

Beulah Land

By
Bill Dagle

The more I write the more I'm convinced of the power of the printed page. Didn't our Lord say, "These things I have written"; and Paul would add that the power of the Christian sword is the Christian's message. As a matter of fact, he described God's Word as being sharper than any two-edged sword, emphasizing the power of the printed page.

Perhaps, Edgar Page Stites was thinking of this power in the summer of 1875 at Ocean Grove, New Jersey, when he too picked up his pen. Mr. Stites' ancestors had come over on the Mayflower and had eventually settled at Cape May, New Jersey, where he was born in 1836. He was born again in 1857 at the great awakening of Philadelphia and immediately became involved in service for the Lord. In 1870, Edgar, along with ministers and other Methodist laymen, founded the "Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association." Eventually, this summer campground would develop into a city of its own with homes of a permanent nature, including that of Mr. Stites.

Ocean Grove became a little foretaste of Heaven. The preaching of the printed word and the singing of the captured truths brought so many to a saving knowledge of Christ. The sweet melodies would launch the printed words of the great gospel hymn writers into the hearts of many including the heart of Edgar Stites. It was on the first day of meetings in that summer of 1875 that Edgar Page Stites could contain his thoughts no longer. "All this and Heaven, too!" he exclaimed. There, in his tent by the light of a kerosene lamp, he started to write and, in his writing, gave us a demonstration of the power of the printed page. Anyone who takes the words to heart will experience the joy and power as they sing:

I've reached the land of corn and wine, And all its riches freely mine; Here shines undimmed one blissful day, For all my night has passed away.

My Savior comes and walks with me, And sweet communion here have we; He gently Leads me by His hand, For this is heaven's borderland.

Chorus

O Beulah Land, sweet Beulah Land! As on thy highest mount I Stand, I look away Across the sea, Where mansions are prepared for me, And view the shining glory Shore My heav'n, my home for evermore!

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life. I John 5:13a.