A CALENDAR OF HISTORIC METHODIST EVENTS

by William Cardwell Prout

(This is a new section which will appear in Methodist History each quarter. In this issue we are catching up some less known anniversaries for the year 1970. Beginning with January it will be a quarterly emphasis of events three months ahead of the issue.—Editor)

1770

Class meetings were held by John Early, an Irish immigrant and Methodist preacher, in his home in New Jersey, located between Fislerville (now Clayton) and Union (now Aura). Early came to America in 1764.

Paul and Barbara Heck and their three sons—John, Jacob and Samuel—moved from New York City to Camden, New York, on Lake Champlain. In 1774, they moved to Canada.

In the English Wesleyan Conference Minutes, fifty circuits were listed. “America” was included for the first time with Wesley’s four evangelists—Joseph Pilmore, Richard Boardman, Robert Williams and John King—appointed.

The New York Methodist Society purchased their first church site on John Street which had been leased in 1768.

The John Street Church parsonage in New York City was built adjacent to the chapel. The city had a population of 20,000.

The first Methodist society in Delaware was organized in New Castle.

John King gave his first sermon in Baltimore, Md., standing on a blacksmith’s block in front of the shop. Five years later, the Annual Conference was held in Baltimore.

A German Reformed Society in Philadelphia sold St. George’s Church to Miles Pennington, one of the first members of the first class of seven organized by Captain Webb in 1768.

March 23

Joseph Pilmore held his first love feast in America in St. George’s Church in Philadelphia.
August 7  The 27th Methodist Conference was held in London, England. Reported: Membership 29,406; 121 preachers; 50 circuits. The New York membership of 100 was not included in this report.

September 30 On this Sunday at 6 a.m., George Whitefield died in Newburyport, Mass. His last sermon—a two-hour discourse on "Faith and Works"—was preached at Exeter, N. H. Although too ill to preach, he spoke to a group of people gathered in the parsonage the night before.

September 30 The Reverend John Murry, one of John Wesley's ex-class leaders, became the father of the Universalist Church in America. On this day, he gave his first sermon in America in a meeting-house built by Thomas Potter on his farm in New Jersey.

October 2 George Whitefield was laid to rest beneath the pulpit of Old South Presbyterian Church, Newburyport, Mass.

November 18 Although differing because of their Calvinist controversy since 1741, and going their separate ways, George Whitefield and John Wesley still remained friends. It was agreed between them that the survivor should preach his friend's funeral sermon. John Wesley preached Whitefield's funeral sermon on this day in the Tottenham Court Road Tabernacle. He preached the sermon again on this same afternoon at the Tabernacle in Moorfields, and on Friday at Greenwich.

December 14 Thomas Webb organized the first Methodist class in Burlington, N. J. His first convert, Joseph Toy, was appointed class leader. This action was the beginning of the Broad Street Methodist Church in Burlington.

December 31 St. George's Methodist Church in Philadelphia held a Watch Night Service, the first of record in American Methodism.

1870

Beginning publication of a monthly paper, the Missionaren, by the Norwegian mission of the Wisconsin Methodist Episcopal Conference.

First publication of the Berean Lesson Leaf by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Within six years, this
monthly had a circulation of 1,260,000.

Following the Methodist Episcopal pioneer in Utah, the Reverend Lewis Hartsough, the first permanent Methodist work began in Salt Lake City, under the Reverend G. M. Pierce from the Central New York Conference, the actual founder of Methodism in the state.

Dr. Clara A. Swain arrived in Bareilly, India, the first woman medical missionary sent by the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society of the M.E. Church.

Founded in 1866 and first chartered as Shaw University in 1868, Rust College at Holly Springs, Miss., was chartered under the Freedmen’s Aid Society of the M.E. Church and named in honor of the secretary of that society. This institution is the oldest Methodist Negro college in America.

**September 20**  
Chaplain Charles Cardwell McCabe dedicated the M.E. Church at Corinne, Utah, the first Methodist Episcopal church dedicated in the state.

**October 26-30**  
First session of the Los Angeles Conference, M.E. Church South, was held at San Bernardino, California, Bishop Wightman presiding.

**October 27**  
At an Evangelical Association Sunday School convention held at Flat Rock, Ohio, some friends organized a stock company to build a tabernacle for camp meetings. It was decided, however, to invest in a portable tent. These tent meetings lasted from 1872-1881.

**November**  
First session of the North Alabama Conference of the M.E. Church South was held at Gadsden, Bishop Robert Paine presiding.

**November 30**  
The North Mississippi Conference of the M.E. Church South was organized.

**December 16**  
Formation of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church by Bishop Paine in Jackson, Tenn., at the request of Negro members of the M.E. Church South. At their General Conference in May, 1954, the delegates voted to change the name of the denomination to the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. This change in name became effective on January 3, 1956.