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EDITORIAL

Greetings to all the members and friends of the World Methodist Historical Society. In this, my first formal communication as your editor, I wish to affirm all of you as persons interested in Methodist history. I wish to thank those who have offered good wishes, news notes, requests for information, whatever. I try to make formal acknowledgment of all letters, sometimes tardily, but always with gratitude. I do my editorial work with trepidation, for Fred Norwood, here as elsewhere, has set a standard truly noble. Above all, I here acknowledge John Ness' tireless industry, generous application, and multifarious talents in keeping the WMHS afloat and under sail.

And now:

- thanks to Fred Norwood, editorial exemplar and master historian of American Methodists "and their relations";
- thanks to Fred Maser, who continues to add to his lively productions via the "Discovery" pieces in the United Methodist Methodist History;
- thanks to Norman J. Goreham, who answered from New Zealand a Norwood inquiry about Methodism in France with a letter that deserves its own publication;
- thanks to John Vickers, sterling biographer of Thomas Coke, lively historian of British Methodism, and vice president of the British Section of WMHS;
- thanks to Ed Sharp, publisher of Methodist classics and active in UMC Archives & History circles, who asked a question about Peter Cartwright that I am still researching;
- thanks to Evelyn Mottweiler, executive secretary of the Free Methodist historical committee, for the biography of her father Bishop Leslie Ray Marston, and the article about George Neal; both will receive larger notice shortly;
- and thanks to Doris Hepburn, periodicals supervisor at the UMC Archives Center at Drew University (USA), about non-receipt of an issue of the Bulletin; we will mend this, and any other page appropriately.

In closing this "AVE" to our readers, may I echo the Autobiography wish of Peter Cartwright, that "a competent historiographer, who had kept himself posted", was doing the writing. I share the sentiment. But with all of you to help, we shall overcome. God bless you!

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

We were quite pleased to receive copy from the editor, Theodore Agnew, whose initial effort is hereby presented. We cannot urge you, the readers, too much to provide newsworthy articles for use with an international audience. It sometimes is very difficult to publish an issue when there are no items for publication. You may send material either to Dr. Agnew at his listed address or to the WMHS office at Mont Alto, PA. We will see that it is duly provided at the proper source.

If you are interested in attending a Regional Conference in some part of the world, please note that three are being planned: 1987 New Zealand; 1988 Great Britain; 1988 Europe (German language). We shall try to provide ample information so that you may be in touch with the sponsoring group for registration and further details. The World Methodist Historical Society joins in sponsoring these events and provides modest financial support. The regional organization however provides the chief thrust for program and entertainment.

Please remember that all of the officers of the WMHS are volunteers with no remuneration. We hopefully try to meet their expenses, but even at this point we do not cover all of it. Therefore the success of the organization must depend upon you, the readers and members, who are needed to assist in publicizing the WMHS. Our membership roll should be twice its current size. With you help and spreading the word, it can be. For you are the ones who know persons interested in Methodist history and may pass along a good word for the WMHS. And when it comes time for renewal, we urge you to respond: either for an additional year, or for a five year period; or best of all, a lifetime membership.

John H. Ness, Exec. Sec'y.

ROUTES OF LIBERIAN METHODISM by Bishop Dr. Arthur F. Kulah (Delivered at quinquennial meeting of the WMHS, Nairobi, Kenya, July 23, 1986)

#### INTRODUCTION:

It is not possible to understand or to appreciate the establishment and development of the missionary enterprise in Liberia without some knowledge of the circumstance which led to the settlement of the then colony, and its later development into an independent political entity - the Republic of Liberia.

The formation of the Liberia Colony grew out of the problem of slavery in America. Many Americans with religious and social convictions felt that slavery was a violation of the laws of God and a deprivation of Human Dignity. The abolitionists exerted their efforts along with others who were very deeply concerned with the problem and committed themselves to help restore those held in slavery to freedom and human rights.

Finally, the Americans decided to repatriate the Black People to Africa. In order to effectuate the repatriation scheme, an organization known as the American Colonization Society was formed in Washington, DC, Dec., 1816.

The repatriation program began in 1822 and continued through 1847 with the aid of not only the American Government through the American Colonization Society (A.C.S.), but also of Churches and Church-related Organizations. After about six years of negotiation, the first group of repatriated freed slaves, known as Pioneers, arrived in Liberia on Jan. 7, 1822. Among them were Christians who were Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians<sup>1</sup>. Getting started as a young colony was not an easy task. The Colony's best and strongest leaders were active churchmen.

It is very important to mention here that many nations have vague deistic reference to a creator in their founding documents, but "Liberia's Declaration of Independence in 1847 was specifically Christian-based."<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, Liberia was viewed by both colonists and their supporters in the American Churches as the Hope of Africa from which the Gospel of Jesus Christ could spread through the continent.

In summary, Methodism first came to Liberia in 1822 by repatriated exslaves from the United States of America who had embraced the Methodist faith and practice. They established and built Churches in Monrovia, Caldwell, Bassa, Sinoe, Cape Palmas, Garroway, and in the Kru Coast Area. They could not successfully build the Church with the limited resources available to them. Therefore, they requested the Board of Missions to send out missionaries to help them in the enormous task of Church Building.

#### METHODISM COMES TO LIBERIA:

##### (a) The Pioneer Route

As stated earlier, the purpose for which Africa was chosen as an asylum for the freed people of color was to have those who settled in the young colony serve as emissaries

for the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the continent. This could only be achieved through the building of Churches and Church-related institutions, through which they witnessed to the redemptive act of God. In every Pioneer Community, there were a Methodist Church and a Baptist Church. The United Methodist Church and the other Methodist groups in Liberia today have benefited in the efforts of the early Methodist settlers.

According to Bishop Willis J. King, "when the missionaries arrived, they found a struggling church, and their problem was to regularize its doctrines and activities through living and witnessing and relate it to the larger institution in the United States of America."<sup>3</sup> Due to the fact that the pioneers were technically and financially limited, there is no record of any attempt to expand the struggling church they began.

##### (b) The Missionary Route

The leaders of the young colony saw Christianity as a stabilizing element not only in the interest of the aborigines of Liberia, but also in the communities of the settlers. The Church was needed to administer to the religious needs of the Negro Colonists as well.<sup>4</sup> The third reason the Colonists appealed for missionaries was the need to help them accomplish the mission to evangelize the entire nation. Against this background, they made an appeal to the churches in America to send out missionaries to Liberia to minister the religious affairs of the young colony and Christianize the native people of Liberia.

The first Methodist Missionary to Liberia was the Rev. Melville B. Cox of Maine who sailed from Norfolk, VA, on the steam ship "Jupiter" on Nov. 6, 1832, and arrived in Monrovia, March 8, 1833. The decision for the Board to send out missionaries to Liberia was taken at a meeting of the Missionary Society held on March 17, 1824, but it did not materialize until 1833.

The Rev. Melville B. Cox began his assignment in Caldwell with Camp Meetings. He served for barely five months before his death. Yet he was able to establish a permanent congregation at Caldwell. He had planned to establish mission stations in Grand Bassa and Grand Cape Mount Counties, but was not successful due to lack of funds. He took sick with malaria and died July 21, 1833. Rev. Cox was buried in Monrovia, Liberia. Four months after his death, on November 5, 1833, two missionary couples were sent to Liberia to succeed Rev. Cox. They were Rev. & Mrs. Rufus Spaulding and Rev. & Mrs. Samuel O. Wright, together with the first single female missionary in the person of Miss Sophia Farrington.

They arrived in Liberia Jan. 1, 1834. On Jan. 10, 1834, these missionaries made the first attempt to organize the Liberia Annual Conference. Very unfortunately for them, Rev. & Mrs. Wright were attacked by malaria and died March 29, 1834 and Feb. 4, 1834 respectively. Upon the death of the Wrights, the Spauldings decided to return to America in May of that year. Miss Farrington remained with the determination that she would rather die than to

abandon the Mission. Her unselfish decision was influenced by her great love for the cause of Christ.

The Rev. John Seys was commissioned to succeed the Spauldings. He arrived October 18, 1834. At his arrival, Methodist Societies were already organized in the following cities: Monrovia, Millsburg, Caldwell, New Georgia, Edina, and Buchana with a total membership of 224.

Preaching places were organized with Sunday Schools, and Methodist Centers with Day Schools. Also there were preaching services at Sasstown and Bushrod Island.<sup>5</sup> With the death of the Spaulding family and the departure of the Wright family, the Mission Work was carried out single-handedly by Rev. Seys, until the early part of 1835 when an American Negro by the name of Francis Burns was appointed to come out and work along with Rev. Seys as a teacher at Millsburg. Miss Farrington became very ill and was forced to leave Liberia.

Much of the concern and interest of Rev. Seys were spent in the work in the city of Monrovia with First Methodist Church. He served as Superintendent of the Liberian Mission prior to his selection as President of the Liberia Annual Conference.

Because of a dispute between Rev. Seys and Governor Thomas Buchanan, over the remission of duties for goods brought in by the Liberia Mission, the Missionary Society decided to recall Rev. Seys in the interest of peace.

After the death of Governor Thomas Buchanan, Rev. Seys was re-appointed by the Missionary Society to serve in Liberia. He was assigned at Cape Palmas. At this time, Governor Joseph J. Roberts was placed in charge of the Colony. Serving only about one year in the Cape Palmas area, Seys resigned and returned to America.

Though the Liberia Annual Conference was organized in 1834, the act was deemed irregular by the General Conference in 1836, and the status changed from an autonomous Annual Conference to a Mission Annual Conference, on the grounds that the Liberians had not met the technical disciplinary requirements necessary to become an Annual Conference. Specific reference was made to the quantity and qualifications of the Liberian ministers to perform the ministerial functions.

There were other missionaries who came in succession as the work in Liberia continued to grow. Among them were:

- (a) Rev. John B. Benhum of the Oneida Conference,
- (b) Rev. William B. Hoyt of the New York Conference,
- (c) Rev. Jabez Burton, and
- (d) Rev. N.S. Bastion, the last white missionary to the Liberia Mission Conference.

In the year 1849, the Liberia Mission Annual Conference was divided into three Districts, each of which was headed by a Missionary Superintendent as follows:

1. The Monrovia District headed by Rev. John W. Roberts,
2. The Grand Bassa District headed by Rev. James S. Payne,
3. The Cape Palmas District headed by Rev. Francis Burns.

The division was based upon a recommendation of the Missionary Society and the bishops having responsibility for Foreign Work.

The three district leaders were the three appointed presiding elders of the Liberia Conference. Since 1847, no Annual Conference session was held, because there was no episcopal leader provided for the same. However, in 1851, the Council of Bishops appointed the Rev. Francis Burns to hold the Liberia Annual Conference. That Conference was held in Cape Palmas.<sup>7</sup>

This Conference was the most significant one in the history of Methodism in Liberia. The major question addressed was whether the Church should be closed or be allowed to continue, since the missionaries had withdrawn. This session of the Conference was attended by twelve men upon whose shoulders the decision, fate and responsibility of leadership of Methodism in Liberia rested.

These men dedicated themselves to one complete hour of prayer as they prepared for the task ahead of them. It was resolved, after the Conference, that the Church should go on, and that the Monrovia Seminary be named the "Burton Seminary" in honor of Rev. Jabez Burton who was the founder and its first Principal. There were two major actions taken at the conference to wit:

1. That the General Conference be requested to furnish the Church in Liberia with Episcopal Powers, and
2. That a proposal be sent to the General Conference raising the question as to whether the Church in Liberia was a separate and distinct organization or entity.

In response to the two major actions, the General Conference of 1852 amended the Discipline to provide for a Missionary Bishop to visit Liberia at least once a year with all expenses to be paid by the Missionary Society in order to supervise the work there. In 1853, Bishop Levi Scott was designated for the first visit. He presided over the Annual Conference held in Cape Palmas in 1853. At this Conference Session, the first ordination service was held on Liberian soil. Eleven Liberian men were ordained Elders, and eight were ordained as Deacons to administer the Word and Sacrament in Liberia.<sup>8</sup> Mount Scott United Methodist Church is named in honor of Bishop Levi Scott.

The continuous health problem of the white missionaries and Bishop Scott punctuated the question of episcopacy for the Liberia area. In this regard, the General Conference of 1856 voted that a Liberian Elder in good standing be elected by the Liberian Conference and be required to present himself to the Bishops in America for consecration. "By this action, the Methodist Church in America made formal provi-

sion for the episcopal supervision of Methodist Work in Liberia and withdrew its active interest in and concern for the promotion of missionary work in Liberia as far as its practical purposes extended."<sup>9</sup>

#### Summary of the Missionary Route

The missionary superintendents and bishop, from Melville B. Cox of Maine (Mar. 8, 1833) Francis Burns, John W. Roberts, William Taylor, Joseph C. Hartzell, Isaiah B. Scott, Matthew W. Claire, John W. Springer, Willis J. King, to Prince A. Taylor, the last of the missionary bishops, were sincere and dedicated servants of Jesus Christ to whom was given the Divine Commission as contained in the Gospel (Matt. 28:19) to "Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations and peoples." Even though missionaries continue to serve the Church in Liberia today, they serve under the indigenous leadership which began in 1965 when the first indigenous bishop was elected and consecrated on Liberian soil in the person of the Rev. Stephen Trowen Weati Nagbe.

#### Temporary Indigenous or National Leadership

During the January Conference of 1858, Rev. Francis Burns was elected missionary bishop of Liberia and was consecrated in October of the same year. This was the early beginning of the Liberian leadership of the Church.<sup>10</sup>

Three factors led to the election and consecration of Burns:

1. The problem of health for white missionaries;
2. The need for making provision for ordination for the conference ministry, and
3. The confidence which the leaders of the Missionary Society had for Rev. Burns.<sup>11</sup>

Burns' ill health did not permit him to serve much longer. He died in Baltimore April 18, 1863, where he had gone for medical care. His successor, Rev. John W. Roberts, was elected to the office of bishop, and later consecrated in New York, June 20, 1866.

Like Bishop Burns, during the administration of Bishop Roberts, emphasis was placed on missionary extension, self-support and education. It was during the episcopacy of Bishop Roberts that Liberia was given the full status of an Annual Conference. Since then, the Liberia Annual Conference has possessed the right to be represented at the General Conference which is the greatest conclave of the Methodist Church.

#### Break in the Liberian Episcopacy

The death of Bishop Roberts ended the period of distinctly Liberian leadership under the missionary bishop which was set up primarily to meet the needs of the situation in Liberia at the time. Bishop Roberts was succeeded by Bishop Gilbert Haven, a General Superintendent of the General Conference.

According to King, the General Conference's failure to provide for the election of another bishop was:

- (a) The need for episcopal visit from America to afford the Liberians the opportunity to receive Fresh Inspiration from time to time, and
- (b) To secure full and influential representation of their cause among the churches in America.

During the episcopal administration of Bishop Haven, the Liberian Church was moderately prospering because of lack of leadership. In order for the Church to reach out into the interior areas, Bishop Haven appointed the Rev. C.A. Pittman, a leading Liberian pastor. The chiefs and people in the interior areas warmly welcomed Rev. Pittman and pledged their support. In the area, Rev. Pittman revitalized both the Church and the educational programs. This was the beginning of the outreach of the Church to our unfortunate brothers and sisters in the interior of Liberia.

Bishop Haven spent 46 days in Liberia and was never sick until, on his way back to America, he was attacked by malaria. It disabled him from returning to Liberia up to 1880 when he died. Very unfortunately, after the death of Bishop Haven there was no foreign missionary nor bishop to supervise the Liberian Mission for a period of seven years. During this long period, it was through the dedicated and faithful service of a little group of Liberian leaders that the Liberia Annual Conference was kept alive. Church leaders were elected from among the Presiding Elders in keeping with the Discipline.

#### The Indigenous Route

Historically, it has been very difficult to single out articulately the trend of Methodism in Liberia from the indigenous route. From the different accounts of Methodism in Liberia, it has been very clearly indicated that the indigenous people (Natives of the Soil) who embraced the Methodist faith from the very beginning have been very instrumental in the spread of that faith up to now. Without the influence and courage of these early indigenous converts, the success of Methodism in Liberia would have been impractical. However, there are two Liberians from whose work a chapter could be developed on the Indigenous Route of Methodism in Liberia.

##### (a) The Prophet Harris

From records, Prophet Harris hails from Cape Palmas, Maryland County, Liberia. He was reared by a colonial Methodist pastor whose name was Rev. Jessie Lawry.

In 1913, Prophet Harris began his work along the Liberian-Ivorian border. A legend which was developed about him reports that his preaching ministry began as a result of a vow he made after an encounter he experienced with a leopard in the forest. Throughout his message he emphasized "Repentance and Baptism" as a means to Christian identity and life. As a result of his zealous ministry, hundreds of people were converted to Christianity and were baptised.

He was imprisoned on several occasions for his persistence, but this made him the more determined as he went from village to village. Due to the numerous harrassments from the author-

ities, Prophet Harris finally decided to move on to the Ivory Coast and later to Ghana to continue his work.

#### (b) Kuoo-Henry Grimes in the Gbarnga Area

The late Rev. Kuoo-Henry Grimes was a native of Grand Bassa County. Like Prophet Harris, he was a very strong religious personality, even though he was not formally educated.

The Rev. Kuoo-Henry Grimes is said to have been a very wealthy man with many wives until his call to the ministry. According to oral sources from which this information was gathered, because of his commitment to preach the Word of God and to live a Christ-like life, all of his wives left him, and even many friends deserted him. Eventually, Henry Grimes, as he was originally known, lost all his possessions and became very poor to the extent that he had to collect pieces of cloth and knit them together to make himself a pair of trousers or a shirt. From this poverty stricken condition, he was nicknamed "Kuo-Henry" which, in Bassa, means "Dum-pile Henry."

Like Prophet Harris, the ministry of Rev. Henry Grimes took him from village to village until a decision was reached to purchase a piece of land upon which a church would be built for the future. As his congregation increased, they began collecting from one to a hundred cents per person until eventually they got enough money to buy a piece of land.

Purchasing the land in Dec., 1965, Rev. Henry Grimes encouraged his Kpelleh and Bassa speaking members to construct a church building so that they could move out of St. John Methodist Church, since it was a purely English-speaking congregation. The idea of constructing their own church was well conceived by Rev. U.S. Gray, who at the time was the pastor of St. John's Church. Upon the consent of Rev. U.S. Gray, Rev. Henry Grimes and his followers built their very first church edifice which today is used as the pastor's office. All the Bassa and Kpelleh speaking people in St. John's Church migrated with Kuoo-Henry Grimes to their new church. Under indigenous leaders similar and large "people movements" have occurred in the Church. This is to say a whole group of related people.

Very unfortunately, Rev. Kuoo-Henry Grimes died in July, 1968. Prior to his death, he requested his followers to construct a much larger church for the future generations. The present building in which the church now exists is named in memory of its founder, the Rev. Kuoo-Henry Grimes (Kuoo Henry U. M. C.). The cornerstone of said church was laid by Bishop Bennie Warner, one of the indigenous bishops of the United Methodist Church of Liberia. The very first pastor of the existing church was Rev. James D. Karblee.

#### (c) The Ganta Mission Area

The Ganta Mission has its origin in the visit to

Liberia of Africa's Secretary to the Board of Missions, Dr. Thomas S. Donohugh in 1923. This visit was prior to the visit of the Harleys in January 1926. During the visit of Dr. Donohugh, the need was strongly felt that the future of Methodism in Liberia was inherent in the natives of the soil, mainly because the missionary enterprise near the Coastal areas catered to the Americo-Liberians and the so-called civilized natives.

Expressing his desire to the President of Liberia, Charles D.B. King, strategies were planned for an approach to the Chiefs of the area. The Chiefs were very impressed. They gave a positive response.

The invitation of the Chiefs to the Methodist Church to open mission work in their areas was extended to Bishop Matthew W. Clair. It was Commissioner David Carter, a prominent Methodist in the area who pointed out that the Ganta Area was a suitable location for a mission establishment.

While in America, Dr. Donohugh acquainted Dr. and Mrs. George Way Harley with the challenge, since an earlier application had been made by them for missionary work in Liberia. According to the Copplestone records, the Board enlisted four missionaries for this new task. They were: George Way Harley, Henry T. Miller and their wives. Upon their arrival, the Harleys were accompanied to Ganta by R.L. Embree who was at the time President for the College of West Africa. The Harleys were later joined by the Millers. According to records, both missionaries (Harley and Miller) were co-equals in the discharge of their missionary functions.

Evangelistic work at Ganta began as early as the establishment of the Mission station. Rev. Charles Britt was the first fulltime evangelist appointed to the area in 1948, and later in 1953, Rev. Paul Sundar and his wife Sigrun joined him.

