

The YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series



www.ymcamission.org

*compiled by Rev. Tom Welch, Central Florida YMCA
edited & formatted by Craig Seibert*

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Dear Staff, Board Member, and Volunteer,

The spiritual heritage of the YMCA is simply amazing. From its birth as a workplace prayer movement of 12 young men in a drapery firm praying for their co-workers by name, to a world-wide movement that has passed its 150th birthday and has over 14,000 locations globally the YMCA has impacted the globe in an amazing way.

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) still has its mission statement today

"To put Christian Principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all."

The expression of this mission varies from branch to branch and from association to association. The enthusiasm for mission expression always requires leadership. This leadership can be positional leadership on the organization chart or influential leadership that is exercised through relational networks that are invisible as far as the organizational chart is concerned, but are real and effective no matter what your staff or volunteer role might be.

This document is composed of one Quick Overview Document of 7 Great YMCA Spiritual Leaders and a brief historical reference to the JOHN 17:21 Logo. It is then followed by brief one page biographies of 12 Great YMCA Leaders who were great spiritual leaders as well. These are numbered in such a way that it generally reflects the chronological order that they served within the YMCA.

These biographies will both challenge you and encourage you to **"go for God and go for it"** as you pursue making a difference in the YMCAs work. It will also hopefully hearken you back to "first things", maybe re-kindling or launching your faith journey with God.

The format of this document certainly allows you to sit down and read all the biographies at once, however it's greatest use for team development and for vision casting for YMCA work is to use the biographies individually with the teams of people that you influence or work with. They can be particularly effective at helping to build Christian Emphasis Teams and keep members excited about the YMCA mission.

Individual pdfs of each bio can be downloaded at the www.ymcamission.org website that are easier to pass along electronically when are using the approach of sharing one at a time. You can also find many other history, heritage, and mission resources at the site, including the history of the JOHN 17:21 Logo, the meaning of the Triangle, letters from George Williams the Founder of the YMCA, John Mott and more. You can even hear a George Williams voice from an 1894 recording celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the YMCA that has now been digitized and streamed from the world wide web.

Huge credit on these biographies goes to Rev. Tom Welch of the Central Florida YMCA Association who first put these biographies together and used them within his association. It is leaders like Tom and so many others that have a heart for God, a heart for the YMCA and its potential for Kingdom impact that are the spiritual torchbearers of the YMCA in this generation.

Our hope is that these resources will encourage you and empower you to be one of those torch-bearers for this generation as well.

Mission Focus
Craig Seibert
www.ymcamission.org

YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

Seven Great YMCA Leaders and the YMCA Logo



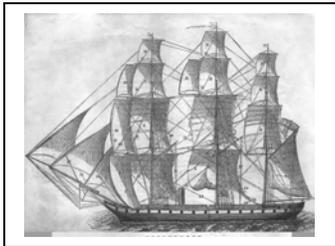
George Williams was born in a farmhouse in southern England in 1821. When he arrived in London in 1840 to become a drapers apprentice, his faith was challenged by the worldliness of the city. He managed to find a few young workers who by their example, encouraged him to give his own life more completely to Jesus Christ. On June 6, 1844, twelve men, led by George Williams, who was 22, founded

the Young Men's Christian Association, and thus the YMCA was born. The original mission read:

"The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) seeks to unite those young men, who regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Savior, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom amongst young men."

"I cannot describe to you the joy and peace that flowed into my soul when I first saw that the Lord Jesus had died for my sins, and that they were all forgiven."

For his service to the well-being of the nation, Queen Victoria knighted him. He has been commemorated by a stained glass window in Westminster Abbey and is buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, both among the highest honors given to English national heroes.



Thomas Sullivan

Around 1850, Thomas Sullivan of Boston was organizing groups to pass out pamphlets that explained the message of God's love in Jesus Christ. Sullivan, a retired Canadian sea-whaling captain and lay missionary for the Baptist Church,

also worried about the temptations facing young men in large cities. He sought to provide a "home away from home" for young sailors on shore leave. From his journal in 1851 we read this,

"In October of 1851, I read this newspaper account of this new organization in London that had been formed for young men who had pledged their lives to Jesus Christ and needed a wholesome alternative to life on the street. I thought this would fit my young men just fine. So I traveled to London to visit the YMCA, and upon my return summoned together other concerned Christian leaders to consider establishing a YMCA in order that these young men be nurtured in their Christian faith. We agreed to start the first YMCA in the United States."

On December 15, Sullivan and six others drafted a constitution that was reviewed at a second meeting a week later. On December 29, in the chapel of the Old South Church in Spring Lane, they approved the constitution and began their work to improve "the spiritual and mental condition of young men." Thus, the YMCA in America began at the Old South Church in Boston.

lectures series, evening classes, social gatherings, excursions, a gymnasium, an employment department, and a register of respectable boarding houses. In addition,

numerous religious activities, including bible classes and prayer meetings, were offered for young men and boys.

By 1853, the Boston YMCA had 1,500 members, most of whom were merchants and artisans. Members paid an annual membership fee to use the facilities and services of the association.

By 1855, there were 24 YMCAs across the United States from New York to San Francisco and from New Orleans to Detroit and Washington DC. The first national meeting was held in New York, forming a voluntary association of YMCA's in the U.S. and Canada.

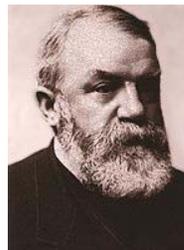


Anthony Bowen. The first YMCA in the world established to serve African American people came into being in 1853, seven years before the Civil War and ten years before slavery was officially ended in the United States. The principal founder was a former slave, Anthony Bowen, who, with a group of friends, organized the "YMCA for Colored Men and Boys" in Washington, D.C., just nine years after the world's first

YMCA was founded in London, England and less than two years after the first North American YMCAs were organized in Boston and Montreal

Anthony Bowen was an unusual man. Born a slave in 1809 in nearby Prince George's County, Maryland, Bowen moved to Washington in 1826 and became legally free within four years. Remarkably, given the times in which he lived, Bowen was the first black man to become a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office. Bowen first heard of the YMCA from a white co-worker, William Chauncy Langdon, a member of the board of the year-old Washington YMCA for white men and boys. With black people barred from membership in any organizations of the day, Bowen decided that a "Black YMCA" was needed.

The YMCA was not the first institution Bowen founded. Mr. Bowen served as a local preacher for forty years, and under his guidance the St. Paul AME Church was founded in 1856. Bowen also established a Sunday Evening School for children and adults. Both met in his home in the 900 block of E Street.



D.L. Moody. Active in the 1859 prayer revival in Chicago, Moody helped establish Chicago's YMCA and became its first full-time employee. In 1861 Moody became a city missionary for the YMCA. Moody rose to its presidency from 1866 to 1869. He had a part in erecting the first Y.M.C.A. building in America when he supervised the erection of Farwell Hall in 1867, seating

3,000.

It was during this first visit to Britain that Moody heard the words which set him hungering and thirsting after a deeper Christian experience and which marked a new era in his life. The words were spoken to him by Mr. Henry Varley, the well known evangelist, as they sat together on a seat in a public park in Dublin. The words were these: *"The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him."*

YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

Seven Great YMCA Leaders and the YMCA Logo

"He said 'a man'" thought Moody, "he did not say, a great man, nor a learned man, nor a 'smart' man, but simply 'a man.' I am a man, and it lies with the man himself whether he will or will not make that entire and full consecration. I will try my utmost to be that man."



