

ASBURY, BISHOP FRANCIS



*F*RANCIS *A*SBURY'S
*L*AST *J*OURNEY

By
ELMER T. CLARK

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Francis Asbury started on his last journey in 1815. It was the forty-fourth year of his traveling and he had already covered a quarter of a million miles on horse and in wheeled contrivance. Sixty times he had crossed the eastern mountains along the primitive trails first traversed by the aboriginal tribes, carrying religion, morals, and the genius of culture to the advancing frontier.

For this a grateful people would later place him on his horse in bronze in the nation's capital, the country's President would declare him "entitled to rank as one of the builders of our nation," and the United States Government would ask that his papers be found, edited and published along with those of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and sixty others famous in history.

Where Did It Start?

From whence did Asbury start on this last ride? We cannot tell. Where does a circle begin? Where is the top of a ball? Asbury was always going, always on the round of his circuit from Maine to Charleston, and there was no beginning and had been none since 1771.

So ceaseless was his round that only two months before his death he wrote to Joseph Benson in England to send letters for him "to any part of the United States." Any postmaster in the land knew that Francis Asbury would soon pass and claim his mail.

He had come up from the Carolinas and Maryland in the Spring and in June of 1815 he was in New England. Then he turned back towards the South, after holding the New England Conference at Unity,

Massachusetts. He went through Wilbraham, Boston and Cambridge to the fine home of Freeborn Garrettson at Rhinebeck, New York. Garrettson was the young preacher who "rode off like an arrow" to summon the preachers to the Christmas Conference where Asbury had been ordained Bishop more than thirty years earlier. He had married Catherine, daughter of the noted Judge Livingston, who had enjoyed a close friendship with George Washington; Garrettson was a preacher all his life and never accepted the customary stipend for his ministry.

Asbury passed rapidly through New York and New Jersey to Philadelphia. There he had landed forty-four years ago, and there in old St. George's, which is still active, he had first preached in the New World. He went to the home of Thomas Haskins, who had attended the Christmas Conference and was one of the first editors of Asbury's documents. Then he went on to Martin Boehm's near Lancaster. That old saint was a founder of the United Brethren and his son William was a noted Methodist preacher who often traveled with Asbury.

In the adjoining county lived another dear friend whom he did not see. Mrs. Rebecca Grace of Coventry Hall often entertained Washington when he was at Valley Forge; she would not marry Benjamin Franklin but he asked her to sit by his side when he died and point him to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

Proceeding across the mountains Asbury visited a camp meeting near Zanesville, Ohio, and on the fourteenth of September he reached the conference at Cincinnati.

Through The Southeast

But let us concentrate in the South, which Asbury loved and where Methodism has always been strongest—to which he went thirty times in thirty-one years, where he spent most of the winters, and where at last he died by the side of the road on which he lived.

John Wesley Bond, the loyal and loving man assigned by the conference to accompany Asbury, went with him from Cincinnati through Lexington and Shakertown in Kentucky to Middle Tennessee in October of 1815. There lived the McKendrees, at Fountain Head, the present Portland, one of whom was also a Bishop; there he buried the little son of Dr. James McKendree, the Bishop's brother, married their sister Frances to Nathaniel Moore, one of his preachers, and baptized Francis Elizabeth Mabry. Two weeks later, John McKendree, the father of the family, died, but the two Bishops were then well on their way to South Carolina.

The widow of Learner Blackman, a noted preacher, lived near Fountain Head, and Asbury went to see her. She had been married twice and would marry again—and then in her fine home at Nashville, Mrs. Elizabeth Ellison kept a "bishop's room" for McKendree. But when Asbury visited her the last time she was Mrs. Blackman. "Ah! sad state of human frailty," he exclaimed. "The body of the first husband rests in a tomb near the dwelling; the body of the second may yet float in the Ohio."

Those were strange words, for Asbury had just come from Cincinnati and should have known that Learner Blackman's body had been recovered from the Ohio in which he had been drowned in June and was resting in the church yard at the rear of the Old Stone Church, the present Wesley Chapel there. But Asbury was old and failing rapidly.

His Last Conference

Asbury went on to his last conference, at Bethlehem Meeting House, a log house with eight corners four miles south of Lebanon, in which the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, would later find its origins. But the feeble old saint could do little. He preached a sermon in memory of his colleague, Bishop Thomas Coke, the great missionary who had been buried in the Indian Ocean the previous year, and he ordained the deacons. But he could not make the ap-

pointments: "My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop McKendree—I will take away my feet."

Because the road was better that way, Asbury went by way of Crab Orchard and Kingston to Knoxville while McKendree went through the Cherokee Indian country. The two were to meet at Charleston for the South Carolina Conference two days before Christmas.

Bond drove the failing Bishop in his little chaise through East Tennessee by way of Newport to Western North Carolina. Five years previously he, with McKendree, Henry Boehm, and John McGee of camp meeting fame, had gone across the aboriginal Cataloochee Trail by way of the present Lake Junaluska and Clyde, where he stayed in the home of Jacob Shook, which still stands and where the old 1798 society, founded by Samuel Edney and the first in that area, is now called Louisa Chapel. But he could not undertake that difficult crossing in 1815.

In Familiar Territory

On the Tennessee-Carolina border Asbury was in familiar territory. He had visited John O'Haver's camp ground in Cocke County and travelled Philip Hoodenpile's road from Hot Springs to the Tennessee line, and he was concerned for Hoodenpile's soul. He stayed at Barnett's (or Barnard's) tavern, where he had dosed the landlord and cured him in 1809; now there was fiddling and drinking there, and Asbury delivered his testimony and cleared himself of the publican's blood.