In the Ganta area, Dr. Harley was able to establish a Leprosy Control Center which began in 1927 with a few patients. By 1960, when Dr. Harley retired, the Leprosy Center had grown into a community of more than 1,000 patients, and was regarded as a referral center for Rehabilitation and Reconstructive Surgery for all of Liberia. During the years of his service in the Ganta Area, Dr. George Way Harley trained many Liberians as builders, hospital workers, teachers, laboratory technicians, maintenance personnel, evangelists, etc.

#### (d) Rev. Walter B. Williams (The Coastal Mission Area)

Rev. Walter B. Williams came to Liberia as an American missionary in the spring of 1909. At the time he came, there was a violent misunderstanding in action between the Kru people and the Liberian government. Bishop Isaiah B. Scott, then resident bishop at the time, sent Rev. Williams to Grand Cess on the Kru Coast as a missionary to make peace.

The entire area was closed to all intercourse with the outside world. It was very difficult for anyone, regardless of status, to enter the area. In fact, the people of the area did not accept any negro, missionary or otherwise, because of fear that he might be an agent of the government. This was the condition under which the Rev. Williams was to venture and to work in establishing peace among the people

of the area. The task was very difficult for the first few months, but gradually, he finally succeeded in settling the three year old dispute.

There was another problem which Rev. Williams had to encounter. As the community of Christian converts on the Kru coast began to grow, the non-Christian people of the tribe began to persecute them for their new allegiance and for breaking away from their tribal customs and traditions. These converts were driven out of their homes after being baptized into the Christian faith. Miss Agnes McAllister, who was at the mission station at that time, had to accomodate many of the refugees by taking them to Cape Palmas where she rented them a house.

In order to solve the unpleasant situation on the Kru coast, Rev. Williams finally decided to build a separate community in which the Christians would live in unmolested peace. This community was called New York and grew into a worshiping community.

According to Rev. Augustus Monu, the Kru people previously worshiped many gods. These gods were responsible for the socio-economic life of the people of the entire area. The predictions of the gods were to be obeyed without questioning. On one occasion, a god told the people that a bell was coming from the west, and when this bell reached the Kru coast, the road to him (the god) would be closed forever. This "bell" as referred to is the WORD OF GOD as contained in the Holy Bible and presented by God's messenger, the missionary prophet.

Like the Grand Cess area within the Kru Coast District, the Nana Kru area was also faced with a similar problem of unrest. The mission station in the Nana Kru area was previously run by an independent missionary called Mary L. Allen. After her death, the little estate was taken over by Methodists in the area for mission work. Again, Rev. Williams decided to use this little estate as a separate community which he called "Bethany," similar in purpose to the little New York community.

Brutality and murder were prevalent in the Nana Kru area just as in Grand Cess. The areas of Miffu, Betu, Little Kru, Sattru Kru, and Wissipo, just to mention a few, were among the trouble spots along the Kru Coast. At the end of Rev. Williams' work on the Liberian Coast, many fetish priests were converted, their homes and idols destroyed to the honor and glory of God. In 1932, Rev. Williams was retired.

#### History of the Gbarnga Mission Station

The history of the Gbarnga Mission dates as far back as 1936, when Gbarnga was just a little town with no roads connecting it with other major towns and Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia. As the little town began to grow, educated and professional people were sent there to work. Among them were Christians of various denominations, including Methodists. At the

time, there was no other church organization in the area except a Catholic church and a mosque. This left the larger Christian community without a place to worship.

In 1937, the non-Catholic community decided to organize into a Community Church. Rev. James E. George, the oldest Baptist minister in Gbarnga at the time, and Brother Ernest Peabody were among the pioneer members. At first, the new group met in the home of two Methodist members. From there they moved on to other homes until 1939 when they finally decided upon a permanent place for worship. Their first church structure was a little thatched booth built exactly at the site presently where the Sigrun Sundar School of Home Arts is located at the Gbarnga School of Theology (GST).

The newly established community of worshipers included Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians and Baptists. Among them were people who spoke Kpelleh, Bassa, and English. In 1949, the Annual Conference saw that Gbarnga was a developing town and requested the General Conference to send missionaries for the work. Rev. and Mrs. William Keller were the first missionaries for the Gbarnga Mission. After a very short stay because of ill health of Mrs. Keller, they were succeeded by Rev. U.S. Gray and his wife, Vivien, who previously worked at C.W.A. Through the effort of President William V.S. Tubman, a very strong and stalwart Methodist, a 250,000 acres of land was granted for the establishment of the Gbarnga Mission Station.

Under the Gray administration the mission began to take root and prosper in education (school), agriculture (farming) and church growth. Opening the mission station, it was decided that the community congregation be separated, i.e., each denomination to establish its own church. Under the leadership of the Grays, St. John Methodist Church was begun in 1953 and completed the following year with the support of the Board of Foreign Missions. It was dedicated by Bishop Prince A. Taylor, the last of the missionary bishops assigned to Liberia.

#### Churches on the St. Paul River Settlement

Several churches were founded and built in the St. Paul River area. The first was in 1927 by Rev. Alexander M. Harris, an emigrant from America who settled in what is now known as Harrisburg. This church was later named St. John Methodist Church, Harrisburg.

The second was established in Clay-Ashland, and later named St. Peter Methodist Church. The history of this church dates back as far as 1840 in connection with the Houston family coming to Liberia. This family was given a parcel of land on the St. Paul River by King Bromley of the Dey Tribe who had inherited the area which is bounded by the settlement of Virginia and the St. Paul River.

The third in the series is the Burnsphelps Methodist Church which was established in 1875 during the episcopal leadership of Bishop Francis Burns. This church was originally known as the Burns Methodist Episcopal Church. At first, there were two separate congregations in the area known as Brewerville which later merged.

Due to the fact that there were not many Methodists living in the area, the services in the two congregations were poorly attended. Thus the congregations were joined in 1945 and named the Burns Methodist Church. This merger gave strength and vitality to the new congregation.

After the merger, Rev. Monroe Phelps was appointed pastor. At the time the building was small. Out of his personal resources, Rev. Phelps built a new edifice. Because of his commitment, dedication and service the members decided to honor him by naming the Church after him. Since it had already been named after Rev. Burns, they simply added "Phelps," thus calling it BurnsPhelps Methodist Church.

#### Indigenous Congregation: Georgia Patten Memorial UMC

This church is the result of efforts of Miss Mary Sharp who came to Liberia in 1878 as an American missionary and actively engaged herself in service with the Kru people. According to history her work actually started in the early 1900's.

During her first experience with the Kru people, she realized their need for spiritual enlightenment. Their spiritual anxiety urged her to organize a church. With just twenty persons in the group, they went from house to house for prayer meetings and services.

At the close of 1904 another female missionary named Georgia Patten came to join Miss Sharp. Sister Patten was a medical doctor who dedicated to the service of the church ended up building a church edifice in the Old-Kru-Town area. This new building was dedicated and opened for worship in Dec. 10, 1905. Because of her invaluable and humanitarian services and gift to the congregation, they decided to name the edifice after her, hence the name Georgia Patten.

#### Doe-Juah U. M. C.

The founders of this congregation were originally members of Georgia Patten UMC from Monrovia Town, Waterside area and the West Point Community. There were two sisters whose works and services contributed very largely to the establishment of this congregation. They were sisters Dugbe Blamoh and Nancy Doe-Juah. Because of their persistence and determination they organized a prayer group known as the Doe-Juah Faith Group.

At one of their prayer meetings Sister Doe Juah had a vision that a pastor would be coming from Ghana to help and lead the group into becoming a church. On July 7, 1962, this vision came true with the arrival of Rev. Paul W. Teah from Ghana. Upon arrival he associated with Georgia Patten UMC, but worked very closely with the Doe Juah Faith Group as an evangelist.

On July 1, 1975, a petition was sent to the Administrative Board of Georgia Patten UMC from the Doe-Juah Faith Group seeking the establishment of a congregation at West Point. It stated three major reasons for this request:

- (a) Because the West Point Area is a strategic area for Church Growth and Development mainly because the majority of the inhabitants in the area do not belong to a Congregation or Church;
- (b) Because of the concentration and growth of the concern and work of Georgia Patten Church in the area, it was very important that a local Congregation or Church be established, and
- (c) Since the Pentecostals and Catholics have erected church edifices in the area, the Methodists should do likewise.

Approved by Rev. Charles O. Nance who was District Superintendent for the Monrovia District, the petition was later presented to Bishop Bennie D. Warner for its implementation. At the 1976 Annual Conference in Miller McAllister UMC, Ganta, the petition was granted and a regular congregation was established at West Point under the name of Doe-Juah UMC, West Point, Monrovia District.

#### Lott G. Matthew U.M.C.

This congregation started as a prayer group in 1978 under the leadership of Rev. David B. Quire, Sr. In 1979, Bishop Warner and the Annual Conference approved the request and it became a local Methodist Church within the Conference.

This church is named after the memory of Rev. Lott G. Matthew, Sr., an eminent Methodist minister who had devoted his whole life to the service of the Church. He died in an airplane crash April 28, 1968 on his way to Annual Conference.

The Church operates an elementary school catering to the educational needs of its children and unfortunate other children. Located in the Logan Town area, the church and school are serving a viable purpose meeting the spiritual and educational needs of the people.

#### Trinity U.M.C.

The Trinity congregation was organized in 1964 when the inhabitants of Old-Krue-Town were compelled to abandon the area because of the government's decision to build a seaport and needed the rocks of Old-Krue-Town. The residents left the area to establish another Krue Town, now known as New-Krue-Town. This was concluded in 1945. Those that were evacuated from Old-Krue-Town were members of the Georgia Patten Church, so that Trinity Church is an off-spring of Georgia Patten.

As more and more people migrated into New-Krue-Town, the church membership grew. In the early days of Trinity Church, Rev. Willis J. King was bishop, but retired before the work was completed. During the administration of Bishop Prince Taylor, the church was completed through the hard struggle of its members especially refusing Bishop Taylor's request to reduce the size of its building structure.

Camphor U.M.C.

The Camphor congregation is another offspring of the Georgia Patten church. It started in 1925 when Rev. C.W. Duncan, who had pastored Patten U.M.C. for 16 years (1909-1925), was appointed by Bishop Clair and transferred to Sasstown. Rev. Duncan refused to accept the transfer supported by a number of his members. Together with these discontented members he broke away from the Liberia Annual Conference and joined a little Independent Methodist Church built by Miss Mary Sharp, his wife's foster mother. As a foster daughter his wife asked him to take over her mother's church group. From this congregation the Camphor Memorial Independent Methodist Church was established in 1930 in Old-Krue-Town.

Unfortunately for this congregation they had to abandon the area when Old-Krue-Town and the Camphor Church were demolished in 1945. After re-locating and constructing a new building in Clara Town, the members decided to name the church after Bishop A.P. Camphor.

Additional Information on Methodism in Liberia

The Methodist Church is the largest denomination in the Republic of Liberia. Even though it has had good steady growth, that increase has not been commensurate with the opportunities. "For a quarter of a century, Liberia was the only Mission Outpost of the Methodist Church in America. For half a century, Liberia was the only Mission Station on the African Continent. From its infancy, this church was kept growing by substantial mission subsidy." (P.73, Joseph Wold).

From the very beginning there were three types of mission approach in Liberia:

- (a) Establishment of Methodist Church in Americo-Liberian communities such as Monrovia and its adjacent settlements,
- (b) Establishment of Methodist Church Mission on the Kru Coast as a means of Outreach, and
- (c) Establishment of Church Mission to the Interior tribes such as Ganta and Gbarnga Stations.

The major reason for the slow expansion into the Interior from its beginning was the language barrier. Missionaries could not speak the language and therefore could not administer to the people's needs.

Also during its formative years, the Annual Conference was administered by the Methodist Church in America as part of the African Central Conference which was organized in 1939. At the time, it included: Angola, Begium Congo, Mozambique and the Rhodesias (northern and southern).

In 1944, a new plan was put into effect by which a bishop of Liberia would be elected by the Central Jurisdiction in America. Bishop Willis King and later Bishop Prince Taylor were elected under this system.

In 1959, Liberia raised the issue of having its own indigenous bishop, but being a single conference with just few ordained ministers, she could not elect her own bishop.

In 1964 the General Conference adopted a plan presented by Bishop Taylor that Liberia and other countries be affiliated with the General Conference permitting them to elect their own bishop. In 1965, the Liberia Annual Conference chose to become an affiliate of the General Conference. At a special session of the Liberia Annual Conference convened in 1966, the Rev. Stephen Trowen Nagbe was elected as the first native Liberian to be its bishop.

According to records, Bishop Nagbe succeeded to develop the spiritual life of the Liberian Church. He organized the Annual Conference on the new standards of the United Methodist Church and formulated goals and strategies for the outreach of the Church and Conference. He succeeded in strengthening the Agricultural program, whereby the Gbasontown Agricultural Project under Norwegian assistance and leadership is outstanding. Unfortunately he died Feb. 3, 1973 and was succeeded by Rev. Dr. Bennie D. Warner.

Among the programs of Bishop Warner's leadership was the attempt to develop the economic power of the Church through self-supporting efforts. As bishop emphasis was placed on stewardship and leadership training. Programs and strategies were formulated for their implementation. Outstanding was the initiation of "The Movement:" the God-power Movement, the Money-power Movement, and the Manpower Movement. With his involvement in politics he could not return to Liberia from America where he had gone for church business because of a 'coup d'etat' in April, 1980.

Elected Dec. 6, 1980, the Rev. Dr. Arthur F. Kulah succeeded Bishop Warner as the third indigenous bishop of the Liberia Annual Conference. Bishop Kulah's primary concern is directed toward building the Church. In the words of Nehemiah 2:18 "Let us rise up and build." He has attempted to do this through leadership training and developmental programs with theological education as his chief concern. The Gbarnga School of Theology is now offering Leadership Training courses in three levels of qualifications:

- (a) The Certificate Program Level,
- (b) The Diploma Program Level, and
- (c) The Degree or Advanced Program Level.

Sixteen young men and woman have received scholarships to study in the United States. They are being trained for leadership in various disciplines including theological studies.

The laity of the Church has become involved in support of the ministry and outreach of the Church through the Fund Generation. Program and strategies are planned for the growth and expansion of the Church. The bishop has emphasized that if the United Methodist Church in Liberia is to grow, it has to do so by the power of God through Jesus Christ. The Church's programs are as follows:

- (a) Evangelism as a source of out-reach of the ministry,
- (b) Education for leadership training through our schools



and Junior College.

- (c) Building of hospital and clinics in strategic areas such as Ganta, Nana Kru, Cape Palmas, to mention a few, as a means to help meet the health needs of the nation and its people, and
- (d) Seminaries for the training of church and community leaders such as Gbarnga School of Theology.

For the opportunity thus far presented and for the degree of success that has been achieved through the leadership of the people called "Methodists," we should be supremely grateful to God and rededicate ourselves to the continuation of building the Church as we all together look forward to a brighter future for the Church and the nations of mankind.

#### Summary

My intended objective for this brief presentation is to explain how Methodism got to West Africa. I have described three routes by which that has happened.

It was first taken by the ex-slaves from the United States in the case of Liberia or the ex-slaves repatriated from Great Britain in the case of Sierra Leone. Secondly, the pioneering efforts of the ex-slaves who were Methodist Christians were reinforced by the Methodist missionaries to West Africa. Here Nigeria, Ghana and other nations come in. The third route to establish Methodism firmly in West Africa was taken by the indigenous Africans, who were responsive to the Christian faith and dedicated themselves to the ministry of witnessing to their own people. Through them an entire village has moved into the Church on profession of faith. Such a people movement described by Dr. J.C. Wold in his book, God's Impatience in Liberia is still a possibility in Liberia and the rest of Africa.

Four groups of Methodists exist in West Africa: United Methodists, British Methodists or Wesleyan Methodists, the African Methodist Episcopal, and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion. Methodism is very much alive in West Africa; and the Methodist Churches there have a great future.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>The Methodists who first settled in Liberia were from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph C. Wold, God's Impatience in Liberia, p. 51. The United Methodist Church (formerly M.E., M.E. South, M.P., and E.U.B. roots), the A.M.E.C, and the A.M.E. Z. Church. These three groups of Methodists remain in Liberia today. The Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and other Christian bodies came later in the history of Christianity in Liberia.

<sup>3</sup>Bishop Willis J. King, History of the Methodist Church (Monrovia, Liberia: Mimeographed, undated), p.12.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>5</sup>William Barclay, History of Methodist Missions, Vol. I, p. 336.

<sup>6</sup>Barclay, vol. III, p. 870.

<sup>7</sup>Willis J. King, p. 26

<sup>8</sup>Karblee, p. 52.

<sup>9</sup>Willis J. King, p. 61.

<sup>10</sup>Karblee, p. 52.

<sup>11</sup>It was Burns who kept contact between the Liberian field and the Missionary Society from the time Benhum left in 1847 to the General Conference in 1856. It was due to his devotion that the Church survived the crisis of almost complete dis-connection with the Mother Church in America.

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8. Numerous pamphlets and brochures representing the various local churches described in this account.

(Bishop Arthur Kulah has been bishop of the Liberia Annual Conference since 1980. He received his M. Div. and D. Min. from Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC and a M.R.E. from St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO. He has served as pastor, theological dean, district superintendent prior to being consecrated bishop.)

#### REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN NEW ZEALAND

Unfortunately the details of this gathering arrived a few days after the copy for vol. 15, Fourth Quarter, 1986 had gone to the printers. Although time is at an essence for consideration we wish to share the following information and hope that some of our readers may be able to attend.

South Pacific Regional Conference, at Wesley College, Paerata, Auckland, New Zealand, Mon., May 18 to Mon., May 25, 1987. Theme: Ministry, Mission and Culture in the South Pacific, A Methodist Perspective. Guest speakers: Dr. Frank Baker, Durham, NC, USA; Rev. Albert Burua, Pres. of United Church of Papua-New Guinea; Rev. Saveti Tuwere, Principal, Pacific Theological College, Fiji; Rev. Siatua Leuluai, Sec'y., Methodist Church of Samoa; and others. Registration:

\$220.00 (New Zealand). At this time that is about equivalent to \$110.00 (USA). Conference is open to anyone interested in Methodism in the South Pacific. Although the deadline for registering has been set for March 31, 1987, due to delay in this announcement a week or two later will probably still be considered. Send money or write for other information to: Dave Roberts, 2/10 Birdwood Ave., Papatoetoe, Auckland, New Zealand. If one wishes to be met in Auckland or Paerata, please let Mr. Roberts know so complete arrangements can be made. The Wesley Methodist Historical Society of New Zealand invites you and extends a hearty welcome. The WMHS is an affiliate sponsor of this conference.

#### CELEBRATING THE WESLEY CONVERSIONS

Plans are developing fast for a major celebration in 1988 of the 250th anniversary of the conversion experiences of Charles and John Wesley in May 1738, generally regarded as the 'birthday' of the Methodist movement. The event will be celebrated by services in St. Paul's Cathedral, London (where John Wesley attended Evensong on the afternoon of his 'heart-warming' at Aldersgate Street), and also in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, in Westminster Central Hall, and Methodist churches throughout the country. There will be special exhibitions at various centres, musical and dramatic presentations, and a variety of evangelical outreach as part of the continuing mission of Methodism in the very different world of the 20th century.

Indications already show that large numbers of Methodists from overseas, especially from the United States, are planning to visit England during that year. Further information can be obtained from Mr. David Ensor or Mr. Martin Ludlow, c/o the Conference Office, Westminster Central Hall, London, SW1H 9NH, United Kingdom.

#### A MAJOR NEW PUBLICATION

Nonconformist Chapels and Meeting-houses in Central England by Christopher Stell (HMSO, London; available

in the USA from BERNAN-UNIPUB, Lanham, MD 20706 at \$78.75). This is a volume of outstanding interest and importance to anyone involved in the study of religious nonconformity, especially in England; the only comprehensive and authoritative work on the subject available, full of fascinating detail and lavishly illustrated. The author is recognized as an expert in this field, with a knowledge of the historical as well as the architectural setting of nonconformity.

#### REGIONAL CONFERENCES IN 1988

The conference in the German language for European Methodism will be held during that year. The program will probably follow the plans for the 1987 conference, delayed until 1988. Dr. Michel Weyer, Prof. of Church History, Theologisches Seminar, Bellinostrasse 35, Reutlingen, West Germany, D. 741 is serving as chairman of the European Historical Commission (United Methodist Church). He will answer any questions about the conference as directed to him.

Another Regional Conference will be held by the British Section (WMHS) and the Wesley Historical Society during Easter Week. Details will be forthcoming in the near future.

The address of the Secretary of the British Section, WMHS, is as follows: Dr. Joan Anderson, 7 High Street, Bassingham, Lincoln LN5 9JZ, United Kingdom.