James Naismith, originator of basketball. When James Naismith applied on May 27, 1889, to be a student at the YMCA Training School, he answered this question among others: "What is the work of a YMCA Physical Director?" He answered, "To win men for the Master through the gym." His job at Springfield was to train men for

ministry in the growing Sunday school movement and the similarly expanding YMCA.

Oswald Chambers – Chaplain and Author Oswald was born on July 24, 1874 in Aberdeen Scotland, where he became a Christian during his teen years under the ministry of Charles Spurgeon.



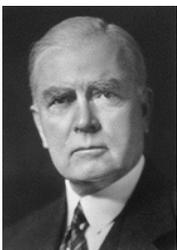
God used many things to shape and mold Chambers. One of which was his acceptance into the University of Edinburgh. Rapid spiritual development followed as Chambers became intently

interested in the things of God. From 1906-10, he conducted itinerant Bible-teaching ministries in the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan.

In 1915, Chambers was commissioned by YMCA to go to Zeitoun, Egypt, where he ministered to Australian and New Zealand troops during World War I.

Many of Chambers' devotional lectures make up a large portion of *My Utmost For His Highest*, now considered a classic and his best-known book. His death, the result of a ruptured appendix in 1917, came as a shock to all who knew him. He had often told friends: "I feel I shall be buried for a time, hidden away in obscurity; then suddenly I shall flame out, do my work, and be gone."

After his death, a fellow worker remarked: "It is a mighty thing to see even once in a lifetime a man the self-expression of whose being is the Redemption of Jesus Christ manifested in daily hourly living. He would have [simply] called himself 'A believer in Jesus.'" The fact is, God made this man "a refuge from the storm" for many downcast souls. Through his written words, God continues to touch and change lives for Christ's sake.



John R. Mott. From 1915 to 1928, Mott was general-secretary of the International Committee of the Y.M.C.A. and from 1926 to 1937 president of the Y.M.C.A.'s World Committee. During World War I, when the Y.M.C.A. offered its services to **President Wilson**, Mott became general secretary of the National War Work Council, receiving the Distinguished Service Medal for his work. At 81, the

Nobel committee awarded him one of the highest honors given on earth--the Nobel Peace Prize. In his own words:

"If the Young Men's Christian Association is to increase its spiritual vitality and fruitfulness, it must maintain at all costs its distinctively Christian Character.... This is tantamount to saying that it must preserve its clear Christian aim, its unshakable Christian foundation...."

The Association must steadfastly resist the danger of becoming a mere human institution ...

This essential must never be compromised, obscured, or abandoned for the sake of any plausible outward success or worldly advantage for such a course would mark the beginning of the end. Wherever an Association lacks world-conquering power, it is because it has to some extent been conquered by the world."



The YMCA Logo. Inside the circle are the first two letters of the word Christ. The Greek letters Chi and Rho (XP) form the ancient symbol that early Christians painted on the walls of the catacombs. It was used by the YMCA to remind all that Christ was at the center of the movement. Finally an open Bible was added

"both because this divine book is the weapon of warfare which St. John gives to young men, and because it's the distinguishing mark of the great Reformation. The Bible opens on the Savior's High Priestly prayer, from which we have especially chosen the 21st verse: 'That they all may be one...as We are one' - John 17:21." This remains the YMCA's official emblem.

*Compiled by Tom Welch
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"It is our duty to evangelize the world because we owe all men the gospel. To have a knowledge of Christ is to incur a responsibility to every man who has it not..."

YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

George Williams – Founder of the YMCA

1



George Williams

Many people today have no idea what the "C" in YMCA refers to. Powerful movements, especially those touching young people, can usually be traced to one visionary individual who sets the "genetic code" of the future movement. Lord Baden-Powell did that for Scouting. Sir George Williams did that as founder of the Young Men's Christian Association.

Sir George Williams was the youngest of the eight sons of Amos & Elisabeth Williams, of Ashway Farm, Dulverton, in the county of Somerset. He was born on October 11th, 1821. George Williams represented the massive 19th century shift from the rural to the burgeoning English cities

"I entered Bridgewater", said Williams, "a careless, thoughtless, godless, swearing young fellow". But the town of Bridgewater where he first learned the draper (clothing-goods) trade had a lasting impact on him. "I

"I cannot describe to you the joy and peace that flowed into my soul when I first saw that the Lord Jesus had died for my sins, and that they were all forgiven."

first learned in Bridgewater", said Williams, "to love my dear Lord and Saviour for what He had done for me... I was on the downward road... I said, 'Cannot I escape? Is there no escape?'

They told me in this town of Bridgewater how to escape - Confess your sins, accept Christ, trust in Him, yield your heart to the Saviour." Williams commented: "I cannot describe to you the joy and peace that flowed into my soul when I first saw that the Lord Jesus had died for my sins, and that they were all forgiven."

From that moment on, Williams' motto became: 'It is not how little but how much we can do for others'... J.E. Hodder said that "it was impossible to resent his cheerful, unaffected sincerity; his manly directness; his courageous simplicity."

On June 6, 1844, twelve men, all but one associates of Williams' firm, met in his bedroom and created the Young Men's Christian Association. Its original intent was merely to work with employees of other drapery houses. The era was one of evangelical advance. Associations to deal with the dreadful social and moral consequences of the industrial revolution were springing up everywhere in Protestant countries. The YMCA hired a hall and assumed the task of reclaiming men through lectures, exercise and innocent amusement.

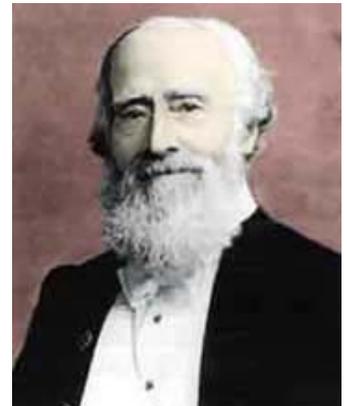
Many prominent men threw their weight behind the work. Lord Shaftesbury was the YMCA's president for a time. Thomas Binney and other evangelical leaders gave their support.

The organization caught on like wildfire. Long before Williams' death in 1905, it had achieved a membership of 150,000 in Britain and half a million in America with thousands of branches worldwide.

Williams was a keen and brilliant businessman, who understood the art of delegation and ongoing accountability. From his growing and prosperous clothing-good business, he regularly gave away two-thirds of his income, in order to help others. Williams once said: "What is my duty in business? To be righteous. To do right things between man and man. To buy honestly. Not to deceive or falsely represent or colour." He once prayed: "Oh Lord, You have given me money. Give me a heart to do your will with it. May I use it for you and seek to get wisdom from you to use it aright."

In Williams' room hung a framed card illumined with the words "God First". George Williams had learnt from Dr. Charles Finney that everything worth doing needed to begin with, and end with prayer. Williams' early YMCA gatherings met to pray for the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of their co-workers and neighbors.

His very last words, which he spoke while at the 1905 World YMCA Jubilee, were: "...if you wish to have a happy, useful, and profitable life, give your hearts to God while you are young." He was then carried to his room and died.



George Williams in old age

For his service to the well-being of the nation, Queen Victoria knighted him. He has been commemorated by a stained glass window in Westminster Abbey and is buried in St. Paul's Cathedral, both among the highest honors given to English national heroes.

