BOOK REVIEWS


You need a magnifying glass to read Abingdon’s first *Sourcebook of American Methodism*, edited by Frederick A. Norwood (1982). The new one favors the eye, while burdening the hand. Its heft raises the question of how long the binding will hold up. But every student of Methodist History must own it.

The new *Sourcebook*’s editors are Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt, who published *Perspectives on American Methodism* (Kingwood/Abingdon, 1993), a selection of articles based upon research in primary sources. Many of those sources now are available in *The Methodist Experience in America: A Sourcebook*. Its companion volume, *The Methodist Experience in America: A Narrative*, will be the standard history of American Methodism when it is issued.


The index makes it easy to locate readings in these categories: African American, Architecture, Asian American, Doctrine, Ecumenism, Education, Episcopacy, Evangelical United Brethren, Hispanic American, Homosexuality, Missions, Native American, Polity, Sermons, Social Justice, War and Peace, Women, Worship, and Youth. A more complete index, listing all names and places mentioned in the documents, would have been useful.

Every selection helps readers imagine their way into the Methodist past. Some, however, could have been shortened. I was fascinated by Mary Evans Thorn Parker’s narrative of how she was treated by her Baptist church when she became a Methodist class leader in Philadelphia, but I did not need to know what happened to her when she returned to England. Other readings cry out for editorial comment. Richard Allen’s account (1833) of what happened at St. George’s Church in 1792 is fascinating but hard to follow.
Abingdon’s editors could be more creative. A number of photos, maps, charts, orders of worships, and articles of religion are clumped together at the front of the book. Why weren’t they placed at appropriate places among the readings? And pictures of many of the authors are easily available. Why weren’t they used?

Quibbles aside, The Methodist Experience in America: A Sourcebook is what every teacher of Methodist history has been waiting for; what every student of the Wesleyan heritage in America needs on the shelf. Although three editors are responsible for it, I detect the deft bibliographical hand of Ken Rowe in the selecting and labeling of the documents. Once more, Methodism’s historians are indebted to him for helping them locate resources necessary for their work.

JOHN G. MCELHENNEY
Phoenixville, PA


This booklet painstakingly records the outcome of detailed analysis of data, amassed on traveling preachers who itinerated during Wesley’s lifetime. It acknowledges the difficulties of interpreting data and the inconsistencies which have led scholars in the past to misread the sources.

Lenton illustrates from his study how the Methodist movement grew and where it was strongest, as evidenced by the recruitment of those prepared to itinerate for Wesley. The importance of the Celtic nations and the traditional heartlands of British Methodism (Yorkshire and the North East, Bristol, and Cornwall) is reflected amongst the preachers’ origins. Lenton shows that most of them were drawn from the skilled artisan or semi-skilled laboring classes. There were mostly poorly educated or self-taught men recruited by Wesley in their younger years (the majority between 18 and 28). A large number ‘left’ the ministry to become local preachers, sometimes on the grounds of marriage. The life of traveling preachers became easier as circuits became smaller and married preachers more able to be supported. But many left for other reasons not always clearly articulated. Some were unsuited to the task through ill health or inability to cope with the pressures. Others were expelled by Wesley (and the Conference) for drunkenness or immorality. Some joined from dissenting groups only to leave later. Others left to return to the Church of England or independent sects.

This is a fascinating vignette of 18th century itinerancy in Methodism which helps us to make sense of the wealth of stories of the ‘Early Preachers,’ their heroism and endeavors, in a more systematic way than ever before. A comparative study with other religious groupings drawing on the work of Lovelace would be most useful as would the publication of much of the raw
data. Lenton’s index is a treasure-trove waiting to be unlocked through further, more extensive, study and publication. You may order this publication from Donald Ryan, 15 Foxland Drive, Lloyd Hill, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 5NB, U.K. at £3

Tim MacQuiban
Oxford, UK
MINUTES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PLATTE WOODS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PLATTE WOODS, MISSOURI
TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 2001
2:15 P.M. CST

Members Present: Mary Bakeman, Thelma Boeder, Joy Dodson, Nancie Fadeley, Gary Ferrell, Lyle Johnston, John Sims, Rob Sledge, Art Swarthout, Charles Yrigoyen

John Sims, Presiding

Lyle Johnston opened the meeting with prayer.

Sims asked all to introduce themselves and recount something significant in archives and history that had happened in the past year.