#### MEMBERSHIPS IN THE W.M.H.S.

We continue to urge our membership to solicit new members and keep your own position active in the society. The charges have not changed since established in 1971.

Annual Membership	\$5.00 (USA)
Quinquennial	20.00 (USA)
Life Membership	100.00 (USA)

#### HISTORICAL BULLETIN

World Methodist Historical Society  
Box 460  
Mont Alto, PA, 17237  
USA  
Published Quarterly

# HISTORICAL BULLETIN

## World Methodist Historical Society

Volume 16

Second Quarter, 1987

### EDITORIAL

Our World Methodist Historical Society has members from many countries. It also has members from many communions -- or churches, if you prefer. Many of these have a historical office, an archive, a record of publishing histories. Sometimes they have a person officially designated as "historian". And, every now and then, one or another of these churches celebrates an important historical anniversary. That is the case in this year of 1987 with the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Details of the AME celebration appear in a handsome 68 page pamphlet, A Syllabus for Celebrating the 200th Birthday of the AME Church. Published by the Church's Sunday School Union, the syllabus is edited by Bishop Vinton R. Anderson, who is also ecumenical officer of the denomination.

The Syllabus covers the AME heritage well. The Bicentennial logo captures the theme of "A Liberating and Reconciling People," drawing on the spirit of the Rev. Richard Allen. Allen it was who in 1887 led several blacks out of presence and membership in St. George's M. E. Church, Philadelphia, when denied equal seating. The denomination formally organized in 1816, had gifted nineteenth century leaders among whom were three bishops -- William Paul Quinn, expansionist; Daniel A. Payne, educator and historian; and Henry M. Turner, "Reconstruction politician, black nationalist, and African emigrationist". Twentieth century AMEs of importance have included Rosa Parks, whose refusal to "move back" sparked the Montgomery bus boycott; Rev. James Cone, advocate of black theology; and Bishop Philip R. Cousin, president of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

At the time of their Centennial in 1887 notes "historiographer" Henderson Davis, forty percent of American blacks were AME members; later the church "served as mid-wife" for several other predominantly black denominations. Among highlights of the AME experience during these two centuries have been: showing "concern for all manner of people", seeking "civil freedom and social justice", promoting education, performing "the modeling function ... a symbol of the blacks' ability to achieve, to function effectively without white oversight", and encouraging "talent to develop".

Bishop Anderson notes future goals in "Retooling for the Third Century", centering on the need to "expand our global vision, give serious attention to our overseas mission, and engage in vital ministries to the masses with their varied languages and cultures." Anderson relates these aims to the first seal of the denomination,

designed in 1856 by Bishop Payne, with the slogan "God Our Father, Christ Our Redeemer, Man Our Brother." (A note on page 51 of Syllabus explains that the last phrase means "The Human Family".)

The pamphlet gives litanies of celebration, the World Methodist Social Affirmation, maps of AME work, bibliographies, and guides for annual conference and local church observances.

Major bicentennial events include: the World Methodist Conference and the Overseas Consultation, both held at Nairobi, Kenya in 1986; a dozen happenings during 1987, highlighted by a May 18 Washington, D.C. "Meeting with the President on Social & Economic Issues", and climaxing in the "Centerpiece Event", June 13-19 -- the "Dover-Philadelphia-Baltimore Trek". In connection with the latter an ordination service for AME elders will involve Bishop F. Herbert Skeete (UMC), an ecumenical landmark. The year 1888 will see General Board meetings in May and the AME General Conference July 5-15 at Fort Worth, Texas, the latter featuring a "culminating ceremony" for the entire Bicentennial Celebration.

Ecumenism has long attracted major AME attention, Bishop Anderson notes, for "we have --- taken seriously both conciliar and union discussions." The AMEs are members of the Commission on Pan-Methodist Cooperation, the Consultation on Church Union, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the World Council of Churches, and the World Methodist Council. Bishop Anderson lives ecumenism in still another way, serving as a voting member of the United Methodist Church's General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns.

In closing the Syllabus Bishop Anderson promotes the idea of a Bicentennial Trust Fund, designed to endow AME institutions with a "future financial solvency". Not for "speculation" or "showcase", the Trust Fund is "an economic development undertaking".

Copies of this valuable AME Syllabus may be obtained from:  
Bishop Vinton R. Anderson  
Box 6416  
St. Louis, MO, 63107, U.S.A.

The WMHS herewith salutes our sisters and brothers of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in the celebration of their Bicentennial. Let it be for all of us our celebration as well.

Theodore L. Agnew, Editor  
1216 N. Lincoln Street  
Stillwater, OK, 74075, U.S.A.

From The Executive Secretary who produces the camera-ready copy: Please pardon our resorting to the small type entirely. We had a mass of material and one-third of our mailings go overseas. Postage costs would be much greater. JHN

Conference.<sup>14</sup> In 1832 they apparently assumed that Wesleyan views on ordination were identical with those of Episcopal Methodism.

Robert Alder arrived in York in June of 1832 without any missionaries. Egerton Ryerson wrote that Alder was in constant contact with the Lieutenant-Governor, and the Anglican rector of York (Toronto) Dr. Strachan during his visit.<sup>15</sup>

Instead of ignoring Alder, the Canadians foolishly invited him to a meeting of the Board of their Missionary Society and proposed articles of union to him.

The final draft included twelve proposals, the main points of which were:

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- f. a member of the Canada Conference was to be sent to England to negotiate details of the union.

The proposals were to be presented to the Canadian Conference meeting at Hallowell in late August. Alder was invited to attend this Conference.<sup>16</sup>

Immediately, Egerton Ryerson started a "softening up" process through the columns of the Christian Guardian. He assured his readers that Episcopal and Wesleyan Methodism was almost identical, that ordination in the Wesleyan Conference was conducted by a President, assisted in the laying-on-of-hands by presbyters, and that this was the same thing as M. E. ordination. When a "British Wesleyan" correspondent challenged his opinions, Ryerson became belligerent in his defence of the proposed union.<sup>17</sup>

John Ryerson wished a complete break between Upper Canada's Methodists and the Reform Party and Egerton was prepared to go along with him on this while brother William was mildly converted to the idea. All three wanted additional funds for the Canada Conference and thought the British Conference would be a good source.

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voted in favor, making the vote for adoption five to three. Richardson presented the report of his Committee to the Conference, but declared his dissent from it, and in particular, to articles two and three; adoption of the Wesleyan form of government and of the British usages regarding probation examination and admission to the itineracy.<sup>18</sup>

In later years Richardson wrote:

Such men as the venerable William Case, Thomas Madder, Franklin Metcalf, Thomas Whitehead with many others manifested as much opposition to the proposed union in 1832 as I did....<sup>19</sup>

Robert Alder did a good selling job, telling the Conference that he was sent to Upper Canada to extend Wesleyan work there but that he preferred working with a revamped M. E. Conference rather than in competition with it.

The Ryerson brothers' powerful personalities carried the day. The promise of avoidance of another government sponsored schism like the Ryanites, increased financial support for church extension through British Wesleyan and provincial government assistance, and an end to government harassment led the majority to acquiesce in the change.<sup>20</sup>

After the Conference Robert Alder wrote the Lieutenant-Governor that the results of his mission were more favorable than he could have anticipated. The Canadians agreed to abolish episcopacy, "a great barrier in the way of the entire union." The Canadian ministry was to be under the supervision of the British Conference. Local preachers were no longer to be ordained, camp meetings be discontinued and the Christian Guardian a major voice of opposition to Upper Canadian Toryism would become a strictly religious paper.<sup>21</sup>

Following the Conference, Archdeacon Strachan preached a sermon praising John Wesley. This sermon was published in the York Courier and James Richardson, newly appointed editor of The Christian Guardian, reviewed it. He expressed considerable surprise at Strachan's "favorable change towards that eminent man" since Strachan had recently published an article in the Christian Recorder condemning Wesley. Now, according to Strachan, the only error of the Methodists was their departure from the "Apostolic ordinance". Strachan meant ordination, knowing the British Wesleyan position at that time. Richardson claimed ignorance of the ordinance in question, but said that he intended to learn what it was.<sup>22</sup> In actual fact, Strachan had not changed his sentiments about Wesley. His Church of England clergy in Upper Canada now started to preach sermons calling on Methodists to worship in Wesley's beloved Church of England as the "Old Plan" Wesleyan Methodists had done and to abandon the M.E. tradition of a Church with an improperly ordained ministry.<sup>23</sup>

Egerton Ryerson wrote to Robert Adler on November 21st, 1832, in order to court his special favour and to discredit William Case, the acting "General Superintendent" of the Canada Conference. Ryerson wrote that he was prepared to accept the entire Wesleyan system of government and so were his brothers and that they could deliver a majority of the Canada Conference to support this. However the circuit membership was another matter:

But caution and delicacy will be necessary in those matters which relate to the membership, especially when fears have been excited.<sup>24</sup>

Ryerson then told Adler that:

(the) merit or demerit (of the proposed union) has been mainly ascribed to me, and on its result, should I cross the Atlantic, my standing in a degree depends on it.<sup>25</sup>

The Ryersons were waging everything on this union and with men of stature such as William Case, James Richardson, Thomas Madden and Franklin Metcalf opposed, the whole affair was "yet a matter of conjecture rather than of moral certainty."<sup>26</sup> The proposed union could easily be defeated by the circuits if they were allowed to vote. It was important to prevent this. In 1828 when the Canada Conference was considering independence from her American parent, the Quarterly Conferences of the circuits were consulted. Now a greater issue was before the church and they were to be ignored.

It was difficult to collect money from the circuits to pay Egerton Ryerson's travelling expenses to England to negotiate the union and so William and John got busy and raised the necessary funds from Tory friends.<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile opposition to the proposed union was developing.

### 3. The Union Between Episcopal and Wesleyan Methodists in Upper Canada 1833 - the issue of ordination.

When many of the preachers went to the Conference of 1832, they expected to elect William Case as their bishop. The Ryersons were determined that they would not. The preachers were "episcopal" Methodists and their Canadian Book of Discipline was explicit about the episcopacy and ordination. Their Church was an Episcopal Church with no professed relationship to, and only a passing interest in, the Church of England. In contrast, the British Wesleyan Conference of 1792 had rejected Wesley's views on ordination. At this Conference, all distinction between ministers ordained in the succession of presbyters and those who had been received into full connexion by the Conference was abolished and reception into full connexion became the equivalent of ordination. From 1792 until 1836 there was no Conference service of ordination with laying-on-of-hands in British Wesleyanism, nor any appeal to Scripture and tradition to justify this position. The sole exceptions to the Wesleyan ban on ordination were candidates for missionary service overseas. The real union issue in Upper Canada became Church versus religious society. This issue focused on presbyterial succession in ordination.

What was the position of early Canadian M. E.s on ordination? The first preachers in Upper Canada to study the subject were Nathan Bangs and Daniel Pickett. In the preface of his book on Methodist ministry entitled An Original Church of Christ, published in 1836, Bangs states that his first interest in the validity of M.E. ordination commenced in 1806 while serving on the Niagara Circuit in Upper Canada. Rev. George O'Kill Stuart, Church of England missionary in York, Upper Canada, was aware that Dr. Thomas Coke had applied to Bishop William White of Philadelphia for reconsecration as the necessary steps to unite the M. E. and Protestant Episcopal Churches in the United States. (Stuart lived with the White family in Philadelphia for a short time.) Bangs, a former Anglican, and the Rev. Daniel Pickett consulted with Bishop Asbury on ordination in Episcopal Methodism. Apparently, both were quite satisfied with the bishop's explanation as to its legitimacy. Thirty years later, Bangs set forth his understanding of John Wesley's position on ordination with considerable scholarship in his important book on the subject.<sup>28</sup> (Bangs' brother-in-law, Rev. Joseph Gatchell, helped initiate Canadian M.E. opposition to the union. Daniel Pickett joined the continuing M.E. church in Canada.)

William Case, during the six Canada Conference meetings at which he presided as General Superintendent pro tem, consistently refused to confer either deacons' or presbyters' orders because he had not been ordained as a bishop. Instead, bishops from the United States came to perform ordinations.<sup>29</sup> In 1833 Franklin Metcalf had in his possession a letter written to him by Egerton Ryerson, dated March 4, 1828, stating the reasons why Ryerson believed that episcopacy must be continued in the M.E. Church in Canada:

the necessity of a General Superintendent, I think may be very fairly agreed, not only from the general understanding there was among us at the Conference, but from our habits--from the peculiar economy of our church in the appt. and labours of her ministry---from the state of our ecclesiastical affairs in Canada, from the principles and designs of our venerable Founder, J. Wesley---from the practice of the antient (sic) and perhaps, Apostolic, churches; for the duty of our Superintendents appears to be very similar in several respects to that of the Scriptural Evangelists ---On these points I believe we are all agreed.<sup>29a</sup>

Joseph Gatchell, who was received on trial in 1810, set forth his views on episcopacy in his journal. He described the British Wesleyan Conference as: a body of people that was called a Church but on thorough (sic) or scrutinizing examination we find to be a palpable mistake...<sup>30</sup>

Gatchell goes on that, in 1833, the Wesleyans were: without the Gospel rites or order of ordination in its Ministry and of consequence unprepared to come among us or unqualified to administer those Holy

Conference.<sup>14</sup> In 1832 they apparently assumed that Wesleyan views on ordination were identical with those of Episcopal Methodism.

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Such men as the venerable William Case, Thomas Madder, Franklin Metcalf, Thomas Whitehead with many others manifested as much opposition to the proposed union in 1832 as I did....<sup>19</sup>

Robert Alder did a good selling job, telling the Conference that he was sent to Upper Canada to extend Wesleyan work there but that he preferred working with a revamped M. E. Conference rather than in competition with it.

The Ryerson brothers' powerful personalities carried the day. The promise of avoidance of another government sponsored schism like the Ryanites, increased financial support for church extension through British Wesleyan and provincial government assistance, and an end to government harassment led the majority to acquiescence in the change.<sup>20</sup>

After the Conference Robert Alder wrote the Lieutenant-Governor that the results of his mission were more favorable than he could have anticipated. The Canadians agreed to abolish episcopacy, "a great barrier in the way of the entire union." The Canadian ministry was to be under the supervision of the British Conference. Local preachers were no longer to be ordained, camp meetings be discontinued and the Christian Guardian a major voice of opposition to Upper Canadian Toryism would become a strictly religious paper.<sup>21</sup>

Following the Conference, Archdeacon Strachan preached a sermon praising John Wesley. This sermon was published in the York Courier and James Richardson, newly appointed editor of The Christian Guardian, reviewed it. He expressed considerable surprise at Strachan's "favorable change towards that eminent man" since Strachan had recently published an article in the Christian Recorder condemning Wesley. Now, according to Strachan, the only error of the Methodists was their departure from the "Apostolic ordinance". Strachan meant ordination, knowing the British Wesleyan position at that time. Richardson claimed ignorance of the ordinance in question, but said that he intended to learn what it was.<sup>22</sup> In actual fact, Strachan had not changed his sentiments about Wesley. His Church of England clergy in Upper Canada now started to preach sermons calling on Methodists to worship in Wesley's beloved Church of England as the "Old Plan" Wesleyan Methodists had done and to abandon the M.E. tradition of a Church with an improperly ordained ministry.<sup>23</sup>

Egerton Ryerson wrote to Robert Adler on November 21st, 1832, in order to court his special favour and to discredit William Case, the acting "General Superintendent" of the Canada Conference. Ryerson wrote that he was prepared to accept the entire Wesleyan system of government and so were his brothers and that they could deliver a majority of the Canada Conference to support this. However the circuit membership was another matter:

But caution and delicacy will be necessary in those matters which relate to the membership, especially when fears have been excited.<sup>24</sup>

Ryerson then told Adler that:

(the) merit or demerit (of the proposed union) has been mainly ascribed to me, and on its result, should I cross the Atlantic, my standing in a degree depends on it.<sup>25</sup>

The Ryersons were waging everything on this union and with men of stature such as William Case, James Richardson, Thomas Madden and Franklin Metcalf opposed, the whole affair was "yet a matter of conjecture rather than of moral certainty."<sup>26</sup> The proposed union could easily be defeated by the circuits if they were allowed to vote. It was important to prevent this. In 1828 when the Canada Conference was considering independence from her American parent, the Quarterly Conferences of the circuits were consulted. Now a greater issue was before the church and they were to be ignored.

It was difficult to collect money from the circuits to pay Egerton Ryerson's travelling expenses to England to negotiate the union and so William and John got busy and raised the necessary funds from Tory friends.<sup>27</sup> Meanwhile opposition to the proposed union was developing.

### 3. The Union Between Episcopal and Wesleyan Methodists in Upper Canada 1833 - the issue of ordination.

When many of the preachers went to the Conference of 1832, they expected to elect William Case as their bishop. The Ryersons were determined that they would not. The preachers were "episcopal" Methodists and their Canadian Book of Discipline was explicit about the episcopacy and ordination. Their Church was an Episcopal Church with no professed relationship to, and only a passing interest in, the Church of England. In contrast, the British Wesleyan Conference of 1792 had rejected Wesley's views on ordination. At this Conference, all distinction between ministers ordained in the succession of presbyters and those who had been received into full connexion by the Conference was abolished and reception into full connexion became the equivalent of ordination. From 1792 until 1836 there was no Conference service of ordination with laying-on-of-hands in British Wesleyanism, nor any appeal to Scripture and tradition to justify this position. The sole exceptions to the Wesleyan ban on ordination were candidates for missionary service overseas. The real union issue in Upper Canada became Church versus religious society. This issue focused on presbyterial succession in ordination.

What was the position of early Canadian M. E.s on ordination? The first preachers in Upper Canada to study the subject were Nathan Bangs and Daniel Pickett. In the preface of his book on Methodist ministry entitled An Original Church of Christ, published in 1836, Bangs states that his first interest in the validity of M.E. ordination commenced in 1806 while serving on the Niagara Circuit in Upper Canada. Rev. George O'Kill Stuart, Church of England missionary in York, Upper Canada, was aware that Dr. Thomas Coke had applied to Bishop William White of Philadelphia for reconsecration as the necessary steps to unite the M. E. and Protestant Episcopal Churches in the United States. (Stuart lived with the White family in Philadelphia for a short time.) Bangs, a former Anglican, and the Rev. Daniel Pickett consulted with Bishop Asbury on ordination in Episcopal Methodism. Apparently, both were quite satisfied with the bishop's explanation as to its legitimacy. Thirty years later, Bangs set forth his understanding of John Wesley's position on ordination with considerable scholarship in his important book on the subject.<sup>28</sup> (Bangs' brother-in-law, Rev. Joseph Gatchell, helped initiate Canadian M.E. opposition to the union. Daniel Pickett joined the continuing M.E. church in Canada.)

William Case, during the six Canada Conference meetings at which he presided as General Superintendent pro tem, consistently refused to confer either deacons' or presbyters' orders because he had not been ordained as a bishop. Instead, bishops from the United States came to perform ordinations.<sup>29</sup> In 1833 Franklin Metcalf had in his possession a letter written to him by Egerton Ryerson, dated March 4, 1828, stating the reasons why Ryerson believed that episcopacy must be continued in the M.E. Church in Canada:

the necessity of a General Superintendent, I think may be very fairly agreed, not only from the general understanding there was among us at the Conference, but from our habits--from the peculiar economy of our church in the appt. and labours of her ministry--from the state of our ecclesiastical affairs in Canada, from the principles and designs of our venerable Founder, J. Wesley--from the practice of the antient (sic) and perhaps, Apostolic, churches; for the duty of our Superintendents appears to be very similar in several respects to that of the Scriptural Evangelists ---On these points I believe we are all agreed.<sup>29a</sup>

Joseph Gatchell, who was received on trial in 1810, set forth his views on episcopacy in his journal. He described the British Wesleyan Conference as:

a body of people that was called a Church but on thorough (sic) or scrutinizing examination we find to be a palpable mistake...<sup>30</sup>

Gatchell goes on that, in 1833, the Wesleyans were: without the Gospel rites or order of ordination in its Ministry and of consequence unprepared to come among us or unqualified to administer those Holy



Sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper or of consequence to ordain others...<sup>31</sup>

Gatchell described Episcopacy as the "crowning diadem of the Church".<sup>32</sup> In the laying-on-of-hands in ordination a presbyterial succession or commission was passed on to those ordained by persons already ordained in this succession. Only those ordained in such a succession had the right to celebrate the Sacraments.

James Richardson's later position on episcopacy was identical to that held by Bishop Joshua Soule in 1844.<sup>33</sup> In 1833 he probably held to the original M.E. position of two orders.

