MET HERE, 1828. THIS IS THE THIRD BUILDING ON THIS SITE.

During the past five years, worship services have been conducted the third Sunday in each month with annual Homecoming observances and a Christmas Love Feast each December. A number of memorials have been presented and an unusual historical exhibit is on display in the narthex. A bronze marker denoting the December, 1828 conference has been dedicated.

Efforts continued through the Association of Methodist Historical Societies (and the successor Commission on Archives and History) to secure the designation as a national historic shrine. In July, 1969 a session of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History met at Whitaker's. A communion service, using the Methodist Protestant ritual, highlighted the worship shared by 150 people.

Though worthy of a pilgrimage, Whitaker's Chapel symbolizes best the persistence of a people for total participatory democracy in both church and state! Let the pilgrim never forget this!

METHODIST HOSPITAL OF BROOKLYN

by W. Bernard Grossman

Some say Methodist Hospital of Brooklyn began when Jesus told the story of the Good Samaritan, which is depicted in the Great Seal of the Hospital. Others claim it started when John Wesley published Primitive Physic in 1748, “which ran through twenty-three editions during Wesley’s lifetime.”

The actual events leading to organizing and building this first Methodist hospital in the world is an inspiring study of progress against great odds. It was born in the mind of one minister in a time of distress and pastoral anxiety.

When James Monroe Buckley was pastor of First Methodist Episcopal Church in Stamford, Connecticut (1874-77), his organist met with an accident in New York City which necessitated the amputation of an arm. Having been struck by a runaway team, the organist laid on the ground for more than an hour before an ambulance came. A short time later he died, “in surroundings which were far from being Christian.” This seemed a terrible tragedy, and in the sadness of that hour, Dr. Buckley made a vow that someday, if possible, he would secure the erection of a Methodist hospital.

It was in 1880 that Dr. Buckley was elected Editor of The Christian Advocate, and he began immediately to fulfill his promise. He wrote a series of editorials on “Methodism and Charitable Institutions.” The first is, perhaps, the most effective editorial ever to appear

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2 Annual Report, Methodist Hospital of Brooklyn, 1897.
on those pages. The article, dated January 27, 1881, declared: "The Methodist Episcopal Church is today, so far as we can learn, without a hospital, a bed in a hospital, a dispensary, an industrial school, or, except in mission fields, an orphan asylum under her control. . . . We do not for one moment believe that this is the outcome of unfriendly conviction. It is the outcome of preoccupation. But now . . . is it not time that somewhere we built a hospital . . .?"

This editorial inspired an immediate response from the son of a Methodist minister, George Ingraham Seney, banker and philanthropist. It was reported on February 24, 1881, that Mr. Seney expressed his interest with this commitment:

I offer you sixteen eligible lots, valued at $40,000, as a site, and $100,000 in cash toward the establishment and erection of a hospital — the institution to be a Methodist General Hospital, but open to Jew and Gentile, Protestant and Catholic, heathen and infidel on the same terms.

Then this editorial note was added to the report: "P.S. Just before going to press on Monday evening we received a note from which we quote as follows: 'My dear Sir: I have read with great interest the two pamphlets you left with me. You may make my subscription $200,000 instead of $100,000. Very sincerely yours, Geo. I. Seney.'"

The remainder of that letter, dated February 18, 1881, is:

As to the name of the Hospital I care not, but let its spirit be so liberal that the doors shall be thrown wide open to any human being that God Almighty permits to live anywhere on the face of His earth.

This hospital, originally known as the Methodist Episcopal Hospital of the City of Brooklyn, was chartered and incorporated by the Legislature of the State of New York on May 27, 1881. Although Mr. Seney gave a total of $410,000 to the building of Methodist Hospital, financial problems caused delays in completing the original structures. Three buildings were, externally, almost complete when it seemed impossible to continue construction. Some even said, "Board up the buildings and let them stand."

A plan to complete just one of the buildings, at a cost of $60,000, was presented to the Board of Managers by L. S. Pitcher, and was accepted. The period of fund-raising began, and was completed in August 1886. "New contracts were made, and in the spring of 1887 work was begun on the long deserted buildings."

