

# METHODIST HISTORY

April 2011

Volume XLIX  
Number 3



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Robert J. Williams, Editor

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

I am pleased to announce that the process has begun to digitize all back issues of *Methodist History*. It will take about two years for the staff of the General Commission on Archives and History to complete the 49 years of issues. The first two years of the publication are nearing completion and all current issues are available through the commission's web site, [www.gcah.org](http://www.gcah.org). About a year ago the Commission purchased a book scanner to aid in the digitization of materials that are of direct interest to the Commission or the denomination. Staff has already begun scanning *New World Outlook* and its predecessor magazines for the General Board of Global Ministries. We are excited about what this capability will mean for making accessible much material. I am also pleased that the librarians at United Methodist schools of theology have been working on digitizing hundreds of pre-1923 imprints of important works on Methodist history. These are available through Internet Archive at <http://www.archive.org/details/americanmethodism>.

When I met with the Search Committee almost six years ago, I mentioned as part of my vision for the position of General Secretary was increased access. The availability of *Methodist History* on line and the digitization of all back issues helps to realize a part of that vision.

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This month, April, marks the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War or the War Between the States, depending on what part of the United States in which you may reside. To help recognize this anniversary of such a tragic moment in the history of the United States, the Methodist Library of Drew University and the General Commission plans to present an exhibit in the display area of the Archives Center at Drew of artifacts and documents related to Methodism in the Civil War era. I reviewed the available index of *Methodist History* and took note of the several articles published over the years around Civil War topics including one I published in July, 1983, on New Jersey Methodists during the war years. I would encourage our readers to consider the possibility of writing on some topic concerning any of the predecessor denominations or other Wesleyan traditions and the Civil War and submitting the work for consideration by our editorial staff and board. A recent book that I have not finished yet but may be of interest is *God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* by George C. Rable. Its 400 pages of text and extensive bibliography make it a definitive work on this subject. One cannot overlook William Warren Sweet's work of 1912, *The Methodist Episcopal Church and the Civil War*, but there is much still to add from the other Wesley and German Pietist churches.

Robert J. Williams