." Mr. Clarkson retired as President of NBA in February, 1937, and became Chairman of the Board. Mr. Clarkson gave unsparingly of his time and his means to this ministry. No detail was too small to receive his



W. Palmer Clarkson

attention and no undertaking too great if the need existed. Long hours of committee work and individual attention he gave to the NBA affairs out of his busy life, and his unflagging interest in the ongoing of NBA was a great inspiration to all his colleagues. In addition to NBA, he served on numerous Brotherhood Boards and Committees, and was a well-known figure in our Conventions. Perhaps no layman in our Brotherhood rendered more conspicuous national service for his Church over a longer period of time than did Palmer Clarkson. Despite various calls made upon him, his primary concern for NBA weighed heaviest upon his great heart. It was with deep emotion that he asked to be relieved of some of the heavy responsibilities.

1906
1910

1910
1937

1937
1948

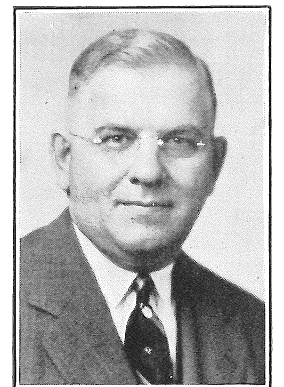
Asa F. Seay, Vice-President of NBA, was elected to succeed Mr. Clarkson by the NBA Board on February 18, 1937. Mr. Seay came to his new office with wide experience in executive work. He was Vice-President of the Ralston-Purina Mills, and an outstanding business and civic leader of St. Louis, as well as a churchman. Since June, 1932, he had been a member of the NBA central executive board, serving since 1935 as vice-president, and was thoroughly conversant with the work and high purposes of the NBA. He was an efficient administrator, a faithful steward, and thoroughly devoted to NBA affairs, and one of NBA's greatest benefactors. Through the generosity of Mr. Seay, the Carrie Hedrick Seay Memorial Home of NBA is a loving and beautiful living memorial to his late wife at Somerset, Pennsylvania, dedicated on June 8, 1950. He was never too busy with his vast business responsibilities to confer with staff members of NBA about its many problems. His leadership as NBA President came at a time when it was necessary to inaugurate extensive programs of repairing, remodeling and new buildings at the several Homes. These activities called for endless counseling and guidance. He was always patient and efficient in dealing with the inevitable problems confronted during the troubled days of World War II from 1941-45 and immediately thereafter. In the preparation of his last will and testament, he made generous provision for the continuation of the work of NBA, to which he had given so much of his time and talents during his lifetime. Upon his death in 1951, NBA lost a trusted leader, a most generous benefactor, and the Kingdom of God one of its most distinguished citizens. His wise leadership was cherished. Due to failing health Mr. Seay retired as NBA President in 1948.



Asa F. Seay

1948
1951

C. D. Pantle, who had served as NBA Vice-President for 11 years, served as NBA President until his death on January 28, 1951.



C. D. Pantle

1951

Ralph P. Jacoby, the first Vice-President of NBA, served 10 months until Mr. Pantle's successor was chosen by the NBA Board of Trustees. Mr. Jacoby served on the NBA Board of Trustees about fifteen years.



Ralph P. Jacoby

1951
1957

W. C. Langley, a lifelong Disciple and most outstanding in the life of Webster Groves Christian Church, and a member of the NBA Board of Trustees and Executive Committee for a number of years, was elected President of NBA on Nov. 14, 1951. Mr. Langley is Assistant Vice-President of the Mutual Savings Life Insurance Company in St. Louis, and makes a full-time job of his home, his business, his church. The NBA is most fortunate to have his wise counsel and valuable leadership.



W. C. Langley

Re-Organization of NBA to Have a Full-Time NBA President

The affairs of NBA have grown so tremendously that too much time is required by these wonderful laymen, who have served through the years so diligently at NBA administration without salary.

The NBA Board of Trustees, after a 2-year study of a newly appointed Policy Committee, approved a new re-organizational plan at their November, 1955, meeting which called for a full-time NBA President with salary.

W. C. Langley, Chairman of the NBA Board of Trustees, appointed a special committee to bring a recommendation to fill this important position.

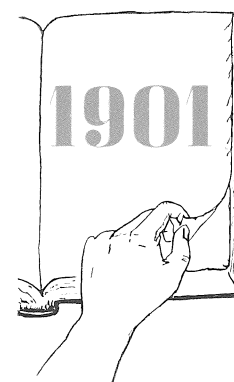
1957

Dr. Orval D. Peterson was chosen by the NBA Board of Trustees at their November 14, 1956 meeting to this newly created position. He resigned his 20-year pastorate at First Christian Church, Yakima, Washington, to begin his new duties with NBA Headquarters, 16th Floor, Landreth Building, St. Louis 2, Missouri, on February 1, 1957.



Dr. Orval D. Peterson

W. C. Langley continues as Chairman of NBA Board of Trustees, Clarence D. Cowdery as Vice-Chairman, James M. Silvey as Secretary, and Roy E. Montgomery as Chairman of the NBA Policy Committee. These important and successful businessmen continue their wise leadership of NBA without salary.

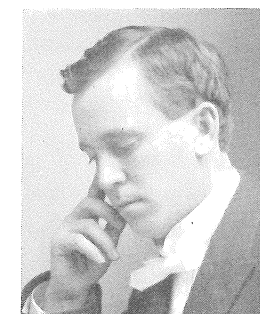


1901
1905

Office of NBA General Secretary Created

As the work grew, the need for administrative and promotional supervision became apparent, and in 1901 the office of NBA General Secretary was created.

George L. Snively was called as the first General Secretary from the Jacksonville, Illinois, pastorate. Under his leadership the work was vigorously promoted for four years, when he was called to the Christian Publishing Company as General Superintendent. Mr. Snively died December 7, 1955, six weeks before he reached 90 years of age.



George L. Snively

1906
1929

James H. Mohorter, pastor of Pueblo, Colorado, assumed the office of general secretary in 1906, and rendered a notable leadership until his death in 1929. It was during these formative years, when the first wave of enthusiasm for such an undertaking had passed, and the work was settling down to the steady, long pull of tremendous responsibility, that the firm hand of J. H. Mohorter was felt in holding the NBA on an even keel, while he steered its uncharted course. NBA's lasting debt to his clear-visioned leadership, consecration, and courage is inestimable. He was known throughout the Brotherhood as the "Beloved Inasmuch Commander-in-Chief," as he charmed them in Churches, groups, and Conventions about this wonderful Benevolent Ministry.



J. H. Mohorter

1929
1937

F. M. Rogers assumed the general secretaryship of NBA in September, 1929, while the work of Benevolent Promotion was being done through a Department of the United Christian Missionary Society, and upon his shoulders fell the task of guiding the NBA through the difficult years incident to its separation from the United Society and its re-establishment as a separate Brotherhood Agency. He spent much time correlating with the officers of the United Christian Missionary Society and the NBA Board of Trustees, making reports and holding conferences with both



F. M. Rogers