

This Week in Eden History

May 1 | Herman A. Feierabend



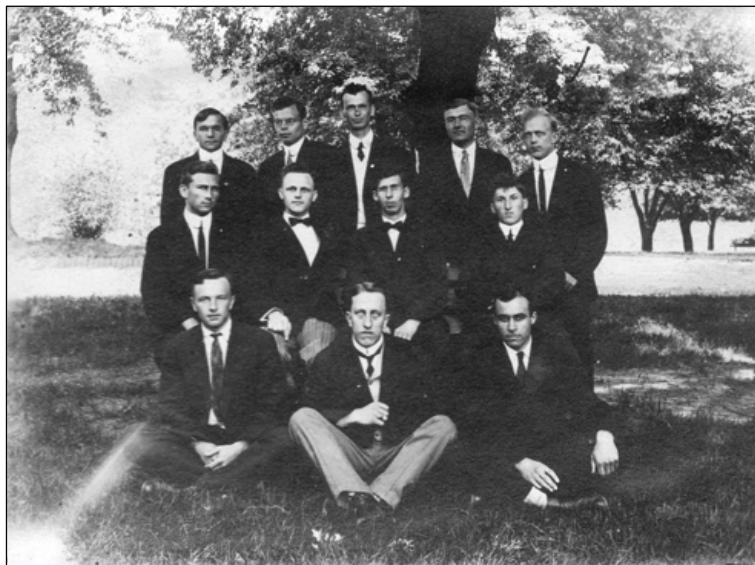
Herman Feierabend's Eden graduation photo, 1912 | Eden Seminary Archives

Herman August Julius Feierabend, long-time missionary in Central India, was born on a farm in Grey Eagle Township, Todd County, Minnesota on May 1, 1889. After attending a county school, he was sent at age 14 to Minneapolis for further education. There he received religious instruction and was confirmed at St. John's Evangelical Church. Back home his family pastor encouraged him to attend Elmhurst College and become a minister. While at Elmhurst he felt a calling to become a foreign missionary and joined the campus branch of the Student Volunteer Movement.

The interdenominational Student Volunteer Movement was founded in 1888 with the slogan "the evangelization of the world in this generation." In its efforts to support the Western missionary movement, the Student Volunteer Movement encouraged students to commit to foreign mission work through national gatherings and supported their commitment through publications and campus chapters. At its peak in the early 1920s, half of all new missionaries leaving the U.S. for their assignments had made a commitment as a student.

Feierabend entered Eden in 1909, where he met other students preparing for missionary work. The members of the Eden chapter of the Student Volunteer Movement included Theophil Twente, Theodore Seybold, and Hans Koenig, all of whom became missionaries in India. In June 1912, the Evangelical Synod Board of Foreign Missions commissioned Feierabend, and he arrived in Raipur, Central

Providences, India on Oct. 30. His first assignments were in Hindu-speaking areas at Sakti and Mahasamund, the latter a large region of approximately 3,600 square miles. His transportation options included an oxcart and a bicycle! When he returned to the U.S. in 1921, he married



Herman Feierabend is standing third from left in the back row in this photo of Eden Student Volunteers. | Eden Seminary Archives

Marie Nottrott, a deaconess sister at the Evangelical Hospital in St. Louis.

The Feierabends returned to India where they started a new ministry to the Oriya people. Herman's responsibility was to evangelize and support the small but growing churches that resulted. Marie used her nurse's training to provide basic medical care. For many years, Herman, Marie, and their growing family traveled through the Oriya region in oxcarts—and later a truck—camping outside villages

while preaching, distributing literature, and providing medicine to the inhabitants. In 1940, they took over the mission work at Parsabhader, continuing until they retired in 1957.

During their forty-five years of ministry, the world had changed. Two world wars had indirect impacts on their work, and the Indian-led church took over much over their work. Increased sensitivity to the Western cultural baggage that often accompanied the work of missionaries required the Feierabends to rethink their approaches to ministry.

After retiring from the mission field, the Feierabends returned to the U.S., where Herman served Friedens UCC in Farina, Ill.. After three years, they moved to Nashville, Illinois. Herman died at home suddenly on September 23, 1971. Marie died May 12, 1992 in St. Louis.

The life and work of Herman A. And Marie Nottrott Feierabend are described in *Life of a Jungle Missionary: Herman August Feierabend—A Biography* by Herbert H. Feierabend (North Freedom, Wis.: H.H. Feierabend, 1999), available for check out in the Eden-Webster Library collection at call no. EDEN STORED BV3269.FD4 F4 1999. A copy can also be viewed in the archives.

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