Nancie Fadeley’s “something of significance” which included reports of plans for special events and activities during the Society’s 2002 annual meeting, led to a discussion of that meeting. It will convene on Saturday, September 14, 2002, when HSUMC members join with members of the General Commission on Archives & History on the last day of their annual meeting in Salem, Oregon. Scheduled dates for the GCAH meeting are September 12–14, 2002. Dates for the annual meeting of the HSUMC are September 14–17, 2002.

*The corrected minutes of the Society’s 2000 annual meeting and related board meetings were approved with no dissent.*

Johnston presented the Treasurer’s report which showed $7,558.63 in the bank, a healthier balance than that of last year.

*With no dissent the Society accepted the Treasurer’s report.*

Johnston explained that he would turn the treasurer’s books over to the newly-elected treasurer, Gary Ferrell after their audit in July.

SECTION REPORTS

Reporting for the Local Church History Section, Thelma Boeder noted that little had happened since the Society’s last meeting and that she intends to
write an article for *Historian's Digest*. At that point, Joy Dodson urged others to submit *Historian's Digest* articles too.

Rob Sledge reported that the Education and Research Section is collecting the names of teachers of Wesleyan studies in United Methodist seminaries and colleges. He hopes to interest those educators in becoming involved in our Society and in sharing copies of their syllabi.

Mary Bakeman said the Genealogy Section had put two years (1879–1880) of Christian Advocate index material on the web.

There was no report from the Commissions and Historical Societies Section because Lois Yost was unable to attend the 2001 annual meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Sims reported that there had been no progress on hopes to produce a new HSUMS brochure.

Bakeman brought the Society up-to-date on the work she and Dodson have been doing on the HSUMC web site and what they intend to do. It is linked to the GCAH web site.

Noting that he had contacted Ulrike Schuler about the potential of future involvement with the German Historical Society, Sims reported that "nothing has happened yet."

**ELECTION RESULTS**

Charles Yrigoyen announced the HSUMC 2001 election results, noting that, with the exception of the Treasurer's position (where there was only one candidate), vote counts were close. The newly elected officers are Pat Thompson, President; Art Swarthout, Vice President; Lyle Johnston, Secretary; and Gary Ferrell, Treasurer.

Yrigoyen said he had reported the election results to all whose names appeared on the ballot, and had thanked them for their willingness to serve the Society.

**2002 BUDGET DISCUSSION**

Noting the difficulties of forecasting the number of members who will be paying dues during the year and acknowledging that, if projections turn out to be significantly out-of-line, the Board could, perhaps by e-mail, make adjustments, the Society decided to use budget figures similar to those of the
past, reducing the amount budgeted for the annual meeting and, because of decreased membership, for Methodist History. The budget discussion also touched on the possibility of tapping some of the $15,749 in the Society's CD which is funded from life membership dues and used to service Life Members.

With no dissent, the Society approved a 2002 projected budget of $15,700. That budget includes $5,000 for the Annual Meeting; $800 for Sections; $8,000 for Methodist History; $700 for Historian's Digest; and $1,200 for Administration/Promotion.

With no dissent, the Society approved a motion by Dodson, seconded by Johnston, that the Treasurer be instructed to create and distribute to all board members a written treasurer's report which will include the auditor's report.

INSTALLATION OF NEW OFFICERS

Sim's last official act as president was the installation of Art Swarthout as Vice President, Lyle Johnston as Secretary, and Gary Ferrell as Treasurer. Illness prevented President-elect Pat Thompson from attending the Society's 2001 annual meeting, so she will take her oath of office at another time.

After expressing thanks to outgoing officers, the Society adjourned its 2001 annual meeting at 3:35 p.m. CDT.

Respectfully submitted by Nancie Peacocke Fadeley
Secretary
MINUTES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
PLATTE WOODS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
KANSAS CITY MISSOURI
JUNE 26–27, 2001

In the absence of newly elected President Pat Thompson, Vice President Art Swarthout called the meeting to order and offered the opening prayer at 3:30 p.m., June 26, 2001.

Gary made motion, seconded, that John Sims and Nancie Fadeley be continued in the meeting with voice and vote. Approved.

Gary made motion, seconded, and approved that Joy Dodson be continued as Historian’s Digest editor.

We expressed our concern about Pat being sick; and Nell Thrift and Lois Yost who could not make the meeting.

Thelma reviewed the society’s by-laws relative to our purpose.

Art proposed an agenda which was adopted

Robert Sledge, motion, seconded, that we accept the above as our agenda. Approved.

Appreciation was expressed to our planning committee: Lyle, Thelma, Lois, and Joy for this meeting.