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Captain Thomas Valentine Sullivan (1800-1859)



"He was shipwrecked in the Antarctic, fell from a yard and nearly killed; was attacked by pirates off the coast of Brazil; by the time he was thirty-three he had made a fortune and lost it. Nonetheless, Thomas

Valentine Sullivan's most long-lasting accomplishment was ... he founded the YMCA in the United States."

– From Seaman Extraordinary by Leonard M. Snyder

As we know, the YMCA was founded by Sir George Williams. Williams was born in a farmhouse in southern England in 1821. He was brought up in the Church of England. However, when young George arrived in the city to become an assistant drapers apprentice, he found his faith lacking. He managed to find a few young workers who, by their example, encouraged him to give his own life more completely to Jesus Christ. On June 4, 1844, twelve men, led by George Williams, founded the Young Men's Christian Association, and thus the YMCA was born.

The original Mission Statement

"The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) seeks to unite those young men, who regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Savior, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom amongst young men.

It was also decreed at this time that differences of opinion on other matters, however important, should not interfere.

How the YMCA came to the United States

Around 1850, Thomas Sullivan of Boston was organizing groups to pass out pamphlets that explained the message of God's love in Jesus Christ. Sullivan, a retired Canadian sea-whaling captain and lay missionary for the Baptist Church, also worried about the temptations facing young men in large cities. He sought to provide a "home away from home" for young sailors on shore leave. From his journal in 1851 we read this,

"In October of 1851, I read this newspaper account of this new organization in London that had been formed for young men who had pledged their lives to Jesus Christ and needed a wholesome alternative to life on the street. I thought this would fit my young men just fine. So I traveled to London to visit the YMCA, and upon my return summoned together other concerned Christian leaders to consider establishing a YMCA in order that these young men

be nurtured in their Christian faith. We agreed to start the first YMCA in the United States."

On December 15, Sullivan and six others drafted a constitution that was reviewed at a

second meeting a week later. On December 29, in the chapel of the Old South Church in Spring Lane, they approved the constitution and began their work to improve "the spiritual and mental condition of young men." Thus, the YMCA in America began at the Old South Church in Boston.



Guiding Principles

The fundamental principles behind the Boston YMCA were to work among young Christian men, to have leaders in the association that emphasized knowing Christ personally and to "recognize the power of environment in influencing the lives of men." The chapter intended to keep young, Christian men away from the vices of the city and on a Christian path and to promote personal faith in Christ. Its mission was accomplished by offering numerous services to their members. The chapter provided a reading room, a library, a popular lectures series, evening classes, social gatherings, excursions, a gymnasium, an employment department, and a register of respectable boarding houses. In addition, numerous religious activities, including bible classes and prayer meetings, were offered for young men and boys.

Explosive Growth

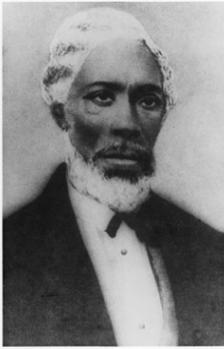
By 1853, the Boston YMCA had 1,500 members, most of whom were merchants and artisans. Members paid an annual membership fee to use the facilities and services of the association.

By 1855, there were 24 YMCAs across the United States from New York to San Francisco and from New Orleans to Detroit and Washington DC. The first national meeting was held in New York, forming a voluntary association of YMCA's in the U.S. and Canada. Ironically, Sullivan was a Canadian!

None of these YMCAs had buildings at the time- they were simply organized groups that reached out and disciplined young men. It was not until 1859 that the first YMCA building was built in Baltimore, Maryland.

YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

Anthony Bowen – Founder of the 1st African American YMCA



Anthony Bowen
and Montreal

The first YMCA in the world established to serve African American people came into being in 1853, seven years before the Civil War and ten years before slavery was officially ended in the United States. The principal founder was a former slave, Anthony Bowen, who, with a group of friends, organized the "YMCA for Colored Men and Boys" in Washington, D.C., just nine years after the world's first YMCA was founded in London, England and less than two years after the first North American YMCAs were organized in Boston

and Montreal

Anthony Bowen was an unusual man. Born a slave in 1809 in nearby Prince George's County, Maryland, Bowen moved to Washington in 1826 and became legally free within four years. Remarkably, given the times in which he lived, Bowen was the first black man to become a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office. Bowen first heard of the YMCA from a white co-worker, William Chauncy Langdon, a member of the board of the year-old Washington YMCA for white men and boys. With black people barred from membership in any organizations of the day, Bowen decided that a "Black YMCA" was needed.

As Anthony Bowen's work in the 1850s indicates, African Americans embraced the YMCA early on, but social and financial conditions for black people made it difficult for the movement to grow very quickly. Nevertheless, by the late 1860s, the movement found a firm foothold in the community with associations established in New York City, Philadelphia, Charleston, S.C., and Harrisburg, Pa. In 1867, E. V. C. Eato of New York City became the first black delegate to attend the YMCA's annual convention.

The YMCA was not the first institution Bowen founded. He helped to found the St. Paul AME Church in 1856 and established a Sunday Evening School for children and adults. Both met in his home in the 900 block of E Street, SW (now part of the Southeast-Southwest Freeway).

In "The Journal of Negro History" (vol.7, 1922) Carter G. Woodson described the struggles and triumphs of the black community in seeking spiritual expression and ministry:

"One grievance among others was that the Negro members [of the *Ebenezer Methodist Church*] were dissatisfied with their white pastors because they declined to take the black children into their arms when administering the rites of baptism. In 1839 this alienation developed into an open rupture, when thirteen class leaders and one exhorter left the mother church, and, after purchasing a lot on the Island, erected a house and formed a black church, independent of the Methodist Episcopal body, under the name of the Wesley Zion Church, and employed a black preacher. Among the prominent men in this separation were Enoch Ambush, the well-known schoolmaster, and Anthony Bowen, who for many years was an estimable employee in the Department of the Interior. Mr. Bowen served as a local preacher for forty years, and under his guidance St. Paul's Church

on the Island was organized, at first worshipping in E Street Chapel."

Though we have no written records of Bowen's preaching or writings, if the religion of the African-American community at the time is any indication then his faith was vigorous, evangelical, and deeply spiritual. We can also assume that Bowen shared the spiritual focus of YMCA leaders of his generation (Williams, Sullivan, et al.)

As one of the city's active abolitionists, Bowen met freedom-seekers at the Sixth Street wharf and sheltered them at his home, an important stop along the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, Bowen met with President Lincoln to urge him to recruit African American soldiers.

Today the Anthony Bowen Branch of the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington bears his name. William Sidney Pittman, son-in-law of Booker T. Washington and one of the nation's first African-American architects, designed the five story building to hold 72 rooms and a swimming pool. President Theodore Roosevelt laid the cornerstone on Thanksgiving of 1908, calling the Y "a monument to the advancement of the city of Washington." Renamed the Anthony Bowen YMCA in 1972, the community center housed such famous residents as Langston Hughes who lived there for a few years.



**Original 12th Street
YMCA**

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Andrew Murray: 1828-1917. "One day I was talking with a missionary," writes Andrew Murray, "and he said to me, 'Brother, remember that when God puts a desire into your heart, He will fulfill it.' That helped me; I thought of it a hundred times. I want to say the same to you who are plunging about and struggling in the quagmire of helplessness and doubt. The desire that God puts into

your heart He will fulfill.

"If any are saying that God has not a place for them, let them trust God, and wait, and He will help you and show you what is your place.