There was no apparent dissatisfaction with episcopacy in the M.E. Church in Canada in 1833. Even Anson Green, who supported its abolition, in later years admitted that it was a good system and scriptural in contrast to Wesleyan polity.<sup>34</sup> Therefore it is not surprising that opposition to its abolition developed immediately after the 1832 Conference at Hallowell. More specifically, probably none of the Canadian class members of 1832 would have accepted the Sacraments from the hands of unordained preachers.

Egerton Ryerson left for England on March 4th, 1833, to negotiate details of the union. In the meantime the situation in Upper Canada was one of "wait and see". The British Wesleyan Conference approved the Articles of Union at their meeting in Manchester in July. Rev. George Marsden, rather than Robert Alder, was appointed President at the request of Egerton Ryerson, to satisfy the "American episcopal prejudices of some on ordination."<sup>35</sup> Marsden had been ordained both a deacon and presbyter by Dr. Thomas Coke in 1813.<sup>36</sup> A grant of 1,000 pounds was promised for missions in Upper Canada, most of it money from the Upper Canada parliament.

A General Conference of the M.E. Church in Canada met in the elegant new church on Newgate (Adelaide) Street in the capital town of York in October, 1833, and ratified the articles of union. The Rev. Thomas Whitehead, who registered the only negative vote at this Conference meeting, agreed to go along with the change.<sup>37</sup> William Case returned to Indian work. James Richardson and Franklin Metcalf accepted appointments as presiding elders and Thomas Madden, now a retired itinerant, fell in line. One opponent of the union, Philander Smith, a former presiding elder and later a bishop of the continuing M.E. Church in Canada, was located at the time. Significantly, however, an old itinerant, the Rev. Joseph Gatchell withdrew from the Conference session before the vote was taken and immediately committed himself to organizing a continuing M. E. Church in Canada.

At the Conference meeting a legal opinion from John Rolph and Marshall Spring Bidwell, Upper Canada's two leading lawyers, was read, which assured the Conference that its church property would be safe regardless of the abolition of the episcopacy. The membership of the Canada Conference was now 16,039; an increase of 60% in five years and the largest it would be until 1840.<sup>38</sup> The preachers came

to the Conference as Episcopal Methodists and left as Wesleyans.

#### 4. The Great Revolt

Significant opposition to the union centred on ordination, the constitutional rights of located and local preachers and Quarterly Conferences, and the attitude of the Conference to establishment of the Church of England in Upper Canada. The problems all related to the differences between Episcopal and Wesleyan Methodists in 1833. Rev. Joseph Gatchell, one of the originators of opposition to the union, summed up the attitude of the continuing M.E.s to the Wesleyans quite succinctly:

(We) find that there is no appearance of any regular Evangelical or Apostolical Order of Church Government in that so-called Wesleyan Church organization...<sup>39</sup>

Rev. David Culp, another principal leader of the movement to re-establish the M.E. Church in Canada, was described by the Wesleyan, Rev. John Carroll, as a bigoted Episcopalian with very narrow views on church government...<sup>40</sup>

Egerton Ryerson obviously knew after his visit to England in 1832 that lack of regular ordination in British Wesleyanism was the Achilles heel of his union scheme but he refused to admit it to his death.

Closely related to this was the ordination of local preachers. British Wesleyans ordained neither local nor travelling preachers and Upper Canadian local preachers were unprepared to accept this. Quite correctly they did not believe that their rights to ordination should be continued after the union, as Egerton Ryerson promised them in the Christian Guardian.<sup>41</sup>

Most British Wesleyan ministers were quite prepared to accept establishment of the Church of England in Upper Canada, believing that it was the Established Church of the British Empire. Episcopal Methodists would not tolerate this position, believing that they were also members of a Church Apostolic origin and tradition and should not show any special deference to the Church of England.

The decision for the change to British Wesleyanism at the Conference meeting of October, 1833, soon led to polarization of opinion and organized resistance. From December onward, protest meetings were held across the province. On January 9th, 1834, at a meeting held in Oxford County (where Nathan Bangs established Methodism in 1804) it was decided to continue a "M.E. Church" in Canada. On March 10th, 1834, a convention at the M.E. Church, Palermo (near Hamilton) to reorganize the M.E. Church in Canada and on June 25th, 1834, a Conference was held at Cumber's Chapel, Willowdale (now North Toronto) to arrange for ministerial supply of the continuing M.E. circuits in Upper Canada. Rev. John Reynolds, a friend and convert of Nathan Bangs, was elected General Superintendent protem.<sup>42</sup>

An adjourned session of this Conference met at Belleville in Eastern Ontario in February of 1835. By the time of



the next Annual Conference on June 10th, 1835, there were twenty-one travelling preachers and 1,234 members of the continuing M.E. Church. At a General Conference on June 25, 1835, John Reynolds was consecrated bishop by three presbyters and a M.E. Church was re-established in Upper Canada.<sup>43</sup> By 1840 there were forty-nine travelling preachers, twenty-four circuits and 5,235 members. In 1881 the M.E.s had a constituency of 101,505 and a membership of 27,402. From 1851 onward they were comparable in size to the Baptists of Upper Canada, six times as large as the Congregationalists and three and one-half times as large as the Lutherans.

Meanwhile the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada was going through its trauma of the so-called "union." The Rev. George Marsden stayed only until the 1833 Conference meeting was ended and then returned to England. By March of 1834, it was obvious that the Church was in such turmoil over the union issue that almost no further regular circuit news was published in the Christian Guardian until 1839. Instead, articles on Wesleyan foreign missions and obituaries of deceased British ministers and members filled its columns.

Rev. Edmund Grindrod of the British Conference was appointed Marsden's successor. He was late in arriving for the 1834 Conference meeting and Robert Adler took over as the presiding officer without invitation.<sup>44</sup>

Grindrod was very unpopular. He had never been ordained and was firmly opposed to John Wesley's position on ordination.<sup>45</sup> An opinionated man, Grindrod was Superintendent of the Leeds East Circuit at the time of the infamous Leeds Organ controversy when over 1,000 members were lost. An authority on Wesleyan church law, Grindrod was determined to enforce that law within the Canadian Conference regardless of its results. He rudely rejected the applications of local preachers for ordination, which was guaranteed them in the "Articles of Union" and insisted that the practice be discontinued.<sup>46</sup>

During his year-long presidency, membership of the Wesleyan Church increased by 176 while in the continuing M.E. Church in Canada it increased by 1,147. Continuing Episcopal Methodists spread the word far and wide that a lay president was ordaining ministers for the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

The Episcopal Methodist schism became an open rupture during Grindrod's one year presidency. Serious trouble developed with the appointment of the British minister, Joseph Stinson, to the British congregation in Kingston in 1834. Apparently supported by Grindrod, Stinson started to proclaim a "doctrine" which was quite unacceptable to the former M.E. congregation in the town and caused serious trouble on neighboring circuits. John Ryerson wrote to his brother Egerton on October 25, 1834:

no one of them (former M.E.'s) will remain in the (Kingston M.E.) church if Mr. Stinson's doctrine is embraced---<sup>47</sup>

Later events indicate that this "doctrine" related to ordination. John Ryerson stated that in the Bay of Quinte District, just west of Kingston during October, 1834 every circuit had suffered large membership losses.

John Carroll tells us that divisions took place on almost every circuit in the province.<sup>48</sup>

Twelve months after the union, John Ryerson wrote:

Every result of this union has been disastrous, without a single promise of anything beneficial to the Canada Conference---I cannot go on this way and I never saw my way so clear to retire as now.<sup>49</sup>

### 5. The Property Legal Suits

In 1835 the continuing M.E.s launched a series of legal suits in order to recover church properties. These suits included at least seven churches and brought the question of ordination into sharp focus.

The first two cases involved chapel properties of the Ancaster Circuit. Tried before the Tory Chief Justice of Upper Canada, the Wesleyans won after the judge charged the jury to find for them.<sup>50</sup> (The ruling clique of the province was known as the "Family Compact." The Anglican, Dr. Strachan, was their acknowledged leader.)

No transcripts have survived for these two cases. The third, the Waterloo Chapel case, was a very different matter. Judge James Macauley, before whom it was brought at Kingston, overruled it as a question of law and ordered that it be tried before the Court of King's Bench at Toronto<sup>51</sup> in January of 1837. This time the M.E.s were victorious. A complete published transcript of this trial has survived and it is a major key to the controversy.<sup>52</sup> In this court case the M.E.s set forth, with considerable scholarship, John Wesley's position on ordination. (Were they assisted by Nathan Bangs?) They stated that the British Wesleyan Conference was a religious society rather than a Church and did not possess the form of an ordained Ministry which Wesley intended for the Methodists of North America. The continuing M.E.s said that at least two of the Presidents appointed by the British Wesleyan Conference had never been ordained, thus violating M.E. usage. Since the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference had not continued as presbyterial succession through the laying-on-of-hands in ordination, their ministers were lay preachers lacking authority to celebrate the Sacraments and to ordain.

One judge, a former student of Archdeacon John Strachan, ruled in favour of the Wesleyans on the grounds that episcopacy was not essential to the M.E. Church. The second ruled in favour of the Episcopalians for various procedural reasons and because the wishes of a large minority of the membership of the Church were violated.

The third judge, James Macauley, concentrated on Wesley's concept of ordination. He decided that, though both the Wesleyan and Episcopal Methodists originated with Wesley,

they were two separate and distinct bodies, one a religious society and the other a Church. The ordination of Coke, Whatcoat and Vasey:

placed the key-stone in the arch by which (the M.E. Church) was perfected and upheld as a church, in contradistinction to a lay association of pious brethren--<sup>53</sup>

The Declaration in Chancery of 1784 gave the British Wesleyan Conference legal status but:

this important document is silent on the subject of ordination and the sacred ministrations. They are not provided for as was meditated and intended in the American Church---Herein the two, as claiming to be churches, differ materially in their organization---<sup>54</sup>

Macaulay denied that Wesleyan "reception into full connexion" constituted ordination and pointed out that the M.E. Book of Discipline drew a marked distinction between lay preachers and the ordained ministry. He noted that the Methodists of Upper Canada were American in origin. Therefore he ruled in favour of the M.E.s.<sup>55</sup>

In September, the Lundy's Lane Chapel case in Niagara Falls was tried before Judge Macaulay with the decision in favour of the M.E.s. The Belleville Chapel case was tried in October, 1837. A different presiding judge ordered the jury to rule for the Wesleyans. Sequestered for the night, they refused and the following morning declared their verdict for the Episcopal Methodists.<sup>56</sup>

News of these events were transmitted to Egerton Ryerson, then in London, England in order to secure funds and a Royal Charter for Upper Canada Academy. The original wording of the charter read that the academy was to be under the control of the "Wesleyan Methodist Connexion" in Upper Canada. At Ryerson's request, Lord Glenelg altered this to "Wesleyan Methodist Church".<sup>57</sup> The original designation would have strengthened the argument of Upper Canada's continuing M.E.s that the Wesleyans were a "connexion" rather than a Church. Ryerson could not afford this.

#### 6. Egerton Ryerson's Attempt to Justify the Changes in Ordination

In August of 1837 Judge Macaulay's judgment on the Waterloo Chapel Case was published. John Ryerson asked his brother Egerton to review the case thoroughly.<sup>58</sup> They decided that the only solution to the legal problems over property was to obtain affidavits from several prominent leaders of the American M.E. Church regarding their views on polity. The Attorney General of Upper Canada suggested two questions, both of which carefully avoided presbyterial succession in ordination but were related to the question of abolition of Episcopacy.<sup>59</sup> Egerton Ryerson reworked these questions into four and sent them to selected ministers of the M.E. Church in the United States.<sup>60</sup> The only answers possible for an Episcopal Methodist would be favorable to Ryerson's cause. These questions related to the power of the General Conference to:

2. change the form of government of the Church
3. dispense with the ordination of bishops
4. have a term episcopacy

So far as the continuing M.E.s of Upper Canada were concerned, all four questions were quite irrelevant to the legal issue, which was presbyterial succession in ordination. Letters with these questions were sent to the four oldest living ministers of the M.E. Church: Ezekiel Cooper, Thomas Morrell, Thomas Ware, and Nelson Reed, and also to Bishop Elijah Hedding, Rev's. J.B. Stratton, Thomas Mason and George Lane.<sup>61</sup>

Ryerson received the desired replies:

1. The Christmas Conference had the right to choose whatever name it wished.
2. The General Conference had the power, subject to the restrictive rules, to adopt whatever form of government it saw best for the Church.
3. The General Conference, subject to the restrictive rules, had the right to abolish the ordination of bishops.
4. The General Conference had the right to make the office of bishop periodically elective.

In his lengthy reply, Ezekiel Cooper quoted the example of the ancient Alexandrian Church and also statements of St. Jerome, Richard Hooker, Archbishop Cranmer and Archbishop Usher on Episcopacy. He emphasized that presbyters have the right to ordain because of their own ordination, but since they are under the restraint of the Conference, they can only act under its direction.<sup>62</sup> No bishop or minister stated that laying-on-of-hands by ministers already ordained in a presbyterial succession was unnecessary because that question was not put to them.

Ryerson wrote a separate letter to Dr. Wilbur Fisk and asked him if the General Conference had power to alter the form of government of the Church, to dispense with ordination of bishops and to introduce term episcopacy.<sup>63</sup>

Fisk gave the expected positive replies. Ryerson then addressed to him the question if he considered the British Wesleyan Conference ordinations of 1836 valid. No one else was asked this crucial question.

Wilbur Fisk was the fraternal delegate of the M.E. Church to the British Wesleyan Conference of 1836, the first regular Wesleyan Conference meeting at which the British used an ordination litany with laying-on-of-hands for ordinands. By request of Dr. Jabez Bunting, he participated in this first laying-on-of-hands ceremony of the British Conference. Fisk wrote:

I considered the ordination, as then and there performed, valid, and the ministers thus consecrated, as duly authorized ministers of Christ.<sup>64</sup>

Fisk was scarcely prepared to admit his participation in a bogus ordination. Why were the words "as then and there performed" inserted? Did Ryerson wish to prevent Fisk from making any reference to earlier Wesleyan practice where reception into full connexion was considered the equivalent of ordination? Did Egerton Ryerson help to engi-

1. change the name of the Church

neer introduction of laying-on-of-hands in British Wesleyanism in 1836 in order to save Canadian Wesleyan property? (Ryerson was at the 1836 British Wesleyan Conference and may have assisted in the laying-on-of-hands in the ordination service since he was a fraternal delegate. He was in England from December 1835 until April 1837.)

In 1836, Nathan Bangs, a familiar figure in Canada, published his book An Original Church of Christ and Bishop John Emory was completing his important work Defence of Our Fathers. Both of these books dealt with ordination in Episcopal Methodism. Joshua Soule held strong view on episcopacy. Either these persons were not consulted by Ryerson or else their replies were suppressed.

After Ryerson's return to Canada, Bishop Hedding qualified his statement on Methodist Episcopacy, as a result of a conversation with the British Wesleyan, Rev. Joseph Stinson, the instigator of the trouble in Kingston in 1834. Hedding said that if the higher courts decided against the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada and they must return to Episcopacy, then their bishop must be ordained by bishops of the American Church.<sup>65</sup> Egerton Ryerson's carefully worded questions were not the final statement on the subject.

Canadian Wesleyan preachers and members were very disturbed by the Chapel property cases and because of his "so responsible" part in the union, Egerton Ryerson was embarrassed. In a sharp letter to Robert Alder in late 1837, he closed with an angry outburst against the continuing M.E. Church in Canada, referring to it as: an insignificant and worthless party.<sup>66</sup>

The Christian Guardian of June 7th, 1837, advertised the sale of a pamphlet on the Wesleyan Ministry, An Essay on the Christian Ministry..., by J. Edmondson, M.A. The review of the pamphlet approvingly quoted Edmondson's statement that reception into full connexion constituted ordination and qualified the candidate to perform all of the ministerial offices. The Toronto Anglican paper The Church picked up the article and quoted Dr. Adam Clarke as saying that:

Imposition of hands is essential to ordination in the ministry.

On January 13th, 1838, Egerton Ryerson wrote Joseph Stinson a fiery letter asking why Ephraim Evans, the Editor of the Guardian, had published this statement thus allowing the full impression of such an authority to remain upon the judges' minds without even saying that the said Dr. A.C. regarded himself and acted as a minister for nearly fifty years, without the imposition of hands and proved the legitimacy of his own ordination and resisted the introduction of the ceremony of the imposition of hands a few years ago and carried his resistance against Dr. Bunting and others by a vote of more than three-fourths of the British Conference.<sup>67</sup>

Stinson's "doctrine" which would have emptied the former M.E. Church in Kingston in 1834 if publicized, was now

being promoted by the Christian Guardian. Now that he was a Wesleyan Methodist, Egerton Ryerson had to face the real and very unpleasant basic issue of ordination in the chapel cases with the continuing M.E. Church in Canada. Ryerson must either reject Wesley's position on presbyterial succession and openly promote the British position or join another Church.

#### 7. Impending Destruction of the Church

Rev. William Lord, an incompetent administrator and a person "of plain manners" succeeded Grindrod in 1835 as President of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada. Promised funds were not forthcoming from the Wesleyan Missionary Society and the American Church no longer gave support to Indian missions. Lord plunged the Upper Canada Academy building project into additional debt, jeopardizing the whole project. Because of the union, about half of the academy subscriptions were cancelled or unpaid. Provincial government assistance for the academy was not forthcoming and Egerton Ryerson went off to England to beg funds for its completion.

Political events developed rapidly in Upper Canada in 1836. In January, the reactionary and incompetent new Lieutenant Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head, arrived in Toronto from England. In June the Wesleyan Conference, meeting in Belleville, sent him an ill-advised address of loyalty. Bond Head in turn gave their address a rude acknowledgment, saying only that he had received it and he was busy with elections.<sup>68</sup>

During the ensuing twelve months, Bond Head's dismal record as governor combined with this stupid address, cost the Wesleyan Conference a new loss of 591 members while the Episcopal Methodists had a net increase of 1,132. Feeling was running high in the Wesleyan Church over the almost blind support being given to the unpopular government by both their Conference and the Christian Guardian now edited by the British Tory, Ephraim Evans. (Evans' wife was a daughter of General Aeneas Shaw of Toronto.) A convention of disaffected members of the Elizabethtown and Brookville Circuits was held in 1836 and a large part of the membership of both circuits joined the continuing M.E. Church.<sup>69</sup> Elsewhere others followed. James Richardson left the Wesleyan Church at this time, quite correctly blaming the Ryersons for harassing him out, and joined the American M.E. Church. Politics and the unacceptable ineffectiveness of the British ministers now serving the former M.E. Church on Adelaide Street in Toronto, once Upper Canada's largest Protestant congregation, led to its almost total disintegration.

Acute tensions were developing between John and William Ryerson and the British Wesleyans, especially William Lord and Robert Alder. Lord returned to England and was replaced in 1837 by Rev. William M. Harvard who proved to be a more affable President, although a useless administrator.

By 1837 confidence in the Ryersons and in the Wesleyan

Methodist Church in Canada was severely undermined. Declining membership, church property in jeopardy because of the union, few British Methodist immigrants, inadequate Presidents of Conference and lack of credibility threatened destruction of the Church. William Ryerson summed up the situation well in a letter to Egerton, then in England, in May of 1837. William wrote:

The less we have to do with the English Conference and their preachers the better it will be both for our Conference and the Church at large---Our present prospects are certainly not of the most pleasing or encouraging character---O how deeply I regret that I ever had any hand in bringing (the union) about---I thought I was doing right, was doing God's service but ah, I fear, I greatly fear, I was greatly mistaken. You doubtless have been informed from time to time of our various lawsuits about our church property and their most unfortunate termination---it will afford you little satisfaction to learn that lawsuits are multiplying and our difficulties are increasing---.<sup>70</sup>

To add to Wesleyan troubles, in 1837 James Richardson returned to Canada and, with Philander Smith, joined the M.E. Church. The continuing M.E. Church was now well established.

Egerton Ryerson realized that the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada was in serious trouble. It was essential that the Conference shed its Tory public image, acquired since 1833. This was undertaken at the ten day Annual Conference meeting in June of 1837. The question of state supported Churches in Upper Canada was fully discussed and the Conference declared itself opposed of government subsidies for religious bodies in colonies where popular opinion opposed them. The Circuits were not to be consulted on all major issues. The President of the Conference, William M. Harvard, made no attempt to limit or to direct debate.

