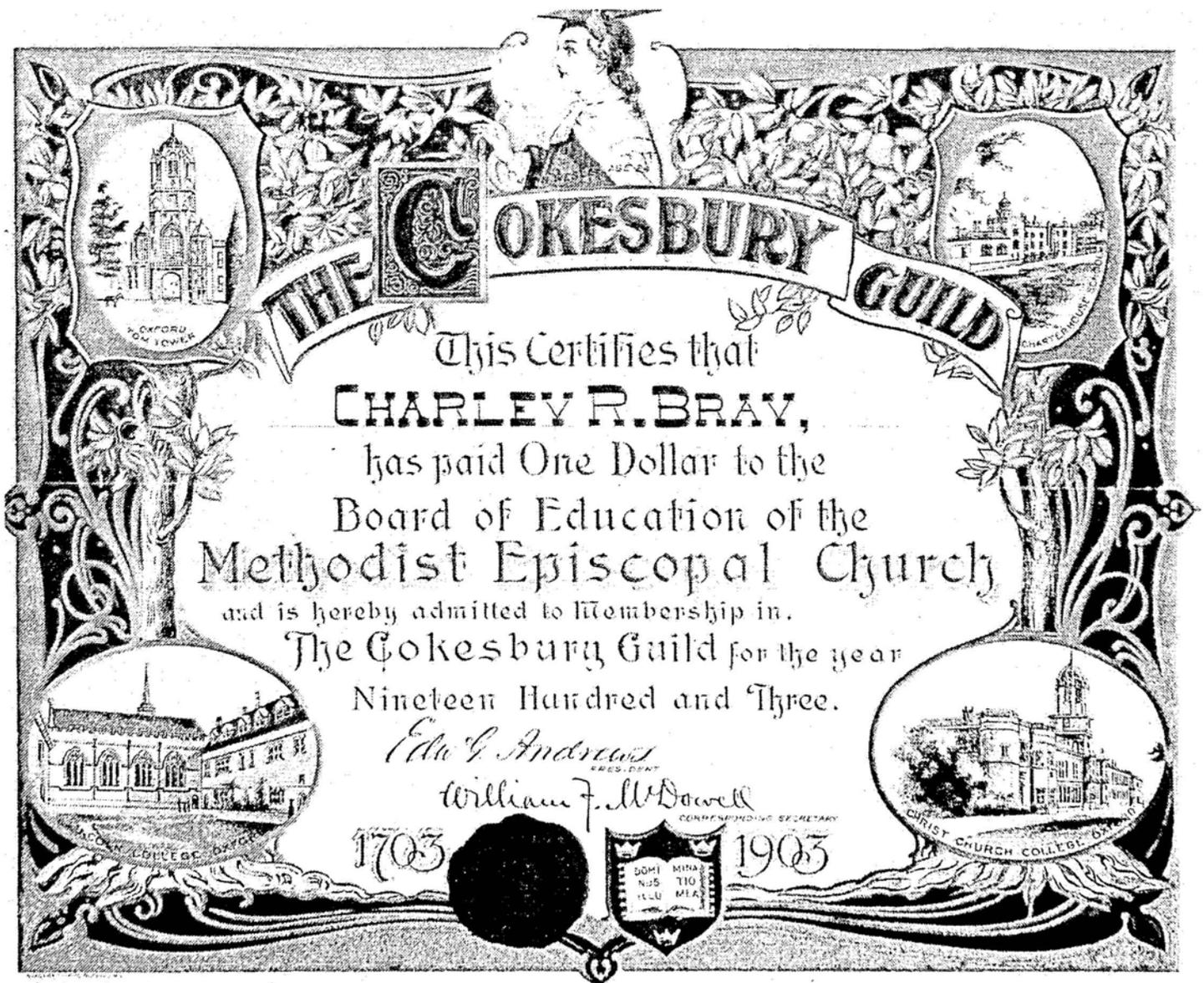


DISCOVERY

Edited by
FREDERICK E. MASER

DO YOU KNOW THE ANSWER?

Periodically someone sends in a request for information on an intriguing bit of Methodist History. In DISCOVERY this quarter we are reproducing a xerox of a certificate given to an ancestor of J. C. Bray, M.D., of Green Lane, Pennsylvania. Dr. Bray has no idea to what the certificate refers, nor do I. Some of our readers, however, may be able at once to spot the certificate, possibly as a financial campaign of a university or the Methodist Episcopal Church.



Some facts are evident from the certificate, itself. It was obviously issued as a form of celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Wesley in 1703. Also, the side medallions are all pictures of places where Wesley studied or taught. The certificate is signed by two prominent leaders of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Edward G. Andrews and William F. McDowell.

In 1903 Edward G. Andrews was a bishop of the M. E. Church and evidently President of the general Board of Education. He died in 1907, three years after he retired in 1904. Earlier in his career he had been sent to Europe and India to organize and to reorganize the work there.

William F. McDowell in 1903 was Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church, being elected a bishop in 1904. He was one of the greatest orators who ever graced the episcopacy.

It would seem as though a financial campaign for educational purposes was led by the general Board of Education in commemoration of the birth of John Wesley. Contributors may have become members of the Cokesbury Guild which may or may not have been a continuing Guild with annual contributions. Possibly a lengthy search of the General Conference JOURNALS would clear up this point.

Dr. Bray reports that the dark seal in the lower portion of the reproduction is that of Wesleyan University. The Charley R. Bray whose name is on the certificate was either attending the university at the time he made the contribution, or the university was aiding the campaign, or the drive was limited to funds for the university which seems unlikely.

Cokesbury, of course, refers to the first college erected by the Methodists in America at Abingdon, Maryland 1785 to 1787. The fact that the elaborate certificate was presented for a one dollar contribution is a commentary on the inflation rate in our country to the present day.

Readers having information on the Cokesbury Guild are encouraged to send word to the Editor of the DISCOVERY.