"I have learnt to place myself before God every day, as a vessel to be filled with His Holy Spirit. He has filled me with the blessed assurance that He, as the everlasting God, has guaranteed His work in me. If there is one lesson that I am learning day by day, it is this; that it is God who worketh all in all. Oh, that I could help any brother or sister to realize this!"

One of four children born to Andrew, Sr. and Maria Murray, Andrew Murray was raised in what was considered then the most remote corner of the world - Graaff-Reinet (near the Cape), South Africa. It was here, after his formal education in Scotland and three years of theological study in college in Holland, that Andrew Murray returned as a missionary and minister.

Murray's first appointment was to Bloemfontein, a remote and unattractive territory of nearly 50,000 square miles and 12,000 people beyond the Orange River. Even at this early stage of ministry, he already showed signs of becoming a noted author. The "deeper Christian life" was a favorite subject for Murray. He told how God was committed to revealing more of Himself to those who would seek Him.

As a preacher, he consistently drew large crowds and led many to trust Christ as their Savior. But Murray's life was not without testing. As a young man, an enduring sickness left him weak and exhausted. Later at the prime of his ministry, a severe illness resulted in his absence from the pulpit for two years. But God used each trial to remove all that hindered his devotion to Christ.

Murray wrote, "That awful pride and self complacency which have hither to ruled in my heart." He fought an insidious battle with pride, but God had the victory.

"I had never learnt with all my theology that obedience was possible," writes Murray. "My justification was as clear as noonday. I knew the hour in which I received from God the joy of pardon. I remember in my little room at Bloemfontein how I used to sit and think, What is the matter? Here I am, knowing that God has justified me in the blood of Christ, but I have no power for service. My thoughts, my words, my actions, my unfaithfulness - everything troubled me."

Murray's daughter wrote of her father, "It was after the 'time of silence' [in sickness] when God came so near to

father and he saw more clearly the meaning of a life of full surrender and simple faith. He began to show in all relationships that constant tenderness and unruffled loving kindness and unselfish thought for others which increasingly characterized his life from that point. At the same time he lost nothing of his strength and determination."

When revival came to Cape Town, Andrew Murray was hesitant. He didn't want to be swept away in the heart of emotion. But Murray quickly realized that God was working in South Africa the same way He was in America. The result was an even deeper knowledge of the things of God.

He writes in *The Secret Of Adoration*, "Take time. Give God time to reveal Himself to you. Give yourself time to be silent and quiet before Him, waiting to receive, through the Spirit, the assurance of His presence with you, His power working in you.

"Take time to read His Word as in His presence, that from it you may know what He asks of you and what He promises you. Let the Word create around you, create within you a holy atmosphere, a holy heavenly light, in which your soul will be refreshed and strengthened for the work of daily life."

Friends share how the Murray home was always filled with activity. He and his wife, Emma, had nine children, and there was an endless stream of visitors and friends. In 1873, Andrew helped to establish the Huguenot Seminary, a school where young women could be trained for educational work. Girls from all over the country began arriving. When classes opened, the building was too small for all who had enrolled and a wing had to be added.

"Do you want to enter what people call "the higher life"? Then go a step lower down."

He also served as the first president of the Young Men's Christian Fellowship (YMCA). Not only was he the author of over 240 books, he was also a man of great prayer. Through his private devotion with the Savior, he learned that laughter and fellowship were two of life's most important activities.

He often prayed, "May not a single moment of my life be spent outside the light, love, and joy of God's presence and may not a moment without the entire surrender of my self as a vessel for Him to fill full of His Spirit and His love."

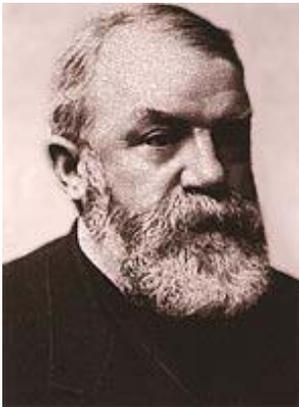
Abiding in Christ was the cornerstone to Andrew Murray's life and ministry. He writes: "Abide in Jesus: your life in Him will lead you to that fellowship with God in which the only true knowledge of God is to be had. His love, His power, His infinite glory will, as you abide in Jesus, be so revealed as it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive."

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YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

Dwight L. Moody – Great YMCA Leader of the 19th Century

5



D.L. Moody

Dwight Lyman Moody (February 5, 1837 - December 22, 1899), also known as D.L. Moody, was an American evangelist and publisher who founded the Moody Church, Northfield Schools in Massachusetts, the Moody Bible Institute and Moody Press.

On his seventeenth birthday (1854), Dwight Moody went to Boston to seek employment. He became a clerk in Holton's Shoe Store, his uncle's enterprise. One of the work requirements was attendance at the Mount Vernon Congregational Church, pastored by Edward Kirk. Church seemed boring, but a faithful Sunday School teacher encouraged him along. One Saturday, April 21, 1855, the teacher, Edward Kimball, walked into the store and found Moody wrapping shoes. He said, "I want to tell you how much Christ loves you." Moody knelt down and was converted. Later he told how he felt, "I was in a new world. The birds sang sweeter, the sun shone brighter. I'd never known such peace." Not sure of his spiritual perception, it was a year before the church admitted him for membership!

As a young man of 21 in 1858, Moody's work in Chicago led to the largest Sunday School of his time, with 1,500 in attendance weekly. It became so well known that the just-elected President Abraham Lincoln visited and spoke at a Sunday School meeting on November 25, 1860.

After the American Civil War started, he was involved with the U.S. Christian Commission of the YMCA, and ministered at several battlefields. He was president of the Chicago YMCA from 1866 to 1869.

Active in the 1859 prayer revival in Chicago, Moody helped establish Chicago's YMCA and became its first full-time employee. In 1861 Moody became a city missionary for the YMCA. Moody rose to its presidency from 1866 to 1869. He had a part in erecting the first Y.M.C.A. building in America when he supervised the erection of Farwell Hall in 1867, seating 3,000.

Moody became one of the most prominent Young Men's Christian Association workers in America, and it was at a Y.M.C.A. convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1870, that he first met Ira David Sankey, who was destined to become his great singing partner. Moody was so impressed with his singing that he asked him to come with him and sing for him, and in Indianapolis they held their first meeting together, in the open air. Some months afterward

Sankey gave up his business and joined Mr. Moody in his work.

Following the Chicago fire in October, 1871, which destroyed the YMCA, the church and D.L. Moody's home, he sprang into action and within a few weeks rebuilt a new building, the Northside Tabernacle, and turned it into a relief center to help feed and clothe the thousands who had lost their homes.

It was in a trip to England that he became well known as an evangelist, to the point that some have claimed he was the greatest evangelist of the 19th century. His preaching had an impact as great as that of George Whitefield and John Wesley within Britain, Scotland and Ireland.

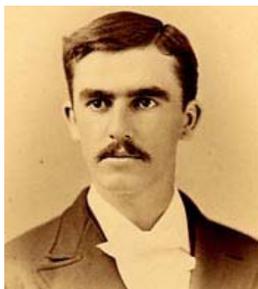
It was during this first visit to Britain that Moody heard the words which set him hungering and thirsting after a deeper Christian experience and which marked a new era in his life. The words were spoken to him by Mr. Henry Varley, the well known evangelist, as they sat together on a seat in a public park in Dublin. The words were these: *"The world has yet to see what God will do with and for and through and in and by the man who is fully consecrated to Him."* "He said 'a man'" thought Moody, "he did not say, a great man, nor a learned man, nor a 'smart' man, but simply 'a man.' I am a man, and it lies with the man himself whether he will or will not make that entire and full consecration. I will try my utmost to be that man."

