



Adelphian Academy staff and students, 1910-1911 school year. Written on back: "Dressers, Von Pohles, Grace Martin, Tillie Barr, Everest, Dean, Mildred Belding, Grace Swartout, Ashley May, Carter Ledford and his wife, Richard Hainer, Clora F. Keiser, Claude Keiser, Hazel Kane."

Center for Adventist Research Image Database. <http://centerforadventistresearch.org/photos> (accessed May 21, 2021).

Ledford, Carter E. (1884–1978)

DENNIS PETTIBONE

Dennis Pettibone, Ph.D. (University of California, Riverside), is professor emeritus of history at Southern Adventist University. He and his first wife, Carol Jean Nelson Pettibone (now deceased) have two grown daughters. He is now married to the former Rebecca Aufderhar. His published writings include *A Century of Challenge: the Story of Southern College* and the second half of *His Story in Our Time*.

Carter E Ledford, the first full-time manager of agricultural enterprises at Southern Junior College, now Southern Adventist University, was born on May 21, 1884, and passed away on May 4, 1978.¹

Although the forerunner of Southern Adventist University had engaged in agricultural enterprises almost from the beginning, these projects were not originally supervised by professional, full-time agriculturalists. Instead, they were headed part-time by religion, science, and history professors and even by an academy student?² This

began to change on November 19, 1917, when the junior college board voted to place all of the agricultural work, including the dairy, garden, orchard, and farm, under the leadership of Carter E Ledford.³ He was also to be the overall manager of all the other school industries. In addition, his responsibilities would include teaching a class in agriculture and doing construction work during the winters.⁴ He would continue to manage the school's agricultural enterprises from 1918 to 1933.⁵

Ledford had previously worked at Beechwood Academy in Indiana. Adequate faculty housing was not available when he arrived; so, he and his wife Celia (who worked in the business office) at first lived in one of the sharecropper's shacks that had been used by workers in the lime quarry that had been operated on what is now the campus before the school acquired it.

Under Ledford's leadership, the college dairy was placed on the local county's Dairy Herd Improvement Association's honor roll and the vegetable garden and fruit orchards local community produce massive amounts of fruits and vegetables that were utilized by the college cafeteria as well as being sold in the community.⁶ The agricultural enterprises he managed enabled students to earn thousands of dollars toward their tuition, but the dairy was the only part of the agricultural program that ever earned a profit for the school.⁷

Although he lost his right arm in the corn shredder in 1922, he was back to work after only a ten-day absence. He continued to manage Southern's agricultural programs for eight years with only one arm. Then, in 1932, he lost his other arm once again in the corn shredder, when one of his student workers failed to correctly understand his instructions. Nevertheless, he carried on as the farm manager for three more years. After his retirement, he continued to live in Collegedale.⁸

Carter E Ledford passed away on May 4, 1978. He left behind his wife, Celia (1909-1984), a son, O. M. Ledford (1915-2011), and a daughter, Louise Roddenberry (c 1923-2010).⁹ Southern's industrial arts building was named in his honor.¹⁰

SOURCES

Elva B Gardner *Southern Missionary College: A School of His Planning* revised by J. Mabel Wood. Collegedale TN: Southern Missionary College Board of Trustees, 1975.

Dennis Pettibone, *A Century of Challenge: The Story of Southern College, 1892-1992* Collegedale TN: The College Press, 1992.

Southern Tidings, September 1978.

Southern Junior College, *Minority Board Minutes*, Nov. 19, 1917.

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/savannah/obituary.aspx?pid=139376367>.

<https://www.southern.edu/advancement/docs/BridgeStoriesDocs.pdf>

NOTES

1. *Southern Tidings*, September 1978, 30.
2. Dennis Pettibone, *A Century of Challenge: The Story of Southern College, 1892-1992* (Collegedale TN: The College Press, 1992), 22, 178.
3. Southern Junior College, *Minority Board Minutes*, November 19, 1917.
4. Pettibone, 178.
5. Elva B. Gardner, *Southern Missionary College: A School of His Planning* revised by J. Mabel Wood (Collegedale Tennessee: Southern Missionary College Board of Trustees, 1975), 307.
6. <https://www.southern.edu/advancement/docs/BridgeStoriesDocs.pdf>. Accessed April 27, 2021.
7. Pettibone, 178.
8. Gardner, 85.
9. *Southern Tidings*, loc. cit.; <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/92436506/celia-a.-ledford>, accessed May 16, 2021; <https://www.thedunlap-tribune.com/2011/07/22/o-m-ledford/>, accessed May 6, 2021; <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/savannah/obituary.aspx?pid=139376367>, accessed May 6, 2021.
10. Pettibone, 265-266.

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000