

"Strawbridge Home For Boys Opened in 1924"
Carroll County Times article for 17 October 1999
By Jay A. Graybeal

Seventy-five years ago, Eldersburg was thronged with visitors who attended the dedication of the first cottage at Strawbridge Home for boys. A description of the event appeared in the October 31, 1924 issue of this newspaper:

"Saturday last one of the beautiful days of this beautiful autumn, between 5000 and 6000 Methodists and their friends from Maryland, Southern Pennsylvania and Delaware gathered at the Strawbridge Home for boys, at Eldersburg, this county, to witness and to take part in the dedication of the first cottage to accommodate the first 15 or 20 boys of the home, who will be received about December 1st, and to attend layman's Day at the Home, which hereafter will be an annual pilgrimage to the Home.

The original farm house has been converted into a cottage by additions and other improvements and now contains 25 well proportioned rooms, well lighted and heated.

Mr. Harry L Price, President of the Laymen's Association of the Methodist Episcopal Congregations of the Baltimore Conference, presided at the dedicatory exercises, and the following program was carried out successfully and entertainingly; Singing, 'All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name,' with a prelude by Mr. Herbert E. Barnes; address, Bishop William F. McDowell, of the Washington Area; singing, 'Faith of Our Father's' and 'I Love to Tell The Story;' addresses, Dr. F. Watson Hannan of Drew Theological Seminary, and Dr. Robertson, of the Burt Orphans' Home, of New York Area; trombone solo, Mr. Herbert E. Barnes; singing, 'Lord's Day Alliance Hymn;' addresses, Bishops John W. Hamilton and Frank M. Bristol; singing, 'America;' dedication, Bishops McDowell, Hamilton and Bristol, and singing, 'America, The Beautiful.'

One of the interesting and instructive events of the day was the camping outfit of 52 girls from Kelso Home For Girls, who, under the supervision of Mr. Muller, the president of the Kelso Home. Mr. Walter Kerwin, the superintendent, and the matron of the Home. They brought with them a complete camping outfit, consisting of tents, cooking utensils, &c., and prepared and ate their meals on the ground. They were a healthy and happy lot of girls and every one was delighted to have them there; also the girls were delighted to be out in the country and to mingle with the thousands of friends of orphans who were in attendance at the exercises.

Among the large throng were members of the Good Wills Industries' boys and girls from Baltimore, with their tent and truck exhibition. They were awarded a silk flag as a prize.

To satisfy the 'inner man' of so large a number of persons, who had come to the Home to spend the day, some one, or rather ones had to undertake the task. When it come to feeding a crowd, leave it to the ladies of the country churches. The job was handled in first class style by the ladies of the following churches who had booths on the premises; Mt. Olivet, Ward's Chapel, Sykesville, Wesley Chapel, Oakland and Bethesda.

By actual count there were between 800 and 1000 automobiles on the ground and the parking of them was handled admirably by the Boy Scouts of Westminster and the State Police. Not an accident was reported.

Another delightful feature of the dedication was the music furnished by the McDonogh School Band. This school was founded by John McDonogh, a native of Baltimore, who died in New Orleans long before the Civil War, and is located in Baltimore county about 10 miles from the Strawbridge Home. Mr. McDonogh, directed in his will that the boys of the school should be taught vocal music, and since the founding of the school in 1873, a competent teacher of music has been one of the faculty. The McDonogh Band boys understand, and can play good music as was demonstrated last Saturday, to the great delight of every one who heard them. Mr. William T. Childs, principal of McDonogh School and a former pupil, sent the band to the Strawbridge Home. He takes a deep interest in the Methodist church and in orphan boys, having been one himself.

Mr. S. S. Wilson, of this city, took a number of photos of groups and copies of the same may be obtained from him at he Wilson Studio, adjoining the post office building, this city.

One of the busiest men at the Home was Mr. George W. Albaugh, this city, who, with Mrs. Albaugh, presented the farm to the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. he was anxious that everyone should be comfortable and that the day should close without an untoward incident to mar it." As the accompanying photograph by Serek S. Wilson shows, the Strawbridge Home was an attractive frame structure. Unfortunately, the building burned in the 1970s.

Photo caption: Participants gathered on the grounds of the Strawbridge Home for Boys in Eldersburg, dedicated on October 25, 1924. Historical Society of Carroll County Collection, gift of Mrs. Robert K. Billingslea, Sr.