The years 1838 and 1839 were times of disaster for the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada. The net membership decreased by 255 during these years, while the continuing M.E. Church in Canada increased by over 1,000 members in spite of government harassment because of the rebellion of 1837. The whole sorry business of the attempt to remake the M.E. Church in Canada into a Wesleyan Conference was coming to an end. The Ryersons and others finally realized that their interests could not always be identical with those of the British Wesleyan Conference and often must be in conflict with them. The Rebellion of December, 1837, had a profound influence on the Canadian ministers, and in particular upon John, William and Egerton Ryerson. The hanging of Lount and Matthews on the gallows behind the Adelaide Street Church in Toronto, the flight of innocent people from the province for not other reason than their desire to enjoy civil liberties, the projected colony for Methodists and other refugees from Upper Canada in the Davenport area of Iowa,<sup>71</sup> realization that Canadians were North Americans, the callousness of Robert Alder to the activities of the Tory clique and the plight of Upper

Canadian Methodists were underlying reasons for the dissolution of the union, which the British Conference finally terminated in 1840. Now another schism took place as approximately 1,400 British members hived off, principally in Toronto and Kingston, soon to organize an Upper District of the British Wesleyan Conference. Twelve ministers went with them, including William Case of American M.E. background. Case wished to continue his work with the Indians and he had no desire for further involvement with the Ryerson brothers.

Upper Canada became part of the United Province of Canada in 1840. By 1840, the former M.E. Church of 1833 was divided into three groups:

1. The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada (the Ryersonian Methodists)
2. The M.E. Church in Canada
3. The Upper Canada District of the British Wesleyan Conference

#### 1840-1884

Reunion of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada and The M.E. Church in Canada in 1840 following termination of the union of the former with the British Conference, however logical, was impossible because of Egerton Ryerson and events of the preceding seven years. Ryerson loomed large as a symbol of perfidity for continuing M.E.s and reunion between them and the Wesleyans was possible only after his death in 1881.

The British faction which withdrew from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada established congregations in cities and scattered towns of the province with Toronto and Kingston as their major centres. By 1847, the year they became reunited with the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, the British had 3,082 members in twenty-two circuits and missions in Canada West.

Recognition of the continuing M.E. Church in Canada by the parent American Church was refused by the General Conferences of 1836 and 1844. In 1864, however, full recognition was granted and from that time onward a close relationship between the two Churches developed, much to the annoyance of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada. In 1871, the Niagara Conference of the M.E. Church in Canada proposed union with the American Church, following an invitation to this effect from the Editor of the North-western Christian Advocate.<sup>72</sup> Three Americans were considered as Candidates for the Canadian episcopacy at this time.

The M.E. Church in Canada adhered closely to Wesleyan theology and Episcopal Methodist polity. Their weekly newspaper, the Canada Christian Advocate, which commenced in 1845, carried scholarly articles on theological questions, in marked contrast to the "holiness movement emphasis" in the Wesleyan newspaper The Christian Guardian. The M.E. newspaper, unlike its Wesleyan counterpart, had limited interest in revivalism and politics and portrayed life in an episcopal, mildly liturgical Methodist Church, thoroughly Wesleyan in theology and strongly

oriented to education. M.E. Church buildings reflected more refined tastes in architecture than most Wesleyan buildings.

Discussion of "term episcopacy" and termination of the consecration of bishops in 1871-72 in the M.E. Church of the United States prompted serious examination of episcopacy in the M.E. Church in Canada. The Canada Christian Advocate reprinted, with full approval, an essay by Daniel Whedon from the Methodist Quarterly Review of New York which defended the consecration of bishops as an indelible, lifelong ordination.<sup>73</sup> At the same time, The Christian Guardian attacked (Methodist) episcopacy in a strange article on ordination in the March 15, 1871 issue.

The Ryerson brothers passed into oblivion soon after 1847 and only Egerton reappeared in Methodist Conference circles two decades later. All of the children of the Ryerson brothers became Anglicans. A granddaughter of Egerton was an Anglican nun and a namesake grandson was an Anglican missionary in Japan.

Statistically, the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada West/Ontario was three times as large as the continuing M.E. Church from 1847 to 1874, with a much higher proportion of urban members. In 1874 the Wesleyans owned a small university at Cobourg and a Ladies College in Whitby. There was a publishing house and bookroom in Toronto and approximately one thousand Church buildings and several hundred parsonages across the province. A Ladies College in Hamilton and an elaborate camp ground at Grimsby, while nominally Wesleyan, were not owned by the Church. The M.E.s had a small university in Belleville, a Ladies College at St. Thomas, a publishing house and bookroom in Hamilton, a large camp ground in the Thousand Islands and approximately five hundred Church buildings and two hundred parsonages in Ontario. Strong loyalty and a high level of financial commitment among members gave the denomination a level of visibility on the Ontario countryside quite out of proportion to its numbers.

Unlike the Editors of the Canada Christian Advocate, those of the Christian Guardian showed very limited knowledge of Wesleyan history and theology. The Advocate editors quite correctly lectured their Guardian counterparts on inaccurate factual statements, including some gross misrepresentations of Wesley's position on ordination, liturgical worship, and the Sacraments. At times the Guardian seemed to promote non-Wesleyan views of sanctification and was always extremely opposed to all forms of "ritualism", by which was meant specifically the Book of Common Prayer, John Wesley's Sunday Service and the Roman Missal. In contrast to the Advocate, the Guardian was violently opposed to Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism. A missionary delegation from the Church of Scotland to Ontario in 1874 described the province's Wesleyans as unique in the Methodist world and closer to Presbyterians than any other body of Methodists. They were not traditional British Wesleyan Methodists.

In 1874, the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Eastern British America and the tiny Methodist New Connexion Church of Canada, (the lineal descendant of the Ryanite Church of 1829) united to form the Methodist Church of Canada. Extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, this Church included almost all of the Methodists in every province except Ontario. In Ontario, where 60% of the country's Protestants resided, by 1881, the Methodist Church of Canada now counted 73.91% of the province's Methodists, the M.E.s 17.1%, the Primitive Methodists 4.3% and the Bible Christians 4%. The two Black Methodist Churches, the Evangelical Association, the United Brethren in Christ, and the Free Methodists provided the remaining .7%.

William Morley Punshon, during his remarkable term as President of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada from 1868 until 1873, revived Egerton Ryerson's active participation in Conference business and he was elected the first President of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada. The Methodist Church of Canada had a quasi-presbyterian polity with a quadrennial General Conference and six Annual Conferences.

The polity of the Methodist Church of Canada lacked an adequate system of superintendency. Ironically, the first person to complain of this was Egerton Ryerson, the man responsible for elimination of episcopacy in the principal body of Canada's Methodists. Ryerson had actively promoted union of the Wesleyans and the New Connexion against Punshon's advice and now he decided that the united body needed a General Superintendency. Others supported the movement and thus opened the possibility for a union with the M.E. Church in Canada.

Egerton Ryerson died in 1881 making possible serious union negotiations based on a General Superintendency. The model proposed was unique in the Methodist world. The General Superintendency was neither an episcopacy nor a presidency. There was no service of consecration and the job more closely resembled the chairmanship of the Board of Directors of a large business corporation than traditional episcopacy. Two General Superintendents were to hold term appointments of eight and four years and these could be renewed for the lifetime of the incumbent. In the case of Dr. Albert Carman, the time limit ended with his eighty-first birthday. There were to be no direct links between the General Superintendents and local circuits since the Presiding Eldership was abolished. The only major pastoral functions of the General Superintendents were at the Annual Conference meetings, and more specifically, at ordination services. The Senior General Superintendent was president of the General Conference and all of its boards and committees. He also shared the presidency of each Annual Conference with an elected Annual President. The junior General Superintendent assisted the Senior officer by performing duties assigned to him. Both were supposed to travel throughout the Church. Parachuted into the presbyterian polity of the Methodist Church of Canada, only a political genius could make this form of General Superintendency work.

No appeal was made to the Wesleyan quadrilateral when this policy was devised. The diaconate was abolished and a concept of ministry considerably lower than that of the M.E.s was adopted by the new Church.

The last battle between Wesleyan and Episcopal Methodists of Upper Canada was fought over this union. A group of former Wesleyans opposed the union because of the proposed General Superintendency. Another group in the M.E. Church, led by Rev. Dr. Thomas Webster, sought to prevent the union on the basis of abandonment of traditional Methodist Episcopacy. Both attempts were unsuccessful and the union took place on June 1st, 1884.

Dissidents from the union were required to acquiesce or leave. About 3,600 M.E. members left, some to become Anglicans. In 1881 there were two hundred and sixty-nine active and superannuated M.E. ministers. Fifty-one of these, all active and most of them younger men, went to the M.E. Church in the United States. Some were gifted persons and one of them, Rev. Frank Warne, later became a M.E. bishop in India.

Bishop Albert Carman of the M.E. Church became a General Superintendent of the Methodist Church, Canada, Newfoundland, Bermuda and, from 1888 until 1910, was the sole General Superintendent. A man of great ability, he made the best of a difficult job, constantly avoiding blows from powerful former Wesleyan laymen in Toronto. His successor in 1914 was Dr. S.D. Chown, a former Wesleyan who interpreted the office as purely administrative.

The conflict over ministry caused by the so-called union of 1833 still haunts the United Church of Canada. In 1925 the Church of Scotland was hesitant to recognize the validity of the ordination of United Church ministers of Methodist background because of the Wesleyan strand in Canadian Methodism. Problems which have led, during the past twenty years, to appointment of the Commission on the Ministry in the Twentieth Century, The Task Force on the Ministry and Project Ministry together with ordination and communion services conducted by lay Presidents of Conference during the past fifteen years indicate how past errors are visited on subsequent generations.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. For a detailed history of the early work of the M.E. Church in Canada see George Frederick Playter The History of Methodism in Canada with an Account of the Rise and Progress of the Work of God Among the Canadian Indian Tribes... (to 1828) Toronto: Anson Green for author, 1862.

2 Strachan's correspondence with Chalmers is found in the Thomas Chalmers Papers, New College Library, Edinburgh, Scotland. Chalmers letters to Strachan are not in the John Strachan letters, Archives of Ontario, Toronto.

3 Charles Bruce Sisson, Egerton Ryerson, His Life and Letters. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co., 1937 p. 49, 169, 510, 513, 534-535. Alder eventually entered Anglican priesthood

3a Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (London) 1827, April 11, p. 414.

4 Sissons, op. cit. p. 153

5 Toronto Examiner, 1853, July 20

6 UCA Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1828, Dec. 11. James Scott Howard, York to Egerton Ryerson. John Gamble is commemorated at St. James Cathedral, Toronto, by a massive wall plaque on the west wall.

7 See Sissons, op. cit. p. 129-132 for an account of Ryerson's mission on behalf of civil liberties in Upper Canada.

8 Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1831, August 6. George Ryerson, Bristol, to Egerton Ryerson. See also George G. Findlay and William W. Holdsworth, History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. Vol. 1, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1921, p. 423.

9 Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1831, August 6. George Ryerson, Bristol to Egerton Ryerson.

10 John Carroll, Exposition Expounded. Toronto: Methodist Book and Publishing House, 1881, p. 18. The bishops elected were Nathan Bangs, Wilbur Fisk and J.B. Stratton. All refused the office.

11 Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1832, April 6. George Ryerson, London to Egerton Ryerson, York, U.C.

12 Ibid.

13 Address reprinted in The Christian Guardian 1832, July 11, p. 134, c.4

14 Egerton Ryerson, Canadian Methodism: Its Epochs and Characteristics. Toronto, Wm. Briggs, 1882, p. 307-310.

15 Ibid. p. 310-311.

16 Thomas Webster, History of the M.E. Church in Canada. Hamilton: Canada Christian Advocate Office, 1870, p. 260-61.

17 Christian Guardian, 1832, June 6, p. 118. See also issues of 1832, April 11, p. 86; May 9, p. 102.

18 Canada Christian Advocate 1872, March 13, p. 2

19 Ibid.

20 Anson Green, The Life and Times of the Rev. Anson Green, D.D. Toronto: Methodist Book Room, 1877, p. 161

21 Thomas Webster, op. cit. p. 262-264.

22 Christian Guardian 1832, October 10, p. 191.

23 See Christian Guardian 1837, April 19, p. 94; May 3, p. 102, 103; May 10, p. 105; May 17, p. 109 for an example.

24 Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1832, November 21. Egerton Ryerson, St. Catharines to Robert Alder (copy).

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 John George Hodgins ed. The Story of My Life, by the late Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D.D., L.L.D. Toronto: Wm. Briggs, 1883, p. 111.

28 Nathan Bangs, An Original Church of Christ: Or a Scrip-



- tural Vindication of the Orders and Powers of the Ministry of the M.E. Church. New York: Mason and Lane, 1837
- "Preface". Rev. George O'Kill Stuart and Rev. Robert Addison were the only Church of England missionaries within the Niagara Circuit bounds in 1804. Stuart seems the more probable to converse with a Methodist minister on this subject because of his acquaintance with Dr. White of Philadelphia.
- <sup>29</sup>Thomas Webster, *op cit.*, p. 240-242. Bishop Hedding's visit in 1830 was the last time an American Methodist bishop ordained in Canada.
- <sup>29a</sup>Egerton Ryerson Papers, 1828, March 4. Egerton Ryerson, Cobourg to Franklin Metcalf, Brockville (copy). Original at Queen's University Archives, Kingston.
- <sup>30</sup>UCA. Joseph Gatchell Papers. "Journal", p.46. Gatchell was a brother-in-law of Nathan Bangs.
- <sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 47.
- <sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 45.
- <sup>33</sup>Canada Christian Advocate, 1872, June 12.
- <sup>34</sup>Anson Green, *op cit.*, p. 177.
- <sup>35</sup>Findlay and Holdsworth, *op cit.*, Vol. I, p. 428.
- <sup>36</sup>*Ibid.* p. 428; Christian Guardian, 1883, Feb. 14, p. 54.
- <sup>37</sup>Anson Green, *op cit.*, p. 176.
- <sup>38</sup>Charles Sissons, *op. cit.*, p. 188.
- <sup>39</sup>Joseph Gatchell, "Journal", p. 46.
- <sup>40</sup>John Carroll, A Needed Exposition: On the Claims and Allegations of the Canadian Episcopal Calmly Considered... Toronto: Methodist Book Room, 1877, p. 29.
- <sup>40a</sup>see Thomas Webster, *op cit.*, p.293, 312 for M.E. comments on Wesleyan lack of ordination.
- <sup>41</sup>Christian Guardian, 1834, Jan. 8, p. 34.
- <sup>42</sup>Thomas Webster, *op cit.*, p. 299-309, 318-319.
- <sup>43</sup>*Ibid.* p. 320-323.
- <sup>44</sup>Charles B. Sissons, *op cit.*, p. 237-238.
- <sup>45</sup>John Bowmer, The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism. London: Dacre Press, 1951, p. 161-162: 1837, August. Henry Moore, Brunswick Place to Edmund Grindrod. Moore, who was ordained by Wesley, challenged Grindrod's views on ordination and his refusal to allow Moore to pass on a presbyterial succession through the "laying-on-of-hands" at the British Wesleyan Conference's first ordination service in 1836. Moore objected that this was contrary to John Wesley.
- <sup>46</sup>Findlay and Holdsworth, *op cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 429.
- <sup>47</sup>Egerton Ryerson Papers, 1834. Oct. 25, John Ryerson, Hallowell to Egerton Ryerson, Toronto.
- <sup>48</sup>John Carroll, Case and His Co-Temporaries. Toronto: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1874, Vol. IV, p. 8,20,21,25, 29,42,43.
- <sup>49</sup>Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1834, Oct. 25. John Ryerson, Hallowell, to Egerton Ryerson, Toronto.
- <sup>50</sup>Egerton Ryerson Papers. 1836, Sept. 25. John Ryerson, Toronto to Egerton Ryerson.
- <sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>52</sup>Upper Canada. Queen's Bench Reports (Old Series). Vol. 5, p. 344-433. Doe ex dem. The Trustees of the M.E. Church in the Township of Kingston vs. Bell (1837). See also Thomas Webster *op cit.*, p. 336-368 for a complete reprint of the judgments of Judges Macaulay and Sherwood on this legal suit. Webster does not reprint Robinson's judgment.
- <sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 411.
- <sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 413.
- <sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 414.
- <sup>56</sup>Kingston, Upper Canada, British Whig 1837, Nov. 7, p. 2. A strange account of the Belleville Chapel Property Case was published by Egerton Ryerson which leaves the impression the Wesleyans won the case:
- Methodist Chapel property case: report of the trial of an action brought by John Reynolds and others, on the part of persons calling themselves the M.E. Church in Canada, against Bella Flint, Jr. and others, Trustees Wesleyan Methodist Church in Belleville, to obtain a chapel in the possession of the latter in the town of Belleville, by Harvey Fowler, stenographer. Toronto: Wesleyan Conference Office, Jos. H. Lawrence, Printer, 1837...with brief notes and remarks by E. Ryerson. 103pp.
- <sup>57</sup>Egerton Ryerson Papers, 1836, June 16. George Grey, Downing St., to Egerton Ryerson, London, England.
- <sup>58</sup>*Ibid.* 1837, Aug. 11. John Ryerson, Toronto to Egerton Ryerson, Kingston. There is reference to the Lundy's Lane Chapel case in this letter.
- <sup>59</sup>*Ibid.* 1837, Oct. 31. Christopher A. Hagerman, Attorney General, Upper Canada to Egerton Ryerson.
- <sup>60</sup>*Ibid.* 1837, Nov. 25. Egerton Ryerson, New York to Rev. R. Alder. In spite of Ryerson's "evidence" the continuing Episcopal Methodists won the subsequent property cases.
- <sup>61</sup>This correspondence and the replies were published 40 years later during the Canadian Methodist union debates in: John Carroll, A Needed Exposition on the Claims and Allegations of the Canada Episcopal Calmly Considered. Toronto, Methodist Book Room, 1877.
- <sup>62</sup>*Ibid.* p. 36-40.
- <sup>63</sup>*Ibid.* p. 45-46.
- <sup>64</sup>*Ibid.* p. 46-47.

- <sup>65</sup> Egerton Ryerson Papers, 1837, Dec. 6. Joseph Stinson, Kingston to Egerton Ryerson, Toronto.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid. 1837, Nov. 25. Egerton Ryerson, N.Y. to Robert Alder
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid. 1838, Jan. 13. Egerton Ryerson, Kingston to Joseph Stinson, Toronto.
- <sup>68</sup> Sissons, *op cit.*, p. 346.
- <sup>69</sup> John Carroll, *Case and His Co-Contemporaries*. Vol. IV, p. 126-127.
- <sup>70</sup> Egerton Ryerson Papers, 1837, May 18, William Ryerson, Hamilton to Egerton Ryerson, London, England.
- <sup>71</sup> See John George Hodgins ed. *The Story of My Life...* (*op cit.*), p. 184.
- <sup>72</sup> Canada Christian Advocate. 1871, April 5.

## APPENDIX ONE - MEMBERSHIP

	Episcopal	Wesleyan	Continuing Episcopal
1830	11,348		
1833	16,039		
1834		14,930	
1835		15,106	1,243
1840		16,354	5,325
1845		22,946	7,881
1850		25,042	8,653
1855		34,322	11,310
1860		48,062	17,727
1865		49,475	20,676
1870		57,817	20,256
1874		65,375	22,641
1875			23,012
1880			27,402
1883			24,435

## A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

(The following was addressed to Dr. Fred Norwood in response to his request about Methodism in France. It is from Rev. Norman Goreham, 187 Old Taupo Rd., Rotorua, New Zealand, P.O. Box 5010.)