Compiled by Tom Welch
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YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

Charles Ober – Promoter of Leadership Development

6



Charles K. Ober

Ober was born in Beverly, Massachusetts in 1856. He found his first job as a bootcutter dull and became a cod fisherman. He entered into YMCA work after surviving eight days afloat at sea off the Newfoundland coast. Crediting his survival to prayer, Ober decided to devote himself to Christian work.

Ober enrolled in George Williams College and was a field assistant to Robert McBurney. After his graduation in 1882, he entered state work in Massachusetts, first as an assistant to S. M. Sayford for six months and then state secretary for two years. In 1885, Ober entered student work as secretary for the International Committee, a post he held for six years. It was during this time that John R. Mott became involved in the student movement and with Ober aided in the development of student conferences, and the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions.

For the next twenty years, Ober worked in the Field department, helping to build up state work and to promote the organization. During his career, he was active in recruiting men for Association work. In connection with his work in the Field Department, he developed the "Fellowship Plan" to bring men with high potential into the YMCA and groom them for secretaryship. In 1910 Ober was released from the regular work of the Field Department to concentrate on the development of this program, which he continued until his retirement in 1922. During World War I he also served as a special secretary in France and England.

Ober's seafaring days and conversion are contained in his book [Out of the Fog](#).

Excerpts from [Out of the Fog](#)

"The strange thing that I now have to record is that I soon forgot, or willfully ignored, my whole experience of God, prayer and deliverance, and became apparently more skeptical and indifferent than before. The only way I can explain this is that I had not become a Christian, and my dominant mental attitude reasserted itself when danger was past. I practically never attended church. My position and influence, however, were not merely negative; I was positively antagonistic to Christianity, and this attitude continued up to the April following.

But while I forgot, I was not forgotten. God had begun a work in me, the continuation and completion of which waited on my willingness to cooperate, and the most powerful force in the world, that of believing and persistent prayer, was being released in my behalf. My mother was a woman of remarkable Christian character, with rare qualities of mind and heart, knowledge and love of the Scriptures, and a deep and genuine prayer life. Notwithstanding my lack of sympathy with her in the things most fundamental, she had confidence that the tide would turn with me. Her confidence, however, was not based on me. She knew the Lord and understood that it was not the sheep that went out after the Shepherd who was lost until it found Him. So she kept a well-worn path to the place of prayer..."

"...But I was weary with the effort, and as I thought it over, I said to myself "What are you trying to do?" and the answer was, "I am trying to be a Christian." Then it dawned upon me that trying was not trusting; that, if I succeeded in my effort, I should have only a self-made product and not the religion of the Bible and that it was unreasonable for me to expect the results of faith before exercising faith itself. I was stumbling at the very simplicity of faith. I was working to win what God was waiting to give, while my latent faculty of faith, the greatest asset in personality, was lying worthless through disuse. I thought of my experience on the ocean, when finally, helpless to help myself, I had left my whole problem with the Pilot and He had taken command and brought us through to safety, and so I deliberately gave up the struggle and said to myself, "It is right for me to serve God and to live for Him, and I will do it whether I have what they call an 'experience' or not." And, having settled the question, I dismissed it and waited for instructions."

"And then something happened, for, from without, surprising me with its presence, like the discovery of a welcome but unexpected guest, there came into my life a deep, great, overflowing peace. I had never known it before, and therefore I could not by any possibility have imagined it; but, I recognized it as something from God. It was not sensational, it came quietly; as quietly "as the daylight comes when the night is done." It was not emotional, unless it was in itself an emotion. But emotions are transient and this had come to stay.

The man who would lift others must be uplifted himself, and he who would command others must learn to obey.
Charles K. Ober

With the peace, there came also something that seemed to be a reinforcement of my life principle, an achieving power, a disposition to dare and an ability to do that which hitherto had seemed impossible; and the petty pessimism of the past gave way before this new consciousness.

With this deep incoming tide of peace and power came a clearing of the mental atmosphere, and I saw that the fog had lifted. When I saw this, I said to myself quietly, "I think I am a Christian," and almost immediately added, "I am a Christian!"

The fog had passed, and the drifting was over; I had come within sight of land. What land it was I did not then know, but it proved to be a new world. How great it is I do not yet fully understand, but I have been exploring it thirty years and I think it is a continent.

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Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick

Gulick, whose parents were missionaries, was born in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1865. For fifteen years he traveled extensively because of his background as a child of missionaries. Finally, in 1880, he was able to slow his travels and go to Oberlin College until 1884. In the fall of 1885, Gulick entered a middle preparatory class, but also took

some college classes to further his education. Shortly after his stay at Oberlin, he went to Sargent School of Physical Training in Cambridge, Massachusetts for a period of six months. In April of 1886, he became the physical director of the YMCA in Jackson, Michigan. and continued his relationship with the YMCA off and on until his death

In 1887, Gulick became head of the gymnasium department of the Young Men's Christian Education's Springfield Training School. In 1891, he assigned one of his students a set of rules to design a game around. The student was James Naismith. The game became known as basketball. Gulick's other achievements include: Chairman, AAU Basket Ball Committee (1895-1905), Member, Olympic Games Committee (1906-Athens, 1908-London), Founded Public School Athletic League (PSAL) as head of physical education for Public Schools of New York City (1903), Instrumental in creation of the Boy Scouts, and along with his wife, introduced the Camp Fire Girls to educate women on changing roles outside the home (1911).

Dr. Gulick was perhaps the most influential figure within the YMCA (Putney). Gulick campaigned to ". . . Christianize the gym" (Putney: 71) and in turn reinforced the growing relationship between sport and Christianity.

A "New" Othodoxy?

This, however is not to suggest that Gulick was thoroughly orthodox his beliefs. According to John Gustav-Wrathall:

"Gulick appeared to embrace many contradictions... He was an advocate of eugenics and a believer in social Darwinism who also upheld altruism, service, and self sacrifice as the highest form of religion" (Gustav-Wrathall, 1998: 28-20)."

The foundation of his thought was the so-called 'Recapitulation Theory'. According to Recapitulation Theory, each individual, just like each human race (and that included at the time what we now would refer to as ethnic groups), recapitulates human evolution. Child study experts, such as **G. Stanley Hall**, president of Clark University and founding father of psychology in the United States, for example argued that each boy had a "little Indian" stage in his development. That is, on the way towards maturity each individual relives past stages of evolution. It was central, then, to shape behavior towards civilized self-possession as each individual moves away from the more atavistic

behavioral stages of human evolution. Luther Gulick believed that this could be achieved best through proper training and development of spirit, mind, and body and to overcome the mind-body dualism in social thought and to understand human beings as holistic entities instead. This brought Gulick to create a new symbol for the YMCA - a triangle, inscribed with the words 'body,' 'mind,' and 'spirit,' adopted as YMCA logo in 1895 at the YMCA Convention in Springfield, Massachusetts. Gulick, then, promoted what was known at the time as a "Muscular Christianity."



"Athleticising the YMCA"

When he and Robert J. Roberts launched the first course for gymnasium instructors at the YMCA College at Springfield, the association did not see physical training as the integral part of its program, and of an education of its members to be well-rounded men, but merely as a bait to draw young men to what the YMCA considered its main mission - religious work. There was fear of "the tale wagging the dog".