Art reminded us of our 13th year – we may have some painful time in the next few years. He highlighted Gary’s perfect attendance at every annual meeting of the Society since beginning in 1989.

Thelma, again, highlighted some purposes from the by-laws.

In general, we also need to remember that the African Methodist Episcopal, African Methodist Episcopal Zion and Christian Methodist Episcopal and we share a common history.

Art passed around “Building a healthy Historian Community” (See proposal on separate page).
We reviewed the brochure and its need for changes/additions: website; color, purpose of sections; gift membership line; sticker for treasurer so it does not go out of date; cartoon; phrase change; no check list; more emphasis on what UMHS can do for you; membership rate schedule; less HS history; different shape; 8½ by 14; attractive artwork; tie us to work of UMC; emphasis key person; better definition of each section; meeting dates; officer/contact insert; e-mail addresses.

Membership concerns: Gary will be in charge of addresses and changes.

Future annual meetings: sections/business meetings simultaneous - discussion was extensive.

The 2002 Western Jurisdiction Archives and History meeting - discussion was held between members and Nancie Fadeley.

The meeting adjourned for the evening at 6:25 p.m.

June 27:

Art called us to order with prayer at 8:21 a.m.

Lyle as treasurer asked for recommendation for honorarium for use of church and van/driver. Fifty dollars was approved.

Charles highlighted the 2002 General Commission meeting that is scheduled for September 12–14, with a HSUMC board meeting on Saturday afternoon (14).

The 2003 convocation is scheduled for August 13–17, in Madison, NJ.

Discussion was held on post-2003 meeting possibilities. For meetings, see "Working Paper" (on separate page).

We then turned our attention to the ideas on the board: brochure, sections, publications.

Last evening, Mary and Thelma put together a draft brochure and passed it around. Mary wanted to see same content on website with a downloadable application form.
John suggested design be 8½ by 14. Gary, motion, seconded, discussed. Motion withdrawn.

Motion by Thelma, second, that the brochure committee of Mary and Pat, with Pat naming a third art specialist, and have ready to view by July 15. Approved.

Sections were discussed next. Thelma, motion, second, that we request each section study how they relate to each other and constituent community. Approved.

Sections need to have something in HD. See section I. Thelma, motion, remind section leaders to provide content for HD, second, approved.

Mary mentioned the constituency who attend the genealogy section are not consistently in attendance.

Thelma, motion, that annual meetings include time for section’s business meeting and the opportunity to plan a program within the time constraints identified by the vp. Second, approved with 1 dissenter.

Publications: we need a website. (Name not caught) Motion, committee of 3–4, including Dale Patterson, GCAH archivist, to create, develop and maintain a society website as part of th GCAH website. Seconded and approved.

Suggestions: put past issues on it; coming events; pages from each section; names, addresses, e-mail; glossary of terminology; web master be possible board member.

*Methodist History* was next on the docket. Thelma, motion, that the MH editorial board consider reformatting MH, without changing content, to make it more appealing to public. Second. Discussion. Approved.

*Historian’s Digest* - Thelma moved it be printed on white paper. Second. Discussed. Withdrawn.

A suggestion was made that HD be e-mailed to various people a month ahead of issue.

Art emphasized using HD to get events out to the membership.

*Church Historian* manual - Suggestion made that church historian section take on as a project, review and offer suggestions to GCAH. Approved.
Honorary members - article 7, section 6D. Committee of Lyle, Thelma, Robert to correspond and make suggestions. Approved. Lyle will be convenor.

Historian of Society - tabled to 2002 meeting.

Awards - discussed. Approved. This was referred to Honorary members committee above.

At-large members to board. Discussed. Not prepared to name any at this time.

Election process - discussed.

Membership marketing:
   Archives and History directory - Thelma will contact archivists.
   A/c, jurisdictional, historical society officers
   Commissions
   Bishops - Charles
   General Secretaries - Charles
   Church history professors - Rob Sledge
   Students
   Wesley studies - Rob Sledge
   Course of Studies teachers - Rob Sledge
   Academic institutions
   local church historians - Thelma Boeder
   Wesley Foundation directors.

Approved

Recommendations that we use the blue sheet for developing a plan.

Mary, motion, express our appreciation to Art, in Pat's absence, in providing materials and proposals for stimulation for future business. Seconded. Approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m., to meet again Sept. 14, 2002, in Salem, Oregon area.

Respectfully submitted

Lyle Johnston, secretary