Methodism first entered France in Normandy and came from the Channel Islands. Methodist services were being held in Paris before 1790. In 1791 an entry appeared in the stations of the British Conference. "France: William Mahy". In 1796, Dr. Thomas Coke accepted to work in America with one reservation: "unless the door opens in France". At first, Methodism was not well received by the French Reformed Church. This led two members of aristocratic families in Brittany, converts under Methodist influence from Catholicism to Protestantism, Pierre de Pontavice and Armand de Kerpezdron, to seek ordination in the French Reformed Church in order to spread Methodist principles (as Wesley had done) within an established Church. Later, other Methodist preacher also found it convenient to work within the national Church. Among these was Charles Cook, an indefatigable traveller and apologist who

APPENDIX TWO:  
DENOMINATIONAL GROWTH, CHURCH BUILDING, UNION AND DISRUPTION  
TABLE COMPARING DENOMINATION GROWTH IN CANADA WEST/ONTARIO  
1842-1881

DENOMINATION	1842 <sup>①</sup>	1851 <sup>②</sup>	1861	1871	1881
BAPTIST	16,411	45,353 <sup>③</sup>	61,559 <sup>④</sup>	86,630 <sup>⑤</sup>	106,680 <sup>⑥</sup>
ROMAN CATHOLIC	65,203	167,695	258,141	274,162	320,839
ANGLICAN	107,791	223,190	311,565	330,995	366,539
CONGREGATIONAL	4,253	7,747	9,357	12,858	16,340
DISCIPLES	no listing	2,064	4,147	no listing	16,051
LUTHERAN	4,524	12,089	24,299	32,399	37,901
WESLEYAN	Can. 32,315 Br. 23,342	(109,040) 96,640	218,427	286,911	436,987
NEW CONNEXION	no listing	(8,610) 7,547	28,200 <sup>⑦</sup>	30,889	
EPISCOPAL METH.	20,125	(46,238) 43,884	71,615 <sup>⑧</sup>	92,198	101,505
BIBLE CHRISTIAN	no listing	5,726	8,801	18,225	23,726
PRIMITIVE METH.	no listing	no listing	no listing	24,045	25,555
OTHER METH.	7,141	(43,768) 52,585	23,330	9,964 <sup>⑨</sup>	3,730
ALL METHODISTS	82,923	213,382	350,373	462,232 <sup>⑩</sup>	591,503
CH. OF SCOTLAND	77,929	(59,102) 57,542	108,963	63,167	7,964 <sup>⑪</sup>
FREE CHURCH	pre disruption	(69,738) 65,807	143,043	230,465	402,572
PRESBYTERIANS	18,220	(75,308) 80,799	51,378	50,847	
OTHER PRESBY.	946 <sup>⑫</sup>			11,963 <sup>⑬</sup>	7,213 <sup>⑭</sup>
ALL PRESBY.	97,095	204,148	303,384	356,442	417,749
QUAKERS	5,200	7,460	7,383	7,106 <sup>⑮</sup>	6,307
OTHER CREEDS	22,305 <sup>⑯</sup>	25,392 <sup>⑰</sup>	40,387	36,266 <sup>⑱</sup>	27,099 <sup>⑲</sup>
NO RELIGION		6,744 <sup>⑳</sup>	17,373	6,792	3,255 <sup>㉑</sup>
NOT GIVEN	81,348 <sup>㉒</sup>	35,740	8,121	13,849	12,965
TOTAL POP.	487,053	952,004	1,396,091	1,620,851	1,923,228

Courtesy of Professor William Westfall

(Dr. Glenn Lucas is retired from service as Executive Director of the United Church of Canada Archives in Toronto, Canada. He presently lives at Box 501, Markdale, Ontario N0C 1H0, Canada. He also is a past President of the World Methodist Historical Society.)

## LETTER TO EDITOR (Continued)

did much to uphold and commend the Methodist position in controversy with the Calvinism of the Reformed Church. His aim was to form a "society" within the Church, a position which led him into difficulties through the misunderstanding of the clergy of that Church.

The spread of Methodism was more successful in rural than in urban areas. Circuits were formed, some of them vast, such as the Midi Circuit which stretched from the Alps to the Mediterranean. The growing Methodist movement, at first attached to the British Conference, became an independent Conference in 1852. In 1898 the name of this was changed to Synod.

French Methodism had its own newspaper, a girls' boarding school, a bookroom, a children's home, Sunday Schools, lay preachers, ministerial training (at first when a senior minister trained candidates for the ministry in his own home), and, eventually its own mission field in Algeria. Eventually, too, the movement was

(Continued on Page 16)



CHANGE IN BRITISH SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Dr. Joan Anderson resigned as secretary of the British WMHS office. In her place Mr. John H. Lenton, M.A., M. Phil., 21 Vineyard Road, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 1HB, England has been nominated by the Methodist Archives and History Committee and will be acted upon by the British Conference at its next session. Mr. Lenton is assuming the office immediately prior to his final endorsement.

A 1988 REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN ENGLAND

With the 250th anniversary of the conversions of John and Charles Wesley, a special conference will be planned jointly by the WMHS and Wesley Historical Society. It will be held at York, England, April 5-8, 1988. The theme will be "METHODISTS IN SOCIETY" with papers on the subjects such as John Wesley's evangelical strategy; the Social Witness of United Methodists; Hugh Price Hughes and the West London Mission; symposia on Methodist Archives and Bibliographies; historic visits to sites around York. The cost will be approximately £70. Further information, please write to:

Rev. T.S.A-Macquiban, The Manse, Whitehill Road, Halifax West Yorkshire, HX2 9SS, England.

UNITED METHODIST GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES & HISTORY

Susan M. Eltscher, Director of library for American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, N.Y., has been named Director of Women's and Ethnic History for the Commission. She is a member of the United Methodist Church and began her work at Madison, N.J., June 1.

A denominational Historical Society is being organized and will begin taking memberships during the charter year of 1988 and formal organization will occur at a churchwide Historical Convocation, July, 1989.

The Jesse Lee prize has been revived with deadline of October 1, 1988 for manuscripts, awarding to occur the following year. For details on submitting a manuscript, contact the Commission, Box 127, Madison, N.J., 07940, USA.

Workshop on Shrines and Landmarks, Xavier Center, Convent Station, N.J. Sept. 21-23, 1987.

150 YEARS OF METHODIST WORK IN ARGENTINA

On Sunday, Nov. 30, 1986, celebrations commenced the 150th birthday of Methodist work. In 1836, December, Rev. John Dempster arrived in Buenos Aires and began to preach among the English-speaking community. From these beginnings the Iglesia Evangelica Metodista Argentina evolved. The celebration was held in Buenos Aires with choirs, musical presentations, greetings from other denominations, and main address delivered by Bishop Federico Pagura, leader of the Methodist Church of Argentina. Dr. Raul Alfonsin, Pres. of Argentina, brought greetings. Further celebrations will be held during this sesqui-centennial year.

METHODISM INVITED TO CELEBRATE

The 250th anniversary of John Wesley's Aldersgate experience

will be observed May 18-26, 1988 with walks to historic sites, reflections in London, attendance at St. Paul's Cathedral and Aldersgate services by the North American program committee. Special pilgrimage tours will be conducted. The World Evangelism Committee will prepare a major Bible Study "The Meaning of the Warmed Heart" written by Dr. Donald English. This study will be used in local churches throughout the world. For further involvement concerning North American participation in these great events, write to Aldersgate '88, c/o World Methodist Council Headquarters, Box 518, Lake Junaluska, N.C., 28745, U.S.A.

A REPORT ON THE CATALOG OF METHODIST MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

A second printing of Part 6, Section 1, dealing with the Methodist Records at the John Rylands Library has been completed. Copies may be secured by purchase from Dr. Homer Calkin, 3830 Columbia Pike, #202, Arlington, VA, 22204, U.S.A. Dr. Calkin is the editor of this project. Cost: \$40.00 (USA)

The editor has started the compilation to Part 6, Section 2, of the British depositories: Wales, Scotland, and England. More than fifty depositories have sent their information. About a dozen depositories in Ireland have also reported. Work on the circuits and chapels will cover a separate volume. With 32 districts in the British Methodist Church the volume will be set up by districts so that it can be reproduced in sections allowing purchase of whatever districts may be desired.

ANOTHER JOHN KRUMMEL PUBLICATION

The history of "The Methodist Protestant School for Boys in Nagoya: 1900-1912" has just been released and may be obtained by writing to Dr. John Krummel, 5-4-22 Minami Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107, Japan. This printed pamphlet consists of 16 pages of historical information. No cost has been indicated.

BRIEF HISTORY OF GEORGE NEAL BY LORNE C. BALL

The author sent us a copy of this publication written about a leader of early Methodism in Upper Canada. The title of the study is "George Neal: A Number One Methodist in Upper Canada". Copies may be obtained by writing the author: Rev. Lorne C. Ball, 15-3815 Portage Rd., Niagara Falls, Ontario L2J 2L1, Canada. It consists of seven pages.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR (Conclusion)

One factor needs noting; there were never serious divisions with French Methodism. It retained its evangelical integrity and took it along into the wider ecclesiastical scene.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR (Continued)

able to send some of its own personnel to work in the Channel Islands to repay the original debt.

At ordinations, sympathetic clergy of the Reformed Church were invited to participate, but it was made clear that the Conference was the competent ordaining authority. Methodism strengthened the national Church by leading some of its members to deeper faith and ecclesiastical loyalty as well as support of the Methodist movement.

In 1870, there were thirty ministers in active service, two full-time evangelists, nine day schools and a hundred lay preachers. Numbers of personnel were never great and budgets were always modest. By 1893 there were twenty-four active ministers in France, two in Algeria and two evangelists.

Causes of the eventual decline were: paucity of personnel and financial resources, the too wide-spread nature of the work, the lack of success in major towns and cities, a number of ministerial defections, the closure of the theological school from 1884 to 1889, insularity of French Methodism and lack of interest in the overseas Methodist scene, a general lack of faith on the part of the whole population, the rural exodus, the disillusionment of small isolated, rural, aging congregations, the first world war, (difficulty of communication, loss of personnel through death on active service), and a general lack of nerve, together with dissipation of energy on inessentials.

Nevertheless, French Methodism produced some remarkable leaders. Charles Cook translated Wesley's sermons into French as a tool to aid him in the controversy with Reformed theologians over predestination. Matthieu Lelievre gave Wesley a high profile in educated French circles through his biography and writings on Methodist theology. Henri Guiton was another noted Methodist historian. So was Theodore Roux.

Side by side with French language Methodism, were a number of churches, particularly in northern France, for English-speaking Methodists. The most famous of these was the English Methodist Church at 4 rue Roquepine in Paris, a home away from home for many English-speaking people of Free Church persuasion from all over the world, and where I, myself, preached a trial sermon for ordination while studying, with a scholarship from the World Council of Churches, at the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Paris.

One of the most celebrated ministers of this church was the Rev. William Gibson, a francophile, whose work spilled over into the creation of French-language congregations. These existed side by side with the congregations of the French Conference till 1893 when they were amalgamated with the latter.

In 1870 when Paris was occupied by Prussian troops, Methodist services were maintained at rue Roquepine. Likewise in 1914, but during 2nd World War and the German occupation, services were suspended. This church has one of the finest organs in Paris. It was saved by its caretaker at a time when the plan was to billet German troops in the Church. She appealed to a young Nazi officer's love of music; the troops were billeted elsewhere and the organ was saved.

The merger of French Methodism with the reconstituted French Reformed Church took place in 1939. It seemed inevitable; the original hostility had been largely overcome; some Methodist workers had adopted the deliberate policy of working within the national Church; others had defected to it, seeing in it a more fruitful field of action. There had been a levelling off process--the Reformed Church became more evangelical--Methodism less of an evangelising movement and more of a Church with a settled pastoral ministry.

A few congregations, including one in Paris under ministry of Henri Guiton, remained outside the union.

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EDITORIAL

Thunder Bay, Ontario

Dear Friends of the W.M.H.S.:

This is written, as our Canadian friends put it, "on holidays" from our usual abode and activities in Stillwater, Oklahoma, USA. Our summer location results from my fortunate (providential?) choice of spouse, Jeanne LeCaine, born in what was then Port Arthur, Ontario. Her family were staunch members of the United Church of Canada. Thus, every summer, we have a place of worship that encourages us to meditate on church unions.

There is the United Church of Canada itself, result of the first large national church union of the 20th century. Canadian Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians, after devoting several decades of effort to the process, achieved their union on June 10, 1925. The denomination's shield and banner combine various Christian symbols -- the dove, the open Book, the burning bush, the Alpha and Omega -- with heraldic gold, blue and red tones into a pleasing and harmonious whole. The inscription, beside the church name, features the motto "Ut Omnes Unum Sint" (that they all may be one), thus incorporating Jesus' prayer in John 17: 21.

Then there is the worship experience. We seek out the LeCaine family's Trinity United Church, Methodist before the merger. We find that the congregation combines its summer Sabbaths with Saint Paul's United Church, a block further up the hill. (A wall plaque tells us that Saint Paul's was the site of an important Presbyterian assembly whose vote enabled the 1925 union.) One "local church" (a United Methodist term) is host for July's Sundays, the other for August's. The pastors occupy each other's pulpits with ease, the organists and office secretaries spell each other, and the members of the two congregations mingle happily in pew and at coffee-tea hour after the single service. At Labour Day (Canadian spelling) the two groups have a joint kick-off for the next year's activities, with a barbecue picnic at a favored inland lake. Then they resume their thoroughly -- and vigorously -- separate existences.

We readily sense the United Church's Metho-

dist background, even as our erstwhile former WMHS president, Glenn Lucas, is wont to emphasize (as in his article published in the latest issue of the Historical Bulletin.) Thus we sing hymns by Charles Wesley as well as by Isaac Watts, Felicia Dorothea Hemans, Fanny Crosby, Martin Luther, and St. Francis of Assissi. We use familiar tunes named "Mariners", "Terra Beata", "Hyfrydol", and "Sine Nomine" (R. Vaughn Williams). Trinity, having advanced an ecumenical step farther, uses the hymnary jointly prepared with the Anglican Church of Canada.

Moreover, we share in the United Church's witness in program and activity. The Sunday bulletin highlights mission in the urban scene, or with senior citizens, or in Africa. And the congregations, on July 26, 1987, jointly commissioned a couple to be lay teachers of English as a second language in a technological institute in China. Both pastors participated in the sending forth, as did a lay person representing Cambrian Presbytery; the congregations additionally pledged their support by prayer and precept for these missionaries.

Thus in these several ways we are mindful of our Methodist heritage and practice amid church union, even a thousand miles removed from our accustomed pew and altar.

An added personal note: we plan to renew our acquaintance with other Thunder Bay summer residents, including Dr. Lois Wilson, one of the presidents of the World Council of Churches; and with her spouse Dr. Roy Wilson, United Church member of the World Methodist Council's Executive Committee. In fact, Dr. Roy Wilson, when pastor of Chalmers United Church, Kingston, Ontario, baptized our grandson Robert. But that is another story.

In Christian bonds,  
Theodore L. Agnew  
1216 N. Lincoln St.  
Stillwater, OK, 74075, USA

FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

I have tendered my resignation to the Executive Committee. For thirteen years I have filled this position as a volunteer and have enjoyed

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FREE METHODISTS: REFORMERS AS REFLECTORS AND REACTORS  
by Dr. Lloyd H. Knox, delivered at Regional Conference, Asbury Seminary, Wilmore, Ky., USA, Aug. 9, 1984.

Historians are expected to evaluate and portray persons and movements within the matrix of their own historical period. Harsh judgment regarding Calvin's role in the Servetus affair must be tempered, for example, by understanding that "tolerance" was an attitude as yet unborn. And we should not sneer, smile perhaps, at Wesley's small book on medicine. I found in it a good source for healthy laughter. I recall that my mother had a large medical book, The Perfect Woman, written by a woman M.D. around the turn of the century. Our family found it immensely interesting and amusing. But it was full of insight regarding the state of medicine in that period and the attitudes of women. I found it helpful in my attempt to understand my mother's fear of pregnancy and things sexual.

We may, returning to Wesley, discard the outdated medical notions which he reflects. We cannot as readily dismiss his practical concern for his world parish. He wanted to help the poor and hence condensed for easy reading and wide distribution the medical wisdom of his day.

Any branch of the Methodist family may discover and discard quaintness found in the family tree. But we are enriched by the historical "search and separate" process if we will have it so. I recall assigning a clergyman the task of making selections from the writings of our leading founding figure. I wished to publish the best of Roberts' ideas. My clergy friend was appalled at some things he discovered and said, "Some things he wrote ought not to be repeated now." That may have been so, but each generation has not only the right but the obligation to evaluate and learn from their own roots.

Free Methodism began as a reforming movement hoping never to leave its mother. But it can be readily noted that history bears witness to the tendency among reform movements to reform too much. Some are surprised, certainly most Free Methodists, to find that Calvin as well as early Free Methodists banned musical instruments from worship. In this respect, Geneva must have resembled worship as I first experienced it. Free Methodists got around to reforming that part of their early reform by first permitting the use of one instrument and only one and finally opening the door to anything from Jew's harp to violin to organ. Parenthetically, some of us who have lived through these changes may be permitted to observe that we now take less personal responsibility for singing in the congregation. I no longer hear the exhortations to sing with both the "spirit and the understanding," nor am I treated to the leader lining a hymn, that is, reading it line by line for thoughtful consideration.

Happily, our founding leaders understood the ongoing need for change and renewal. They deliberately provided the means in the original constitution. They did not make it easy; they did make it possible. We may too easily join those who can find the faults of our predecessors. But the failures viewed from the vantage point of the lately come 20/20 vision should be fully considered in their historical context. Furthermore, we should appreciate the motive and what has enduring value.

#### A FREE CHURCH

The reforming motif, I believe, dominated our founding. To understand the nature of the reform envisioned it is necessary to see the founders as reflectors and as reactors. First, they reflected rather accurately social and political ideas which were gaining currency. Second, they reacted to change which they identified as decline in the parent body. So these early Free Methodists provided a mixed portrait. They were forward-looking and often radical in social and political thought. They were conservative in doctrinal concerns. They wished to maintain Methodism in what they viewed as the true Wesleyan pattern. In ecclesiastical polity they were seeking revolutionary change.

Faced with this seemingly contradictory reform movement, the designation "Free" comes to have overriding significance. In the years of my pastoral experience I moved from Southern Michigan to the old Genesee Conference to be pastor of its downtown Rochester, First Church. Here I was in the area where controversy and conflict and finally organizational separation began. I heard my members speaking of us as "The Free Church." "Methodist" was not used. It had been a longstanding custom in that area. I became newly aware of just how significant "Free" was in our denominational name. Indeed, the designation can only be understood, in its full meaning, in the light of social, political, economic, and ecclesiastical conditions and ideas of the time.

The founders, following in the train of Wesley but motivated and molded by things American, were keenly sensitive to the wide range of concerns gripping the minds of churchmen and citizens. They were socially and politically alert and sensitive. But there existed an equal concern and sensitivity about the perpetuation of the essence of Wesleyan doctrine. They were therefore bound to resist what they saw as signs of slackened commitment to the theological emphases of John Wesley from whom they took their cues. Coupled with doctrinal concern and part of the conservative mix was alarm regarding the shift in life-style to what was deemed "worldly" involvements, dress, & amusements.

#### Free Persons: Slavery and Masonry

Unless persons were free, institutions were in danger. A lack of personal freedom could only result in injustice and coercion. Slavery was an assault on the dignity of the individual for the benefit of the privileged. Masonry's invasion of church politics was dangerous because it bound

its members in secrecy. They were no longer free. And that very lack of freedom led to secret rather than open politics in the affairs of the church. It was essential that all persons be free if there was to be health in society, politics, or ecclesiastical matters. It was this logic, which the founders believed to be expressions both of a biblical theology and the growing concern for fully representative government, that gave impetus to the name "Free."

The advocacy of freedom was no mere ideology. The principle founder, B. T. Roberts, actively assisted in raising money in order to buy the freedom of slaves.<sup>1</sup> For a brief period he belonged to the Know-Nothing Party. He was attracted by its strong anti-slavery position along with its call for free and liberal educational institutions for all classes and sects. He saw the party as a means to assist in the struggle for human freedom but finally came to the conviction that this involvement was hindering his spiritual development.<sup>2</sup> However, he continued in his ministry of speaking and writing to advocate in strongest terms freedom for all persons. Zahniser, in Earnest Christian: Life and Works of Benjamin Titus Roberts, 1824-1893, notes that Roberts' editorials in The Earnest Christian gave encouragement to Lincoln to make "emancipation" an issue on a level with "union." In the May issue of the magazine, 1862, he wrote, "leaving slavery still in the body politic, is like mollient plasters over an eating cancer in the human body; they may hide something of deformity, and for a moment diminish acuteness of suffering; but the policy will only leave time for the cancer to deepen its roots, extend its area, and bring in increased suffering, with inevitable death. The only safe course is to cut out the cancer, dry up the thing."<sup>3</sup>

It seems clear that Lincoln was much more devoted to union than to freedom. However, when in the judgment of Lincoln the military situation made it possible to express a political view on the issue of freedom he did so. That moment arrived in the summer of 1862, in the same year that Roberts had made his appeal, when Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation Document. Roberts greeted the announcement with enthusiasm.

Roberts' writing consistently echo Wesley who wrote, "Give liberty to whom liberty is due, that is, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice."<sup>4</sup> Only six days before Wesley died he wrote to William Wilberforce urging him on in his reform activities. "Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it."<sup>5</sup>

The church was agreed in its posture. An excerpt from the 1866 Discipline is convincing. "The Golden Rule, Free Methodists hold, applies equally to the colored as to

the white race. The first Free Methodist Church ever organized was in St. Louis, a slave-holding city, and at a time when slaveholders were freely admitted to the churches generally. (Organized early spring 1859 more than a year before the formation of the denomination.) Yet they made non-slaveholding a test of membership, prohibiting, as they ever have done, 'the buying, selling, or holding a human being as a slave'."