For proponents of "Muscular Christianity, the philosophy of the triangle principle (body, mind and spirit) found its Biblical roots in Luke 2:52 (KJV): "And Jesus increased in wisdom (mind) and stature (body), and in favour with God (spirit) and man (society)." Other frequently cited verses that legitimate physical education were 1 Cor 6:19 (KJV): " know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost" and Mark 12:30 (KJV): "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind".

Theological Shift

In all levels, the Red Triangle widely replaced the official emblem of the World's Alliance, during World War I. The "Chi Rho" cross in the center was explained by the International Committee: "In the circle the monogram of Christ, as the faith of the ancient Christians painted it everywhere in



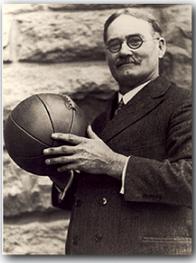
their catacombs, will remind our Associations that Christ is their centre, their true bond of Union, their supreme end, their strength, and their only 'raison d'être'". Thus, while the emblem of the World's Alliance arose from Evangelical missiology, the Red Triangle arose from the anthropology of the movement.

Editorial Comment: *Our understanding of the mission of the YMCA is determined by how we answer three questions: 1) what was the mission of Christ? 2) What is humankind's greatest need? and 3) what is "salvation"? Truly our theology determines our activity.*

YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

James Naismith – Inventor of Basketball

8



James Naismith. Born near Almonte, Ontario on November 6, 1861. Orphaned at age nine, when his parents contracted typhoid fever while working in the milling community. The Naismith children were left under the care of their uncle, Peter Young.

James learned early many lessons in honesty, initiative, independence, and ruggedness. Uncle Peter put great stock in reliability and self-reliance. When James was sent into the field or the woods with a team of horses, he was expected to do the assigned job without asking for help. If trouble arose, he was depended upon to take care of it himself.

Education and Influences: After graduation from McGill University (he was cited on the Prize and Honor List for having passed the Bachelor of Arts in Honors in philosophy and Hebrew) James enrolled in Presbyterian College theological school. To finance his education he accepted an appointment as instructor of physical education in the gymnasium at McGill. As a student in a theological program, he studied hard and became involved in extracurricular religious activities such as the Missionary Society.

Although James won theological scholarships, he dismayed colleagues and professors by continuing his involvement in athletics. He played lacrosse - a sport occasionally referred to at the time as "legalized murder", and rugby - a hard hitting sport, which some considered a tool of the devil. James was advised to leave the evils of the athletic life and devote himself to books and Christian duties. James' views of athletics differed from those of his instructors. He continued his involvement with sports.

During a rugby game in his senior year in seminary, a player on James's team uttered some profanity, then apologized to James explaining "I forgot you were there." These words changed the course of James' life. From this remark he began to play with the idea of helping men through athletics and the ministry.

Backstory: In the late 1880s D. L. Moody convened his annual Northfield conferences during the summer near his home in Massachusetts. Moody attracted hundreds of college YMCA leaders annually to his meetings, which combined Bible teaching and discussion with rigorous activity and athletic competition. All-American Amos Alonzo Stagg of Yale, later the most successful college football coach of the first half of the twentieth century, was in charge of the athletic activities, and Moody and fellow evangelicals instructed the YMCA leaders in how most effectively to return to their campuses and use their athletic prowess as a means to attract converts to Jesus.

Out of these conferences, not incidentally, arose the Student Volunteer Movement and its "watchword" of "Reaching the world for Christ in this generation." Out of these conferences also arose Springfield College as a permanent successor to Moody's summer meetings, given to training YMCA leaders who would skillfully combine athleticism and evangelism.

In the late summer of 1890, after spending some time learning about the YMCAs in Canada and the U.S., James traveled to Springfield to enroll at the YMCA Training

school. Here he would take courses that emphasized spiritual and physical development.

When James Naismith applied on May 27, 1889, to be a student at the YMCA Training School, he answered this question among others: "What is the work of a YMCA Physical Director?" He answered, "To win men for the Master through the gym."

"To win men for the Master through the gym."

While at the YMCA training school, James took and taught various courses, and played rugby for the YMCA. His job at Springfield was to train men for ministry in the growing Sunday school movement and the similarly expanding YMCA.

Basketball is Born: Under orders from Dr. Luther Gulick, head of Physical Education at the School for Christian Workers. Naismith had 14 days to create an indoor game that would provide an "athletic distraction" for a rowdy class through the brutal New England winter. Naismith's invention didn't come easily. Getting close to the deadline, he struggled to keep the class' faith. His first intention was to bring outdoor games indoors, i.e., soccer and lacrosse. These games proved too physical and cumbersome. At his wits' end, Naismith recalled a childhood game that required players to use finesse and accuracy to become successful. After brainstorming this new idea, Naismith developed basketball's original 13 rules and consequently, the game of basketball.

The game took off. In January 1892 Naismith published the rules, including prohibitions against "holding, pushing, shouldering, striking, tackling, or tripping," in the training school paper. By 1896 the game had reached England, France, and Brazil; Australia, China, and India soon followed. Ironically, by 1897 the game had grown so popular in North America that YMCA facilities started banning it—hotshot teams were monopolizing the gyms. At the 1936 Berlin games, basketball became the first team sport in Olympic competition.

Legacy: Naismith later applied to be director of physical education at the University of Kansas, a job he held until his retirement in 1937. In recommending Naismith for the position, A.A. Stagg described him as the "inventor of basketball, a medical doctor, a Presbyterian Minister, a teetotaller, an all-around athlete, a non-smoker and the owner of a vocabulary without cuss words." No wonder basketball refs penalize technical fouls.

*Compiled by Tom Welch
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YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

Sumner Dudley – Founder of YMCA Camping Movement



Sumner F. Dudley started the Boys' Camping Society in 1885 with an eye toward development among young men in a physically challenging outdoor setting. *"The purpose of the plan is not only to have a happy, jolly time but also to teach in a practical way that to have such a time it is not necessary to break away from wholesome restraint, not to forget the Sabbath and religious habits, but to continue, under circumstances that will make it always remembered, the study of God's word..."*

Y literature of the 1880's describes Sumner Dudley as a major spokesman for boys work in the YMCA well before he took his now legendary 1885 "camping" trip, an extension of his work with the New York City and New Jersey Y's. Dudley, long active in both the New York and New Jersey YMCA movements, was asked in 1884 to take young honor YMCA members camping. In 1885 he took seven boys for a week's encampment at Orange Lake, NJ. The next year Dudley moved the site to Twin Islands, Lake Wawayanda, NJ.

"The city youngsters enjoyed their experiences in the country and parents were impressed with the spiritual values their sons were learning, so by 1890 the island became so crowded that another site had to be found."

Sportsmanship, fellowship, cooperation, good humor, physical fitness, and moral responsibility were what the Y regime emphasized."

"Pleasure seeking does not necessitate any relaxation of Christian study and work."
-- **Sumner Dudley**

Though the YMCA did not invent camping in 1885, and Sumner Dudley did not lead the first YMCA camping program. What the YMCA can claim is having founded the first continuously used camp (Dudley).

