



DISCOVERY

Edited by
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Fresh Light on Early American Methodism

The Rev. Joseph DiPaolo, pastor of the United Methodist Church at New Hope, Pennsylvania, has recently unearthed some fresh light on early American Methodism. The DISCOVERY is in the form of a series of letters which appeared in an obscure paper, *The Peninsula Methodist*, between February 1885 and June 1887. DiPaolo has carefully edited the letters, arranging their content in chronological order and prepared them for publication under the title *My Business Was To Fight The Devil or Recollections of the Rev. Adam Wallace, Peninsula Circuit Rider 1847 to 1865*.

Having had a chance to preview the work, at the end of which appears a straightforward account of the life of Wallace by DiPaolo, I can recommend it highly to both the casual reader as well as Methodist scholars. DiPaolo has filled the volume with informative footnotes identifying places and persons which, though possibly familiar to readers of the period, might not be familiar to current readers or students.

The most fascinating reading in the work are the letters themselves, arranged not as letters but as a continuous journal. It is filled with enlightening anecdotes and with descriptions of some of the colorful or important characters of early Methodism. Here, for example are vivid pictures of Bishop Janes and Bishop Simpson among others. There are fascinating pictures of camp meetings and a peek into what went on in the Preachers' Tent on the camp grounds. In addition, the journal fills a gap in the history of the Snow Hill District on the Peninsula. The volume, furthermore, should be of great interest to Civil War scholars and buffs since the letters cover 18 years that include the Civil War period.

DiPaolo, who is in his second pastoral appointment, is a graduate of Lafayette College, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and Princeton

Theological Seminary. One of his priorities is a study of Methodist history, and he is at present at work on a history of the former Philadelphia Annual Conference. He is a careful scholar, and his footnotes can be trusted for their accuracy. The importance of the DISCOVERY cannot be over-estimated. It not only fills a gap in early Methodist history, but it is far more entertaining than Asbury's Journal or other journals of the period. The book is now available from Tapestry Press, Ltd., Acton, MA 01720. The volume should have a wide reading, especially among Methodists.