

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Bethel College is a small Mennonite college located in North Newton, Kansas. The college was founded in 1887. Its original purpose was to prepare teachers and religious workers needed in the Mennonite congregations. It was not until 1912 that the curriculum was changed to offer a liberal arts degree. Until this time intercollegiate sports were severely frowned upon.

THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to show the results of all the men's intercollegiate athletic contests in the various sports at Bethel College; (2) to show the names of the lettermen or participants and coaches; (3) to point out the highlights as they occurred through the years; (4) to list those individuals who received special recognition or were cited for outstanding performances; and (5) to record the major activities of the Bethel College Letter Club.

Importance of this study. A history of this nature is beneficial primarily to those it concerns--in this case, those associated with Bethel College in one form or another. However, all forms of cumulative records have intangible values in regard to future usefulness. Since this is the first study made of men's intercollegiate

athletics at Bethel College, the thesis will help to create a permanent record.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Intercollegiate athletics. This term is defined as any competition between two or more colleges of higher learning involving participants in some type or form of organized athletics.

Formative years. The beginning of athletics in Bethel College to the fall of 1920 was an uncertain period. A more pronounced pattern of activities was in evidence after those years.

Graymaroons. This was a nickname for the athletic teams, derived from the College colors--maroon and gray.

Threshers. The threshing stone, official symbol of Bethel College, inspired this nickname for the athletic squads.

III. ORGANIZATION OF REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

Organization of material. Following the review of literature, the historical study is divided into six chapters. The material within each chapter is divided into the activities sponsored by the College each year. Introductory material is needed to clarify the formative period of intercollegiate athletics. After that, the majority of the material is presented in an objective manner. The final chapter lists the names of the coaches and major activities of the Letter Club.

Limitations. This research study represents a summary of men's intercollegiate athletics at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas, from 1900 through the spring of 1960.

Some scores and names of participants could not be found. This is because such information was not available in the records used for research, or are not available because results or summaries were not kept.

Assumption. There is a need for an accurate chronological order of intercollegiate athletics at Bethel College for any future references that may be needed. The following are other basic assumptions: (1) The understanding of intercollegiate athletics is facilitated by dissemination of accurate information. (2) Intercollegiate athletics represent a major area of public relations in institutions of higher education. (3) Athletics represent one of the greatest ties between alumni and the institution.