In sharp contrast, the northern Methodist General Conferences of 1836 and 1840 took position against abolitionism and defined their churchly task as that of "spreading scriptural holiness" rather than to "divert Methodism . . . to questions of temporal import involving the rights of Caesar." The latter conference declared that owning slaves should not bar admission to any level of ministry. It refused to hear a minority report on abolition. The northern church placed institution above human freedom, even as the politicians usually placed union of the states above emancipation. Biographer R. D. Clark says of Bishop Matthew Simpson, "He approved abolishing slavery so long as it did not injure the institution of Methodism."<sup>6</sup>

Methodist churches both North and South had slaveholding members until the Civil War. Not until 1864 did the northern church vote in General Conference to "restore to its General Rules a clear-cut prohibition of slaveholding, and refer the same to the annual conferences."<sup>7</sup>

Leslie R. Marston, author of an interpretive history of our denomination, has documented the dominant concern of Methodist leadership in this period for the preservation of the great institution of Methodism and its fear of abolition sentiment as the destroyer of unity. He notes that despite the cautious and pragmatic approach to the slavery issue, disunity resulted. The Wesleyan Methodist Church is formed in 1843 as an abolitionist secession. This was quickly followed in 1845 by the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church South. The policy of compromise was also a factor in the 1860 formation of the Free Methodist Church.<sup>8</sup>

The Earnest Christian (V.1, August 1860, p. 260) carried a call for an organizing convention to be convened at Peking, New York, on the 23rd of August. It was a call for a "Free Church." Three items were identified as the basis for possible organization. Number three stated simply and directly read, "No slaveholding, and no connection with secret and oath-bound societies." The responding lay delegates were three times the number of clergy delegates. This convention did in fact formally organize the new denomination. Given the delegate distribution, it is no wonder that item two in the call read, "An equal representation of ministers and members in all the councils of the Church."

The founders embraced a holiness teaching free of pious passivity when faced with personal or social expressions of wrong and evil. They did not agree with those noted

holiness leaders who promoted holiness of heart and life but deliberately restrained followers from bringing the slavery issue into their religious pursuits and gatherings. Phoebe Palmer is a noted example of holy passivity. Dr. Nathan Bangs, president of the Ministers' and Laymen's Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church was another opponent of abolitionism and advocate of moderation regarding the slavery issue. A reporter for the Northern Independent (V.5, June 13, 1861) observed that even at that late date, "Methodist D.D.'s are tender of the feelings of slave-holders." Roberts labeled such holiness as "spurious." There were no prayers for the liberation of slaves nor testimonies against this "sum of all villainies" in the meetings of those promoters of holiness passivity. "Holiness," he wrote, "is not indifference. One who is truly holy does not feel that he has done his duty by simply abstaining from sin."

Marston in a special appendix to his volume of history provides examples of the intense and continuing social and political concerns in the early story of the "Free" Church. The annual sessions of the Illinois Conference, September 1865 following the Civil War, laments the assassination of Lincoln. A fascinating paragraph summarizes the course and end of slavery. "At first in the history of our country it was simply tolerated, but like every other sin it speedily claimed the right to exist, then it stood at the baptismal font, witnessed a good confession and was taken into the church; then it assumed the control of national affairs, and attempted the foul usurpation of power at the expense of right. Its power, its religious character, its right to exist are gone, and its presence is no longer tolerated in our land. We recognize the hand of God in our delivery and attribute all the glory and success to Him."<sup>9</sup>

The same conference demanded the vote for the freed slaves. It called for a constitutional amendment to guarantee to every person civil rights regardless of "his creed, condition or color." It called for a program to educate the freedman "morally, socially, religiously" to make amends for degrading acts of the past. It called for the removal of "the remaining spirit of slavery" by denying offices of power to those retaining that spirit.

The other issue affecting the freedom of persons and hence endangering institutions was oath-bound secret societies. Of primary concern was the Masons, since the founding leaders of Free Methodism felt they suffered at their hands particularly in the Genesee Conference of Methodism. Those who took the required oaths, it was believed, were more loyal to each other than to Methodism and its basic principles. Masonry, they believed played a large role in the expulsion of both laymen and clergy which made necessary a new denomination.

#### Free Seats

To freedom from slavery and secret oath-bound commitments taking priority over commitment to Christ and the church was added concern for the dignity of persons. The church withdrew that sense of dignity through the "pewed system."

Roberts' experience in evangelism in tough city areas led him to write in The Earnest Christian (January 1863), "It is an insult to God and humanity. God's house should be as free as his grace." The pewed system, he contended, was unscriptural. There should be "free" churches for the poor. Paupers' seats were often provided, but this drew attention to one's poverty and hardly enticed one to church or salvation. Pewed churches were referred to as "stock churches." in a letter to his father, Roberts said, "till our exclusive church system is abolished in this city we cannot do much towards infusing the spirit of Christianity among the masses."<sup>10</sup>

The call issued for the organizing convention identified "free seats" as one of the bases for organization. Discrimination on the basis of wealth was deplored. In some cases churches had been built by purchase of pews. In other instances rental became a means of financing the operation of the church. In either case the practice of purchasing or renting became a symbol of growing affluence. Complaints against the system were often coupled with expressions of dismay at an accompanying ostentation in dress. It may be parenthetically noted that a pewed system was a violation of an early Methodist rule which divided the seating of men and women. The historical course of the pewed church in American Methodism is irregular. But by 1852 it had been legalized.

Marston writes, "The Christian principle of freedom of rich and poor alike to gospel privileges, and as well the slave's claim to civil and political freedom, were soon to play an important part in the formation of the Free Methodist Church and would principally determine its name."<sup>11</sup>

#### Ecclesiastical Freedom

Marston states that the founders sought freedom from "ecclesiastical domination." They reacted to the extraordinary power of bishops; they reflected the current desire for representation in government. They felt they had suffered, both clergy and laity, at the hands of bishop- and clergy-dominated assemblies. The laity had lent support to the leaders of reform. They had been read-out of membership. It was logical that in any new organization these pious churchmen should be treated as equal partners in the enterprise of the church.

Experience had convinced the founders that it was an ecclesiastical disadvantage to promote lay representation. A speaker at the 1847 Methodist Conference at Philadelphia said, "I had as lief travel with the devil as with a lay delegation man."<sup>12</sup>

The year of the founding of the Free Methodist Church, the Methodist bishops at the General Conference recommended lay representation but in the form of a "separate house," according to Methodist historian Abel Stevens. Lay representation in all the councils of the church was part of the call to organize. Roberts wrote in The Earnest Christian (V.1, Sept. 1860, p. 291), "The deep interest and close scrutiny of the intelligent laymen who were present as delegates must have convinced anyone that that

church is a great loser which excludes them from her counsels." Before this, the only protection for the interests of laymen was the withholding of financial support. This was an approved practice within the Methodist system. However, it was hardly designed to secure justice for all parties and concerns. The Methodist Episcopal Church had denied representation privilege and responsibility from its inception in 1784. Twelve years after the founding of the Free Methodist Church, laymen were seated in a General Conference but not in equal numbers. Only two members were permitted from each conference. Limited lay representation in the Annual Conference came later, and only many more years later would full and equal representation be made possible.

The "Free church" under its restrictive rules made any change in lay representation as difficult as changing anything pertaining to doctrine, standards, itinerant ministry, and free seats.

Steps were taken in reaction to what was perceived as oppressive dominance to restrict or check clerical control at all levels of church administration. Bishops were not to be elected for indefinite periods. They did not assign clergy to pastorates. Their powers resided principally in their persuasive ability and the general respect accorded them as elected leaders. The title "Bishop" was denied to B. T. Roberts though later applied to the general superintendents.

It seems clear that the new denomination reflected the democratic mood prevailing in the country while it reacted against concentration of administrative power in leadership. The reaction stemmed also from the fact that the leadership was exclusively clerical.

#### Free Worship

Marston in From Age to Age a Living Witness includes, in "Appendix A. New School Methodism," the entire article on the subject written by the Rev. B. T. Roberts, A. M., and published in the Northern Independent in 1857. The article did much to precipitate the crisis which ultimately lead to the formation of the Free Methodist Church in 1860.

The article was a response to articles carried in The Advocate which had previously been called The Buffalo Christian Advocate, a change which Roberts noted as appropriate. It appears that this magazine carried the liberal views of a party in the Genesee Conference labeled "New School Methodists." They had written, "Christianity is not, characteristically, a system of devotion. It has none of those features which must distinguish a religion grounded on the idea that to adore the Divine character is the most imperative obligation resting upon human beings. It enjoins the observance of but very few sacred rites; nor does it prescribe any particular mode for paying homage to the Deity. It eschews all exterior forms, and teaches that they who worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Roberts answered that the Old School Methodists hold that, "'to adore the Divine character' is the most imperative obligation resting on human beings--that Christianity has all of those features that must distinguish a religion grounded on this idea. That he who worships God rightly, will as a necessary consequence, possess all social and moral virtues, that the Gospel does not leave its votaries to choose, if they please, the degrading rites of heathenism, or the superstitious abominations of Popery; but prescribes prayer and praise and the observance of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, 'as particular modes for paying homage to the Deity'; that there is no necessity for antagonism, as Infidels and Universalists are wont to affirm, between spiritual worship and the forms of worship instituted by Christ."

"Free" did not mean a lack of order in worship. The founders did, however, seek to be free from mere ritualistic formality, free from performance as an end rather than a means and open to spontaneity and sharing. Testimonies could punctuate any service along with the voiced "amen" or other verbal expression of praise and joy. Nevertheless, leaders could and did, as occasion required, call a halt to individualistic excesses.

It appears that the "peril of the pendulum" is always present in religious as well as social, economic, and political affairs. On one hand there is the peril of disorder and induced emotional response. On the other hand is the stultifying effect of elaborate, unyielding order along with the emotional appeal inherent in the liturgical which induces a desired mood rather than the outgoing of genuine feeling or passion. Neither whipped up emotions in a "free" setting nor induced moods in a "controlled" order points the worshiper to the proper source of emotional response. A sense of God's presence and comprehension of gospel truth providing ever new visions of grace should be sufficient to stimulate the emotions of the Christian worshiper.

That order and freedom of worship were the twin foci of the new church is shown by the full page given to the concern in the 1910 Free Methodist Hymnal. It is the first page.

#### Order of Worship

The following order is chiefly based on directions in The Free Methodist Discipline:

(Let all our services begin exactly at the time appointed, and let all our people kneel in silent prayer on entering the sanctuary.)

- I. Singing from The Free Methodist Hymnal, the people standing.
- II. Prayer, concluding with the Lord's Prayer, repeated audibly by all both minister and people kneeling.
- III. Scripture Lessons from both the Old and New Testaments.
- IV. Singing from The Free Methodist Hymnal, the people standing.
- V. Notices, followed by the Collection.
- VI. The Sermon
- VII. Prayer, both minister and people kneeling.
- VIII. Singing from The Free Methodist Hymnal, the people



standing.

IX. Doxology and the Apostolic Benediction (II Cor. 13:14)

Note: The foregoing may be abridged for afternoon or evening by omitting one of the Scripture Lessons; also by the omission of singing from the Hymnal after the final prayer.

The proper context for true worship, advanced by the founders, included buildings designed for both simplicity and comfort, kneeling for public prayer, bowing the head in reverence as one entered the pew, and a general attitude of worship in God's house.

Marston in his interpretive history, timed to coincide with our centennial, felt his church held a strategic position in the area of worship. He writes, "It maintains simplicity and earnestness, with restraint against undue liberty that sacrifices true devotion by exalting the flesh on the one hand, and maintains a vitality that resists the creeping death of ritualistic formalism on the other. There seems to be little danger now that the church will veer from its course into the extravagances of the former, but may it guard against the subtle pull of the liturgical current, and refuse to take on forms and symbols to induce the mood of worship while allowing the fire of devotion to die down on the altar of the heart. Only thus can it minister to the inner experience of cleansing and power in the individual, and insure simplicity of worship in the freedom of the Spirit in the congregation."<sup>13</sup>

In the matter of worship the Reformers were "reactors." They were reacting against the creeping formalism of the parent body.

#### Free Society

The Free Methodist movement represented a cluster of religious, social, economic, and political attitudes and concerns. In First Lessons on Money, Roberts aimed at economic reform. He had a front page quote from William Penn reading, "A man should make it a part of his religion to see that his country is well governed."

Roberts, with a master's degree and training in law, could hardly be expected to confine his concerns to things purely ecclesiastical. He did not believe that ignorance was bliss. He did not subscribe to religious passivity where the needs of persons were denied. He rejected the kind of spiritual commitment that closed eyes and minds to the world of daily life. He was utterly committed to education, believing both church and society needed enlightened, trained minds as well as evangelical hearts. Much of his energy went into the institutions of education launched by the young church, but especially the one which now bears his name, Roberts Wesleyan College. It began as Chili Seminary and then became Cheshbrough Seminary before **taking** its present name. Roberts would have read with approval the words of W.W. Sweet, authority on religious sects in America, when he wrote

that "there is a very close relationship between the history of higher education in America and revivalism."<sup>14</sup>

The pious and the practical combined in Roberts as it did in Wesley. The intertwining of the practical, the devotional, the social, the economic, and the political found one institutional expression in the founding of Chili Seminary. Roberts and his wife Ellen were personally and deeply involved here in the development of a "work-study program."<sup>15</sup>

Roberts was concerned that America be a free society--free from slavery and secrecy bound by oath. He stood for other freedoms. Marston observes that it was the "gilded age" of materialism and huge capitalist empires which failed to share with the poor.<sup>16</sup> Roberts believed a single gold standard played into the hands of capitalists and against the poor and debtors. He worked for the passage of laws in the interest of the people and which would not "favor the moneyed class and rich corporations." He was a bimetalist. He was active in organizing help for the farmers. He vigorously opposed monopolies and trusts. He echoed Wesley in his strong advocacy of social betterment. His ideas, as C.H. Zahniser has noted, are advanced in social and economic matters yet "are combined with an extreme conservatism in the field of religion."<sup>17</sup> But he was no narrow religionist. He prided himself on his own farming ability and often managed the Seminary farm. He was active in organizing the Farmers' Alliance in New York, argued against tariffs which were harmful to farmers while at the same time they protected those business and industry segments which were "organized." He was critical of the franchises giving special privileges to banks and railroads. He worked vigorously to remove unfair railroad rates imposed on farmers. He saw the problem of the farmer lay in their lack of organization. He saw the "organized" segments of the economy constantly able to secure economic advantage.

He opposed tight money policies and high interest, advocated free coinage of silver, believed the two great parties of the country were largely controlled by bankers and bondholders. The control was the result of effective organization. He concluded that effective organization was essential to secure justice to each segment of society. In The Free Methodist of Dec. 22, 1886, he declared that Wall Street was "directly in conflict with the interests of the great body of American citizens."

He offered an opinion regarding the causes of economic depression: over production (the seven-day work week), extravagance of the rich and the laborers, and pricing conspiracies. He contended all money should be issued by the national government and not by national banks.

In the same issue of the magazine noted he wrote, "The farmers, unorganized and undisciplined, are overpowered by money lenders though they greatly outnumber them." In the March 1889 issue he described farmers as the goose which lays the golden egg for the nation and the monopolists as "the masters who appropriated the golden egg." He thought the farmer was being "picked to death" by excessive taxes. He contended that the farmers should have income matching that of the manufacturing enterprises. He went so far as to advocate fighting



back with boycott and the private use of the spinning wheel and the making of their own clothes. He persistently inveighed against the monopolists since they "operate against the welfare of the community at large."<sup>18</sup> In his book Pungent Truths he wrote, "Our nation needs a Cromwell" who would apply the words of Dunbar written at the time of his last victory over the royalists: "Believe the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions. If there be anyone that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suites not a Commonwealth."<sup>19</sup>

It may be noted that Roberts advocated the ordination of women to the clergy, a clear indication of his opposition to discrimination in social and ecclesiastical affairs. It was some years before deacons' orders were voted for women and still more before elders' orders were available. His notable book, Ordaining Women, finally bore fruit.

In the quest for a free society it would appear the founders were reflecting the currents of their day and their prophetic-like understanding of society. They were likewise reacting against injustice and the lack of concern characterizing the mother church.

#### Free from Sin

Doctrine and life-style were important to the founders. The envisioned free society and free church depended on free persons. Persons were not genuinely free until free from the slavery of sin. A gospel of full deliverance was the essential doctrinal element in a wholistic concern for human beings.

The founders were convinced that the parent church had drifted both doctrinally and in matters of life-style. They gave clear expression to their doctrinal concern by adding two Articles to the twenty-five Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first was a statement on "Entire Sanctification"; the second was entitled "Future Rewards and Punishment." The latter was a response to the current trend toward Universalism.

It is the first Article that is pertinent to our discussion. It intended to convey a distinction between sanctification as the entire process from beginning to end of the Christian life and "entire sanctification" as crisis within the process. It held to two things important to the founders. First, that "entire" sanctification was God's work subsequent to justification and that it was instantaneous since it was the response of faith to grace.

The freedom envisioned did not remove the human element from the everyday life of believers. It pointed most clearly to the purification of motive, intention, and desire, leaving one still subject to the frailties of humanity in their physical, psychological, and social aspects. It was freedom to be truly human. It did not indicate a stop, a period, an end of sanctification as process, growth, and development. The entirely sanctified were on the way to holistic wholeness with joy and singleness of heart mind. The question Paul raised about himself and for all

of us, "Who will deliver me....," was also answered by Paul for all of us, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" "The old vicious circle of sin and death," as Phillips translates, has been ended by the "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (RSV).

Conclusion. The founding Free Methodists were primarily reformers. The first priority was the church itself. The focus was on the perpetuation of deep piety, simple life-style, free worship, and Wesleyan doctrine, with a special emphasis on "entire" sanctification and freedom from sin.

The next priority focused on concern for persons evidenced by advocacy of free persons, free pews, free society, a free economic system, and an open ecclesiastical system--open to the laity and free from excessive leadership control.

These "Free" reformers were reflectors and reactors. They reflected democratic contemporary currents which were manifested in social, political, and economic issues. They also reacted against the decline of doctrinal integrity and behavioral standards in the parent church. They reacted against formalizing tendencies prevalent in worship. They reacted against depersonalizing institutions of the day.

The founding "Free" reformers serve to remind us how we are influenced by the contemporary and of our responsibility to be influencers in our own social-religious matrix.

The name chosen for this new entry on the denominational scene was both pertinent and appropriate.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>C.H. Zahniser, Earnest Christian: Life and Works of Benjamin Titus Roberts, p.65.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 97-98.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>4</sup>J. Wesley, Works (Emory ed. 1853), Carlton & Phillips, N.Y.; v. 6, 286 et seq.

<sup>5</sup>J. Wesley, Letters, Epworth Press, London, v.8, 265.

<sup>6</sup>R.D. Clark, Life of Matthew Simpson, Macmillan Co., N.Y., p. 56.

<sup>7</sup>L.R. Marston, From Age to Age a Living Witness, Light & Life Press, Winona Lake, IN; p. 157.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 581.

<sup>10</sup>B.H. Roberts, Benjamin Titus Roberts, a Biography, The Earnest Christian Office, N. Chili, NY, 1900, p. 78.

<sup>11</sup>L.R. Marston, From Age to Age a Living Witness, Light & Life Press, Winona Lake, IN; p. 167.

<sup>12</sup>C.H. Zahniser, Earnest Christian: Life and Works of Benjamin Titus Roberts, p. 132.

<sup>13</sup>L.R. Marston, From Age to Age..., p. 358.

<sup>14</sup>W.W. Sweet, Revivalism in America, Charles Scribner's Sons, NY; p. 181.

<sup>15</sup>C.H. Zahniser, Earnest Christian, p. 3 of Introduction.

<sup>16</sup>L.R. Marston, From Age to Age..., p. 352.

<sup>17</sup>C.H. Zahniser, Earnest Christian, p. 3 of Introduction.

<sup>18</sup>B.T. Roberts, First Lessons on Money, The Earnest Christian Office, Rochester, NY, 1886, p. 128-129 and quoted by C.H. Zahniser.

<sup>19</sup>C.H. Zahniser, Earnest Christian, p. 262.

(DR. LLOYD H. KNOX IS PRESENTLY LOCATED AT BOX 253, R.D. 8, WARSAW, IN, 46580, USA.)

#### DISSERTATION

Dr. Arne-Jacob Kristoffersen, Sturegatan 10B, S-523 00 ULRICEHAMN, Sweden, has sent us a copy of his dissertation entitled "The Theology of Bishop Odd Hagen: One of the Presidents of the World Methodist Council (WMC)". It consist of 145 pages in English and was prepared as his thesis for M.A. at Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA. He is seeking assistance in having this printed.

#### FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY (Continued from page 1)

serving the WMHS. However without any office help the preparation of these quarterly bulletins have become a difficult chore. Although I am sure that the Executive Committee would have granted me the luxury of a secretary for such, I have tried to keep expenses at the bare minimum.

The Executive Committee has elected Dr. Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., as my successor. "Chuck" took my place back in 1982 when I retired as General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church. So once again he will be succeeding me in a position. However this time it will be a non-paying, voluntary office. With his experience and exposure to World Methodism and with a supporting staff he will be an excellent choice for serving the WMHS.

Beginning October 1, 1987, please address all communications for this office to him:

Dr. Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., Executive Secretary  
World Methodist Historical Society  
Box 127, Madison, NJ, 07940, U.S.A.

I want to thank all of you and the Executive Committee for support during these years. Also, I want to thank all responsible for allowing me to serve in this relationship. John H. Ness, Retiring Executive

#### AN INVITATION FROM ASBURY SEMINARY

Asbury has received a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts for a 3 year study of Wesleyan/Holiness tradition and its place in American evangelicalism and American culture. The title of the grant proposal is "Evangelicalism: An Alternative Perspective; Revivalism, Social Reconstruction and Mission in the Wesleyan/Holiness Tradition." The study will attempt to demonstrate the rich diversity which exists in evangelicalism. It is hoped that research will provide more historically accurate understanding of the term 'evangelical.' Goals of the study: 1. to review and evaluate the Methodist/Wesleyan roots of American revivalism, social reform and the mission of the church in American culture; 2. to determine where and how such factors translate into the character of contemporary Wesleyan movements as related to issues in American religion and life; 3. to identify the unique emphases in the Wesleyan tradition to help contemporary churches minister more effectively; 4. to suggest the structure and purpose of an on-going center for Wesleyan/Holiness studies at Asbury.

Applications are invited for 10 grants of \$1,000 each for travel and research to study 19th and 20th Century revivalism. A total of 30 grants over 3 years are projected. Recipients will present their results at a conference organized by the Project and papers will be considered for publication. The funds may be used in conjunction with other grants or scholarships. Apply before Dec. 15, 1987 for 1988 grants. Contact: Dr. Melvin Dieter, Director, Asbury Seminary, Wilmore, KY, 40390. The 1st consultation will be held June 10-11, 1988 at Asbury. This, the 1st of three such annual conferences, will focus on "American Revivalism and the Wesleyan Tradition." Proposals for submitting papers are welcomed.

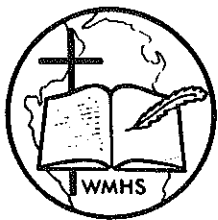
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#### HISTORICAL BULLETIN

World Methodist Historical Society  
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Published Quarterly



# HISTORICAL BULLETIN

## WORLD METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Volume 16

Fourth Quarter 1987

### EDITORIAL

In my report to the WMHS Executive Committee at Jamaica, September 1987, I characterized John Ness by quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson: "An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man." For nearly three quinquennia the essence of the World Methodist Historical Society has been the person of Executive Secretary John H. Ness, Jr. His varied activities clearly as he invited me, shortly before Nairobi, to permit my name to be proposed for editor:

I have prepared the camera ready copy, (he wrote), including a manuscript from one of the conferences and have the issue printed in Chambersburg. I then fold, staple, address and mail to the membership using the cards on hand. I have no secretary and sometimes get a little delayed, but I have been able to get out an issue each quarter. The costs of membership, earnings from modest investments, and the \$2000 annually from the Ruck Foundation investment keeps us solvent. No salaries, but we do try to cover expenses. And I hope it is worth the effort.

In addition to the above-listed essential services, John Ness has provided a most important portion of each Historical Bulletin, his column, "From the Executive Secretary." Here he has shared hopes and feelings, providing a running record of WMHS activities.

These are, however, merely the latest in a long series of historical services given by John Ness to our common Wesleyanism. Many of us have been privileged to work with him in his several terms as general secretary of the United Methodist Church's Commission on Archives and History. Here his responsibilities have included: producing the quarterly scholarly journal, Methodist History; looking after the process by which the United Methodist Church identifies and declares national historical shrines and landmarks, and cares

for those already designated; launching women's history; maintaining contact with historical commissions and societies in the annual conferences; supervising the creation of the United Methodist Archives; and consolidating varied historical collections from predecessor denominations, eventually locating these in the United Methodist Archives and History Center, Madison, NJ, on the campus of Drew University.

Still earlier, John Ness had for a decade served as historical officer of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, producing among other activities the book, One Hundred Fifty Years, a history of publishing in that predecessor denomination. Along the way he aided a generation of scholars by assisting in the production of the Encyclopedia of World Methodism (2 volumes, 1974); for this he contributed several important articles on churches of the EUB tradition, and he produced a union list of the annual conferences of those churches -- all very valuable sources.

Along with these activities, John Ness helped the WMHS create and bring to fruition historical convocations in connection with World Methodist Conferences at Denver (1971), Dublin (1976), and Honolulu (1981), as well as important regional conferences such as the one at Saint Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO, in 1974.

All told, in hailing John H. Ness, Jr., we are honoring one of the prime historical statesmen of our worldwide connection. Thank you, John, and best wishes to you and Naomi in your Pennsylvania retirement residence.

Theodore L. Agnew, Editor

P.S. John's address: P.O. Box 460  
Mont Alto, PA 17327  
USA

RESOLUTION HONORING DR. JOHN H. NESS, JR.

The officers of the World Methodist Historical Society, meeting in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, in connection with the meeting of the Executive Committee, World Methodist Council, September 21-25, 1987:

1. Take note of the retirement of Dr. John Ness, Jr., as Executive Secretary of the World Methodist Historical Society, after thirteen years of faithful service;

2. Thank John Ness for his many contributions to Methodist history and historians, especially in his service to the WHMS;

3. Commend to the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council the service of John H. Ness, Jr. and invite the Executive Committee to associate itself with these sentiments of thanks and best wishes, and to communicate same to Dr. Ness.

For the World Methodist Historical Society

James Udy, President

Charles Yrigoyen, Executive Secretary  
(Incoming)

ADOPTED BY VOTE OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,  
WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL,  
SEPTEMBER 25, 1987

WHS - WMHS (British Section) TO HOLD  
CONFERENCE IN YORK

The 1988 Wesley Historical Society - World Methodist Historical Society (British Section) Conference is scheduled for York, April 5-8, 1988.

This announcement made by WHS Conferences Secretary, the Rev. T. S. A-Macquiban, notes that the venue will be Heworth Croft, York (College of Ripon and York St. John). The cost of residential accommodations for the four days will be L70, which includes a non-returnable registration fee of L10. Non-residential attendance will be provided at L5 per day, plus the cost of meals (which should be ordered in advance.)

The conference theme is "Methodists and Society." Further details and booking forms are available from:

Rev. T. S. A-Macquiban, M. A.  
Conferences Secretary  
The Manse,  
Whitehill Road  
Holmfild, Halifax  
West Yorkshire HX2 9SS  
UNITED KINGDOM

WMHS (European Section) TO HOLD REGIONAL  
CONFERENCE IN SWITZERLAND

THE WMHS (European Section) will be holding its 1988 Regional Conference in Switzerland on July 11-15, according to recent announcements. (This revises earlier notice in HB, 3rd Qr 1986).

The place will be: Hotel Viktoria, CH 6086 Hasliberg Reutli, Berner Oberland, Switzerland. Cost will be approximately \$130 US (subject to adjustment caused by recent currency fluctuations), including lodging and meals.

THEME: The Methodist Churches in Continental Europe, 1912-1940. Papers scheduled cover topics including the career of Bishop John L. Nuelson, the relation of European Methodist Churches and Conferences with the general boards of U.S. Methodist churches, the European branch of the Evangelical Association (EUB) and its relation to America, the role of the European Methodist Churches in the ecumenical movement, and church government and structure in the European Branch of U.S. Methodist Churches.

For further information write: Dozent Dr. Michel Weyer, Bellinostr. 35, D-7410 Reutlingen, West Germany.

As noted elsewhere (in WMHS President James Udy's report to the Jamaica meeting), plans are being made to provide copies of papers in both English and German, as well as translation of the discussions (which will be principally in German).

REPORT OF WORLD METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
TO WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL (Executive  
Committee), Jamaica, September 1987 --  
 by James Udy, President

When, at Nairobi, the resolution to develop a closer link between the World Methodist Historical Society and the World Methodist Council was introduced into the Council, I heard someone near me say, "What is the WMHS?" Perhaps you have the same question.

The description of the WMHS contained in that Nairobi resolution is perhaps the briefest and best that I can give. It stated that "the WMHS is attempting, through research into Methodist history around the world, to assess the insights of John Wesley and Wesleyanism that can be used in shaping the present and future mission of the member churches of the World Methodist Council."

The WMHS Executive Committee consists of 30 people from different regions and groups within the Methodist family. Up till now meetings have been held whenever the World Methodist Council or its Executive Committee meets, or at the time of a regional conference. Some decisions, such as the recent appointment of a new executive secretary, are taken by a postal vote among members of this large committee.

For the past 13 years Dr. John H. Ness, Jr., past General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, USA, has been our secretary. Recently he has found it necessary to resign. The committee, through a postal vote, unanimously elected Dr. Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., Dr. Ness's successor as General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History, UMC, USA to this position.

The most important work of the WMHS is sponsoring Regional Conferences. Normally, these are held twice a year in different parts of the world. Sometimes we publish the lectures given at these Regional Conferences. For example, there is a volume of outstanding addresses given by scholars such as Albert Outler, Frank Baker, Harold Wood, and others in Australia several years ago.

This year between 18-24 May a second Pacific Regional Conference was held at Paerata College, New Zealand. Leaders of our churches in New Zealand, Tongoa, Fiji, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, and Australia gave papers reviewing the response to the Gospel in each of these countries. These papers have been prepared for publication and will be available within a few weeks. The very active New Zealand Wesley Historical Society is waiting to see how many of you would like a copy for a nominal price of about \$8-10. If you would like this review of Methodist witness in the Pacific, send your name to Charles Yrigoyen or fill in the form you are receiving by distribution.

Next year one regional conference will be in York, England in April and a second in Hasliberg-Reutli, Switzerland in July. The former is being held in connection with the British Wesley Historical Society and the latter with the European Methodist Churches.

We are trying an experiment in Switzerland by providing the papers and instantaneous translations in English as well as in German. Forty to fifty participants are expected from Europe. We can take twenty to twenty-five people from America, Britain, and other English-speaking countries. As the number is strictly limited we will be forced to close registrations as soon as we have twenty-five.

In 1989 the first regional conference will be held in Canada and the second in either Tonga or Japan. Initial approaches have been made in each of these places, but the WMHS has not made final decisions.

In 1990 the WMHS committee has decided to hold only one conference because we hope to draw Methodist scholars from around the world. This is the most ambitious and exciting program the WMHS has planned.

This conference will be held in Rome in conjunction with Roman Catholic scholars, particularly of the Benedictine Order. To date, three discussions have been held with the Abbot General of the Benedictines, Simone Elia Tonini. The theme of this conference will be "Roots of Christian Perfection, the 1600th Anniversary of Desert Spirituality."

WMHS REPORT TO WMC -- continued:

Topics will include a study of those 4th Century desert fathers who greatly influenced John Wesley, Macarius, Ephraem Syrus, Evagrius, and St. Benedict. You will recall that at the end of his life (1790) John Wesley, in writing to Robert Brackenbury, said, "The doctrine of Christian perfection is the grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists and for the sake of propagating this chiefly he appears to have raised us up."

The roots of this doctrine are in the writings of this fourth century Greek Father, Macarius. Wesley thought this work so important that he translated it from Greek, made it Volume I of his Christian Library (published in 1749), and persuaded the miners of Cornwall and the farm labourers of England to read it.

This not only nourished the spiritual life of John Wesley but was the seminal document for St. Benedict, as John Cassian, the main source of Benedict, drew heavily from it. It is, therefore, a fact of history that the Benedictines and Wesleyans drink from the same stream in the fourth century.

Present plans are that we will be housed in a monastery in Rome if we can find adequate quarters nearby for the ladies. Otherwise we will use the newly expanded Waldensian Conference Center in Rome. If you are interested further, let us know.

In 1991 the WMHS conference will be held immediately prior to the World Methodist Conference and Council, with at least one session planned during these sessions of the Conference in Singapore. The Committee is planning to hold future conferences in Africa, South America, Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union, and Ireland.

Other activities of WMHS include: The catalogue of the World Methodist Archives and Manuscript Collections. Dr. Homer Calkin has completed most of six of the eight parts covering Africa, Asia, Australia, the South Pacific Islands, Central America and the Caribbean, Europe, Great Britain and Ireland, North America, and South America. When this is completed it will be an invaluable source for scholars anywhere in the world studying Wesley and the development of the Methodist Churches.

Historical Bulletin, issued four times a year and intended to be an organ for sharing news and articles of interest about Methodism and its historical aspects. Since the presentation of the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies we have had some fruitful talks. Just as Chuck Yrigoyen was put on their committee, we have asked for a representative from the Oxford Committee and have received Bishop Ole Borgen. We need more material in order to serve the churches within the World Methodist Council more effectively.

- James Udy, President, WMHS

NEWS FROM BRITAIN

EDITOR'S NOTE: These news items are gleaned from several sources: Wesley Historical Society Proceedings, 46:2 (May 1987) and 46:3 (October 1987); Methodist Archives & History Newsletter 1988 (British Secretary WMHS Mr. John H. Lenton and others); letter from Mr. Lenton, October 30, 1987; letter from the Rev. William Leary, BA, Methodist Connexional Archivist, July 15, 1987. The Editor expresses gratitude to all who provide information for this periodic column, and invites similar submissions from other Sections of WMHS for future issues.

PERSONALIA. Congratulations are expressed to three members of the Wesley Historical Society Executive Committee on their recent obtaining of University higher degrees: General Secretary Mrs. E. Dorothy Graham, Ph.D. Birmingham; Conferences Secretary the Rev. T. S. A-Macquiban, M.A. Bristol; At Large Member Mr. John A. Vickers, Ph.D., Birmingham.

THE METHODIST ARCHIVES, MANCHESTER. As of September 1987 the Archives has a new Archivist, Miss Alison Peacock, M.A., John Rylands University Library, Deansgate, Manchester M13 9PL, UK. Miss Peacock is assigned full time to Methodist Archives related work, an enlarged responsibility. For the year September 1987 to September 1988 the Rev. William Leary, B.A., will be working under his new title, "The Methodist Archives Liaison Officer," overseeing the work of the local Records Offices, oral history, and outside work as required by the responsible committee. Said committee will appoint a successor to begin in September, 1988 as Methodist Connexional Archives Liaison Officer.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL LECTURE.

The Society's Annual Lecture was delivered on June 29, 1987 by the Rev. William Leary, then Archivist and about to become Methodist Archives Liaison Officer. Mr. Leary's topic was "Man of One Book: A Study of John Wesley's Preaching." Copies of the Lecture are available for £1.50 plus 24p. postage from Mr. Leary (17 Charles Avenue, Scotter, Gainsborough, Lincs DN21 3RP, UK); or from Mr. A. A. Taberer, FRCO, Publishing Manager, North Lodge, Bunbury, Cheshire, CW6 9QR, UK).

THE OLD RECTORY, Epworth, Doncaster, S. Yorks DN9 1HE, UK, anticipates many visits in consequence of the 1988 Aldersgate Celebration and other observances, reports Warden Peter W. Greatham.

WMHS (British Section) reports these officers: Vice President Dr. John A. Vickers, B.A., B.D., 87, Marshal Avenue, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 2TW, UK; Secretary John H. Lenton, M.A., MPhil, 21 Vineyard rd., Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 1HB, UK. (Mr. Lenton reports many informative items through the above-mentioned Newsletter, for which, special thanks.)

ALDERSGATE OBSERVANCE

During eight days in May 1988 (18th through 26th) Methodists from all over the world will be celebrating the Aldersgate 250th anniversary. Included will be many members and officers of the World Methodist Historical Society.

We remember, of course, that on May 24, 1738, John Wesley recorded in his Journal: "In the Evening I went very unwillingly to a Society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a Quarter before nine, while he was describing the Change which God works in the Heart thro' Faith in Christ, I felt my Heart strangely warm'd. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for Salvation: and an Assurance was given to me, that He had taken away my Sins, even mine, and saved me from the Law of Sin and Death."

The 1988 celebration will climax in a religious service at St. Paul's Cathedral on the anniversary Day, May 24, at 5:00 p.m. Invited guests from World Methodism will number 2,500; Dr. Donald English is the announced preacher for the event, which is expected to be attended by "a Very Important Person from Britain" who cannot at present be specifically named.

Other events will include a rail pilgrimage to the Golden Triangle of Methodism, including York, Epworth, Bristol and Oxford plus several days in London. Pentecost Sunday in the New Room at Bristol will be a special feature. We shall look especially to the Rev. A. Raymond George, President of the Wesley Historical Society and Warden of the New Room, to "bring its history to life for us," in the words of the North American Program Booklet.

For further information about the Aldersgate observance and associated events, write Dr. Joe Hale, General Secretary, World Methodist Council, P.O. Box 518, Lake Junaluska, NC 28745.

The General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church has published a booklet of resources on celebrating Aldersgate. It includes liturgical, bibliographical and informational material. The cost of the 64-page booklet is \$4.00 (U.S.) plus shipping. Order from the General Commission at P.O. Box 127, Madison, NJ 07940.

JOHN WESLEY SERMONS -

-- a Note by Theodore Agnew

Subscribers to the Wesley Works (Bicentennial/Oxford Edition) received a special treat about Christmastime 1987 with the arrival of the concluding volume of John Wesley's Sermons.

While this cannot be a formal review of the Sermons, surely it is not inappropriate for the Editor to hail the event with ringing acclamation. The four volumes include the definitive canon of 151 sermons, with



JOHN WESLEY SERMONS -- continued

copious headnotes and footnotes, all showing results of the careful editorial eye and pen of Dr. Albert C. Outler, Wesley scholar nonpareil.

Accolades likewise are due to Editor-in-Chief Frank Baker, whose decades of devotion to the cause have now reached this important milestone. Baker's care in establishing the preferred Wesley texts, with variant readings, comes through in the nearly hundred pages of explanation in Appendix A. Gratitude in equal measure should go to printers and publishers, particularly to Abingdon Press, which brought the resources of the United Methodist Publishing House to the support of this, the century's major project in Methodist writings.

This editor also records his pleasure (as a reader of fine print and "back material") at the wealth of information in the appendices and indexes that conclude Volume 4. It is fitting to notice the gratitude expressed by Editor Outler to Dr. John A. Vickers, member of the Executive Committee of WMHS, for the "amplitude and exactness" of the "multiple indexes for the unit as a whole."

Other scholarly appendices note "Sermons Attributed to Wesley" and "Sermons Abridged from Other Authors," both bearing initials of Richard P. Heitzenrater. Wesley's Sermon Register is sampled in a brief appendix prepared by Wanda Willard Smith. Three appendices (totaling 35 pages) list the sermons three ways -- as ordered in this edition, as produced chronologically, and in alphabetical order. Page A. Thomas provides a 75-page Bibliographical Index, while 37 pages list Scriptural references.

A General Index of near 50 pages (with a page of errata to Volumes 1-3) conclude the volume.

WMHS REGIONAL CONFERENCES 1986-1991

EDITOR'S NOTE: We offer this list of WMHS Regional Conferences for 1986-1991, partly for the historical record, and partly to alert our members to planned activities in the years ahead. We shall try to keep you informed as new details become known.

1986 July 23 Worldwide Conference, in connection with World Methodist Conference, Nairobi, Kenya.

THEME: Bicentennial of Methodist Missions  
Papers were published in Historical Bulletin, 4th Q 86 (Agnew), 1st Q 87 (Kulah).

1987 MAY 18-25 South Pacific Regional Conference, Wesley College, Paerata, Auckland, New Zealand.

THEME: Ministry, Mission, and Culture in the South Pacific, a Methodist Perspective (See detailed account on page 3.)

1988 April 5-8 British Section (Wesley Historical Society), College of Ripon and York St. John, Heworth Croft, York, UK

THEME: Methodists and Society  
Write: Rev. T. S. A-Macquiban  
For address see page 2.

1988 July 11-15 European Section, Hasliberg-Reutli, Switzerland

THEME: The Methodist Churches in Europe, 1912-1940

Write: Dozent Dr. Michel Weyer  
For address see page 2.

1989 June 11-14 North American Section

1989 To be set Pacific Regional

1990 Summer Worldwide Conference in Rome

THEME: Roots of Christian Perfection

1991 July 24-31 World Conference with WMC.

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