3 The Christian Advocate, New York, Thursday, January 27, 1881. The original material will be found in the library of Drew University, the New York City Public Library, the library of Methodist Hospital, and the vaults of Methodist Hospital.

4 Ibid., Thursday, February 24, 1881.

5 The original letter from Mr. Seney is framed and hangs in the office of the Executive Director of Methodist Hospital.


7 The Annual Report, 1897.

8 Ibid.
Opening exercises were held on December 15, 1887, and four days later Methodist Hospital admitted its first patient. Up to October 31, 1888, "we had cared for 315 patients, and our total current expenses, including about $2,000 disbursed for instruments, furniture and improvements, amounted to $19,913, and had all been paid." During 1969, the hospital treated more than 98,000 patients at a total cost of almost $17,000,000.

The second outstanding contributor to the completion of the hospital, omitting several gifts of one to five thousand dollars, was William Halls, Jr., referred to as "The Second Founder." Gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Halls totaled $189,000. "Methodism was set a-thrill with the great success of the work. December 4, 1906, the main structure was dedicated, and named the Halls Administration Building, in honor of the institution's 're-founders'."

The first Annual Report of Methodist Hospital, dated October 31, 1888, reveals some interesting information. Twenty-six annual conferences "pledged themselves to undertake the endowment of a $5,000 bed, and to support the same until its endowment is complete." These included conferences from East Maine to the Michigan and Ohio Conferences, and from Northern New York to West Virginia. Today, four annual conferences of The United Methodist Church give continuing support: New York, Northern New Jersey, Troy, and Wyoming.

In the same report, the statistics were given in the following manner:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>IN HOSPITAL, OCTOBER 31, 1888</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paying — 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male patients admitted since December 15, 1887</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female Patients admitted since December 15, 1887</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>Total Number of Medical Cases</td>
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<td>Total Number of Surgical Cases</td>
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<td>Number Discharged</td>
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<td>Eloped</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proportion of Deaths, 9.75 per cent*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Length of Stay of Patients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Patients resident in Brooklyn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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9 Ibid.
10 Cit. above, Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., p. 1462.
Number of Patients resident in New York State, outside of Brooklyn: 49
Number of Patients residents of other States: 17
Total: 315

*Seven of these deaths were ambulance cases, and were in a dying condition when admitted. Doubling these, the death rate is reduced to 6.3 per cent.

A handwritten copy of "Proceedings of the Executive Committee" of the Board of Managers for the "29th of December 1887," reveals the following information.

The Superintendent was authorized to receive patients at the rate of $1.50 per day or $10 per week in the common wards & at the rate of from $15. to $30. per week in private rooms & to consider only one half of the endowed beds as free. 11

One will find, on reading the Annual Report for 1889, the following reference:

During this year, our ambulance which was presented by Mrs. A. E. Bushnell of Brooklyn, has been placed in commission. It is believed to be the most perfect vehicle of its kind ever constructed in America, having been built under the special supervision of two of our physicians. The demands upon it have been so frequent that an additional horse was requested and has been purchased.

Since 1888 Methodist Hospital has had its own School of Nursing. More than 26,000 Registered Nurses received their education in this school. Declining applications and the development of Community Colleges and Baccalaureate programs forced the Board of Managers to vote to close this school with the graduation of its present students in September, 1971.

Currently, with its Internship and Residency specializations for Medical Doctors, Methodist Hospital has more than twenty educational programs in operation. Some of these are independent programs while others are in cooperation with High Schools, Colleges, Universities and Seminaries. These include such diverse fields as Licensed Practical Nurse, In-Service advanced education for Registered Nurses, Radiological Technology, Rehabilitation, Laboratory Technology, Social Service Intern, Chaplain Interns and Residents, Administrative Resident, Inhalation Therapy and others.

It required a period of twenty-seven years to complete the three buildings started soon after the hospital was incorporated—but they were completed. The concern of those who have served on the Board of Managers across the years is evidenced by the parade of buildings to keep Methodist Hospital up-to-date with Medical Science.