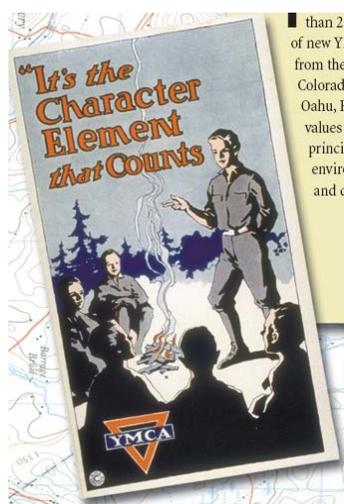
Dudley set up that first camp to provide

"healthful recreation without temptation, the gratification of the natural desire for a free and easy life outdoors, together with the cultivation of a manly Christian character."

From those first seven campers in 1885, the number of Y campers grew to 6,348 in 187 YMCA camps by 1905.

The idea of bringing youth closer to God and each other has been the foremost benefit and mission of YMCA camping. The YMCA puts Christian principals into practice, through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. YMCA camping is more than songs around a campfire on a summer night. Camp is about community, and a commitment to building strong kids, strong families, and strong communities.
(Camp Grady Spruce)

"There was just one tent, a boat, a few cooking utensils, and rubber ponchos for sleeping on the ground".



Ultimately, the camp settled on Lake Champlain, NY, in 1908. Dudley referred to the first camp as Camp Baldhead. After Dudley's death in 1897, the camp was renamed Camp Dudley. Camp Dudley's history describes a strong religious and spiritual atmosphere:

"Guided by leaders of common sense and practicality, it emphasized the Christ-like spirit in the healthy body, and developed its recreational features in a way the church was unequipped to do. Its directors and secretaries were not theologians. They were earnest Christian men. Their theology was a simplification of current Protestant belief worked out practically in daily life."



In 1891, Camp moved to Lake Champlain, with no fewer than 83 campers and operated under supervision of New York and New Jersey Y state committees. In 1897, Sumner Dudley died at age 43, leaving a lasting legacy of Christian mission with the YMCA.

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Oswald Chambers – Chaplain and Author of My Utmost for His Highest



Oswald Chambers

The Surrendered Life

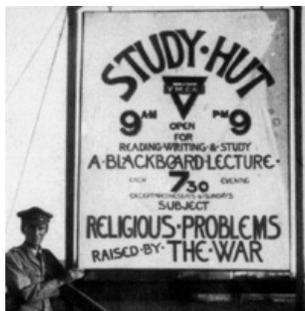
Oswald Chambers was a man unbridled by the world and its desires. Some say he was one of the greatest Christian thinkers of our time. He would say if any credit is given, let it go to Jesus

Christ, his Lord and Savior. Much like the apostle Paul, life for Oswald Chambers was but an open opportunity to glorify God.

He was born on July 24, 1874 in Aberdeen Scotland, where he became a Christian during his teen years under the ministry of Charles Spurgeon. God used many things to shape and mold Chambers. One of which was his acceptance into the University of Edinburgh. Rapid spiritual development followed as Chambers became intently interested in the things of God. After answering God's call into the ministry, he studied theology at Dunoon College.

From 1906-10, he conducted itinerant Bible-teaching ministries in the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan. Upon his return home, he married Gertrude Hobbs. In 1911, he founded and was named principal of the Bible Training College in Clapham, London. The school closed in 1915 due to World War I. Chambers was then commissioned by YMCA to go to Zeitoun, Egypt,

where he ministered to Australian and New Zealand troops.



Oswald Chambers, YMCA Chaplain, in front of his YMCA Hut, Zeitoun, Egypt, 1916 © Oswald Chambers Publications Association.

Many of Chambers' devotional lectures make up a large portion of My Utmost For His Highest, now considered a classic and his best-known book. His death, the result of a ruptured appendix in 1917, came as a shock to all who knew him. He had often

told friends: "I feel I shall be buried for a time, hidden away in obscurity; then suddenly I shall flame out, do my work, and be gone."

After his death, a fellow worker remarked: "It is a mighty thing to see even once in a lifetime a man the self-expression of whose being is the Redemption of Jesus Christ manifested in daily hourly living. He would have [simply] called himself 'A believer in Jesus.'" The fact is, God made this man "a refuge from the storm" for many downcast souls. Through his written words, God continues to touch and change lives for Christ's sake.

Through Trial God Brightens the Flame

However, there was a time when answering God's call seemed difficult and painful. For several years, poverty and spiritual loneliness clouded his life. Then came the breakthrough. God had used a wilderness experience to "bring him to the end of himself." He became keenly aware

of his utter worthlessness. He found his only worth to be that which God had given him in Christ.

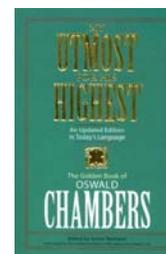
There arose within Oswald Chambers' life a deep desire to abandon all for Christ's sake. He writes, "A sanctified soul may be an artist, or a musician [anyone]; but he is not a sanctified artist or musician: he is one who expresses the message of God through a particular medium. As long as the artist or musician imagines he can consecrate his artistic gifts to God, he is deluded. Abandonment of ourselves is the kernel of consecration, not presenting our gifts, but presenting ourselves without reserve [to Christ]."

Sooner or later God makes each of us aware of the areas in our lives where "self interest" abides. These are the areas He comes to touch and demand complete surrender.

Living The Surrendered Life

The Cross of Christ took on a new dimension to Oswald. No longer was it just a point of salvation; it became the place of self abandonment and surrender to the call of God.

It was more than a place of forgiveness; it was a place of hallowed ground where he and we stand and willingly identify with Jesus Christ. It is where we "give up our right to ourselves" and die to self.



Out of this death comes life and the opportunity to live a Spirit-filled existence. (John 12:24) As we respond in obedience to God, He promises to lead and guide us through life with a sense of victory and hope. The times of trial, distress, and isolation are times God accomplishes His greatest work, when He molds us into the likeness of Christ.

"The one great need for the missionary (Chambers uses this term for those who have given their lives completely to Christ) is to be ready for Jesus Christ, and we cannot be ready unless we have seen Him." The way we come to see Jesus is through surrender. The blessing of living life abandoned to Him is to witness His daily power and grace alive and flowing through our lives into the lives of others.

In abandonment and surrender we find the unbridled soul—one not tempted by the treasures of the world, but bound to the grace and glory of the Savior. Oswald Chambers' message is one that still calls to us today. It is a call to leave behind everything outside of Jesus Christ:

"The battle is lost or won in the secret places of the will before God, never first in the external world. . . . Every now and again, not often, but sometimes, God brings us to a point of climax. That is the Great Divide in the life; from that point we either go towards a more and more dilatory and useless type of Christian life, or we become more and more ablaze for the glory of God - [Our] Utmost for His Highest."

William Borden – Young Millionaire and Leader of Y Rescue Mission



William Borden, 1887-1913.

In 1904 William Borden graduated from a Chicago high school. As heir to the Borden Dairy estate, he was already a millionaire. For his high school graduation present, his parents gave 16-year-old Borden a trip around the world. As the young man traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, he felt a growing burden for the world's hurting people. Finally, Bill Borden wrote home to say, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field."

One friend expressed surprise that he was "throwing himself away as a missionary."