1887—Completion of the first building—West Pavilion
1906—Opening of Halls Administration Building
1908—Completion of East Pavilion

11 Archives of Methodist Hospital.
1915—First unit of the Nurses' Residence opened
1924—A new and modern Maternity Building dedicated
1928—New Laundry and Laboratory facilities finished
1930—Building of present Nurses' Residence
1941—Buckley Pavilion replaced first building
1947—New Kitchen Building put into operation
1956—Razing of Halls Building—used for fifty years
1959—Dedication of new eight-story air conditioned Stanley H. Miner Pavilion. This was made possible by a bequest from Mr. and Mrs. Stanley H. Miner which matured at $3,000,000
1967—Opening of Wesley House, an apartment house for employees of the Hospital. 119 apartments.

The faith that has guided Methodist Hospital over the years is still a vital factor as the Board of Managers and Administration move into the last decade of the first century of service. The Health and Hospital Planning Council of Southern New York has asked this Hospital to become one of the major Medical Centers in Brooklyn. The projected goal is to build new facilities that will give a bed capacity for 750 acutely ill patients and 250 in extended care.

The cost of new property and the construction of the above, plus buildings for Research, Education and additional Housing will be in excess of $60,000,000. The target date for this program is 1981—the one hundredth anniversary of the hospital. It will take the continued dedication of Methodists and other friends of Methodist Hospital, but, it will be done.

Loyalty and dedication to the Healing Ministry of the Methodist Church have been the guide posts for the Presidents of the Board of Managers as well as for the Directors. There have been only seven “Presidents” and six “Directors” in these 89 years of healing.

Leaders in Progress through the years have been:

Presidents:
James M. Buckley 1881-1916
Alfred P. Sloan 1917-1926
Frank A. Horne 1927-1939
Hersey Egginton 1939-1948
Robert R. Diefendorf 1949-1959
Joseph R. Ferry 1959-1964
C. Wesley Meytrott 1965-

Directors:
John S. Breckimridge 1887-1900
Eugene A. Noble 1900-1902
Abram S. Kavanagh 1902-1916
James E. Holmes 1916-1933
Chester C. Marshall 1934-1953
Vernon C. Stutzman 1953-

Many have been recognized as Associate Founders of Methodist Hospital of Brooklyn. These include contributors who have given more than $100,000 to the building and the service of this institution of healing. Individuals and Foundations listed as Associate Founders are:
Churches of the four conferences listed above continue to support the work of this hospital with a special Christmas offering. Children in Church Schools, adults in churches and others who are concerned, contribute more than one hundred thousand dollars each year to the strengthening of this specialized ministry.

Administrative officers as well as members of the Board of Managers are very proud of the recognition of Methodist Hospital, Brooklyn, New York, as a National Historic Landmark of The United Methodist Church. This recognition was voted at the 1970 Special Session of General Conference.

McMAHAN'S CHAPEL

by Walter N. Vernon

An area in East Texas that was the passageway in 1812-20 of free-boaters, filibusters, spies, soldiers, and settlers became the location in 1833 of what seems to be the oldest Protestant Church with continuous history in Texas—McMahan's Chapel. There were Methodist churches or "societies" in Northeast Texas along Red River as early as 1815, established by William Stevenson, but none begun there before 1833 seem to have survived.

The area in which McMahan's Chapel is located is Sabine County, adjoining Louisiana. While under Mexican rule there were restrictions against settlements within twenty leagues of the boundary of Texas, and this encouraged drifters and squatters, delaying permanent settlement. In 1812 Gaines Ferry was established across the Sabine River, making easier the route from Natchitoches, Louisiana to San Augustine and Nacogdoches, Texas. This route was variously called the King's Highway (it was authorized by the king of Spain in 1691, and established in that year by Domingo Terran de los Rios, first provincial governor of Texas), the old Spanish Highway, the old San Antonio Road, and El Camino Real. It became the principal land route to Texas from about 1815 to 1850. As an example, Jared E. Groce migrated over this route in 1821-22 from Alabama to Texas.

2 Ibid., p. 309.