In response, Bill wrote two words in the back of his Bible: **"No reserves."**

He was already known around campus for his commitment to Christian service as well as for his wealth. Presumably that is why he was approached by John Magee of the YMCA about some needs close to home. New Haven, the home of Yale, was also a seaport with a dock that provided irregular, occasional work for vagrants. As a result there was a large population of tramps, as well as recently released prisoners of the county jail. Magee saw the need for a rescue mission in the area and he saw the need for the undergrads of Yale to learn about the suffering of many in their own society. Magee and Borden began regularly praying about the needs of the dock area and with help from the Water Street Mission of New York, they started the Yale Hope Mission

Borden recruited many of his classmates to come to the mission to befriend and witness to those who came in. He started a continuing tradition of involvement of the undergrads in the life of mission, because from the beginning the mission was aimed as much as at the elite students as the down and out hobos. Here are the comments of a student about the mission a few years after Borden's time,

"I might say that sophomore year I was a pure atheist. Because there was so much selfishness and conceit in me, I was unhappy most of the time. The meeting at the mission opened my eyes. After attending several meetings, I saw that Jesus Christ could work miracles in men's lives. I began to get interested in the men – trying to help them get a new start and a firm hold on Christ. This work at the Mission made me a Christian."

Borden himself was the main benefactor of the mission in the beginning, not only recruiting students but providing the funds for the purchase of the building that served as chapel, hotel, and kitchen to

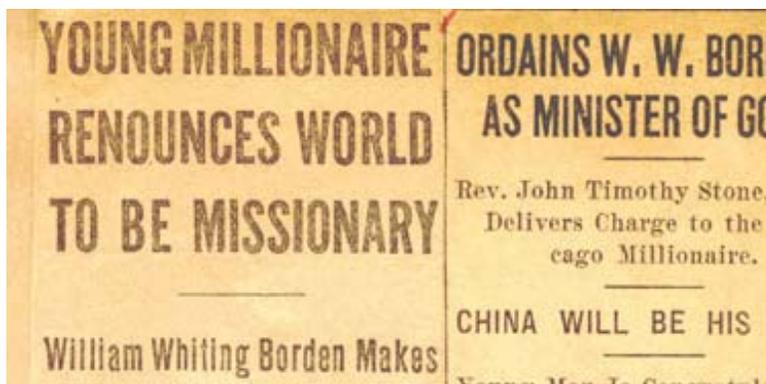
the down and out of New Haven. His involvement was not just of the checkbook, but also of the heart.

Upon graduation from Yale, Borden turned down some high paying job offers. In his Bible, he wrote two more words: **"No retreats."**

William Borden went on to graduate work at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey. When he finished his studies at Princeton, he sailed for China. Because he was hoping to work with Muslims, he stopped first in Egypt to study Arabic. While there, he contracted spinal meningitis. Within a month, 25-year-old William Borden was dead.

When news William Whiting Borden's death was cabled back to the U.S., the story was carried by nearly every American newspaper. "A wave of sorrow went round the world . . . Borden not only gave (away) his wealth, but himself, in a way so joyous and natural that it (seemed) a privilege rather than a sacrifice"

Was Borden's untimely death a waste? Not in God's plan. Prior to his death, Borden had written two more words in his Bible. Underneath the words "No reserves" and "No retreats," he had written: **"No regrets."**



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YMCA Spiritual Legacy Series

John R. Mott – Great YMCA Leader of the 20th Century

12



John R Mott (May 25, 1865-January 31, 1955) was born of pioneer stock in Livingston Manor, New York.

At sixteen, Mott enrolled at [Upper Iowa University](#), a small Methodist preparatory school and college in Fayette. He was an enthusiastic student of history and literature there and a prizewinner in debating and oratory, but transferred to [Cornell University](#) in 1885. At this time he thought of his life's work as a choice between law and his

"While life lasts, I am an evangelist."

father's lumber business, but he changed his mind upon hearing a lecture by J. K. Studd on January 14, 1886. Three sentences in Studd's speech, he said, prompted his lifelong service of presenting Christ to students: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God."

Mott couldn't sleep all that night and hunted up Studd for a private talk. That encounter changed his life--and the world. Mott was to demonstrate a living faith in Christ and became a notable evangelist, a YMCA leader and a co-founder of the Student Volunteer Mission. He labored to pull all Christians together to win the world for Christ in his generation.

In the summer of 1886, Mott represented Cornell University's [Y.M.C.A.](#) at the first international, interdenominational student Christian conference ever held. At that conference, which gathered 251 men from eighty-nine colleges and universities, one hundred men - including Mott - pledged themselves to work in foreign missions. From this, two years later, sprang the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions.

Mott was graduated in 1888, a member of Phi Beta Kappa, with a bachelor's degree in philosophy and history. In September of 1888 he began a service of twenty-seven years as national secretary of the Intercollegiate Y.M.C.A. of the U.S.A. and Canada, a position requiring visits to colleges to address students concerning Christian activities.

During this period, he was also chairman of the executive committee of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, presiding officer of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh in 1910, chairman of the International Missionary Council. With Karl Fries of Sweden, he organized the World's Student Christian Federation in 1895 and as its general secretary went on a two-year world tour, during which he organized national student movements in India, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, parts of Europe and the North East. In 1912 and 1913, he toured the Far East, holding twenty-one regional missionary conferences in India, China, Japan, and Korea.

From 1915 to 1928, Mott was general-secretary of the International Committee of the Y.M.C.A. and from 1926 to 1937 president of the Y.M.C.A.'s World Committee. During World War I, when the Y.M.C.A. offered its services to [President Wilson](#), Mott became general secretary of the National War Work Council, receiving the Distinguished

Service Medal for his work. For the Y.M.C.A. he kept up international contacts as circumstances allowed and helped to conduct relief work for prisoners of war in various countries. He had already declined President Wilson's offer of the ambassadorship to China, but he served in 1916 as a member of the Mexican Commission, and in 1917 as a member of the Special Diplomatic Mission to Russia.

The sum of Mott's work makes an impressive record: he wrote sixteen books in his chosen field; crossed the Atlantic over one hundred times and the Pacific fourteen times, averaging thirty-four days on the ocean per year for fifty years; delivered thousands of speeches; chaired innumerable conferences, and received dozens of awards. At 81, the Nobel committee awarded him one of the highest honors given on earth--the Nobel Peace Prize. He died at his home in Orlando, Florida, at the age of eighty-nine.

In His Own Words:

"It is our duty to evangelize the world because all men need Christ. The Scriptures clearly teach that if men are to be saved they must be saved through Christ. He alone can deliver them from the power of sin and its penalty. His death made salvation possible. The Word of God sets forth the conditions of salvation. God has chosen to have these conditions made known through human instruments. Christians have a duty to preach Christ to every creature. The burning question for every Christian then is: Shall hundreds of millions of people now living, who need Christ and are capable of receiving help from Him, pass away without having even the opportunity to know Him?"

"The young people's movements of our day, like our own...YMCA, need nothing so much as some mighty objective to call out the best energies of mind and heart. We find precisely such an objective in the sublime enterprise of filling the earth with a knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the deep. If we would save our Christian young people's movements from their perils of ease and luxury and selfishness and slothfulness and unreality, we must necessarily take up some great and scriptural object like this, and give ourselves to it with holy abandon."

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.' Therefore, friends, in view of the awful need of men who tonight are living without Christ; in view of the infinite possibilities of the life related to Christ as mighty Saviour and risen Lord; in view of the magnitude of the task which confronts the Church of this generation; in view of the impending crisis and the urgency of the situation; in view of the conditions which favor a great onward movement within the Church of God; in view of the dangers of anything less than a great onward movement; in view of the great cloud of witnesses who gathered around us last night, of those who subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness - yes, in view of the constraining memories of the Cross of Christ and the love wherewith he hath loved us, let us rise and resolve, at whatever cost of self-denial, that live or die, we shall live or die for the evangelization of the world in our day".

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