The chaise labored over the mountain from Marshall to Buncombe Court House, now Asheville, where Daniel Killian usually entertained him in the house which still stands, where the Asbury Methodist Church flourishes, and where a road marker has been erected. Then he inched along to William Mill's and Samuel Edney's near the present Hendersonville.

Grandfather Mills had been hanged at King's Mountain and the son escaped only because the captors found an exhorter's license on his person. Nellie Mills had married Samuel Edney, the first

preacher appointed to travel west of the Blue Ridge and whose church at Edneyville survives; a marker of the Methodist Historical Society recites his story.

Asbury was to meet McKendree at the Charleston Conference, so John Wesley Bond drove him through Saluda Gap into South Carolina. Here he was also at home, as he had been in Buncombe. He stopped with Father Staunton on the Saluda near Greenville and at the Glover's near Calhoun Falls in Abbeville County. From there he struck for the Georgia line, hoping to reach Samuel Rembert's, who had removed from the hospitable and famous Rembert Hall in Sumter County to Wilkes County, Georgia, where all the early conferences in that state were held. He reached the line at Glover's but his weakness forced him to turn back. He went to Thomas Child's at Cambridge near the present Ninety-Six.

Asbury's Journal Ends

On to Charleston!

Asbury crept along to Dr. Moon's in Newberry County, who gave him digitalis, then to Hezekiah Arrington's near Pomaria, and to Mrs. Means who lived across the Broad near Monticello in Fairfield County, and where Bond preached in the kitchen. He could make but slow progress through this familiar country where he had friends everywhere. Three nights he stayed with the Arthurs, two with Alexander McDowell, one at Colonel Hutchinson's, who was "like myself—broken to pieces." He crossed the river at Columbia.

And there Asbury's famous *Journal* came to an abrupt end, on Thursday, December 7, 1815. "We met a storm and stopped at William Baker's, Granby," he wrote, and then the quill fell from his hand and the record closed forever.

Granby is no more, but it was once prominent enough to be visited by the first President of the United States. It was at the head of navigation on the Congaree, opposite Columbia, a mile below the present town of Cayce. In an open field the diligent searcher may find an old stone marker with a chis-

eled inscription: "Site of Granby. Laid out in 1735. Seat of Lexington County, 1785-1798. Seat of Lexington District, 1804-1821. Visited by George Washington, 1791."

There are no other contemporary remains. The very next year Granby closed up shop and sold the court house to the Presbyterian Church in Columbia. The father of Woodrow Wilson was its pastor when the future President was fourteen years old.

Tracing the Journey

Asbury's movements between that day at Granby and March 24, 1816, when he turned up at Richmond, have never before been traced. They can be pieced together only by the study of cognate documents. He could no longer write his *Journal* and half the state lay between him and the conference at Charleston, but the amazing man pushed on. He did not reach the conference and he never saw McKendree again.

He had a regular route through that part of the state and we know where his friends lived and with practical certainty we can follow him. Near Orangeburg Court House lived the widow of his old friend General Rumph, and Asbury went there. Recuperating his strength, he proceeded to the home of Squire Eccles on Cypress thirty miles north of Charleston. He could go no further.

McKendree held the South Carolina Conference alone, but Asbury, reposing at the Squire's, received daily reports from his colleague. At this conference the last remnants of William Hammett's schism, "a few whites and a considerable number of colored people," returned to the fold.

The Virginia Conference was to meet at Raleigh, North Carolina, on January 24th, and McKendree went northward to meet Asbury at that place. Asbury started also, and reached John Whetstone's near St. Matthew's in Calhoun County, seventy miles from Charleston. Here his feebleness was so extreme that he seemed to have partaken of his friend's hospitality for two or three weeks.

John Mason, the Presiding Elder, was now with him, and at Whetstone's the Bishop dictated to Mason on January 15, 1816, a long and bewildering letter to Joseph Benson, twice president of the Conference in England and the famous editor of the *Methodist Magazine*, in reply to an invitation from the British Conference to visit the Mother Church. In this important document Asbury denounced Thomas Rankin, referring to him as "Diotrephes," who on his return from America had slandered Asbury and sowed seeds of distrust against him in the mind of John Wesley. Asbury told McKendree that he wanted this letter to be read to the General Conference, which was not done.

Here also he wrote his valedictory address to the General Conference of 1816, headed "On the Santee 70 miles above Charleston," where Whetstone lived.

The dying Asbury went on. The next lap took him to Rembert Hall, his much-loved retreat at the Rembert settlement in Sumter County. William Capers—later to be a Bishop but who was then located—saw him there in January and asked him for an appointment, "I am a dying man," replied Asbury, "or I would give you one. I will never see another conference in Carolina. You had better wait for your Quarterly Conference to recommend you to a Presiding Elder." Capers said that this was a sore disappointment but there was no alternative.

From Rembert Hall Asbury went eastward to Port's Ferry and turned northward to Marion. Joseph Travis was headmaster of the Marion Academy and Asbury spent several days and nights with him "in the early part of the year." Travis knew the end was near, and he reported that when recovering from a paroxysm of pain the old man would shout aloud, "Hallelujah, Hallelujah!" and declared that "my only hope of heaven is in the merits and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Travis said there was some prejudice against Asbury because of the anti-slavery clause in the General Rules, but he regarded Coke as the real author of the trouble. "In all the conversational and epistolary intercourse that I have had with Bishop As-

bury," he wrote, "not one item was ever hinted to me in favor of Abolition from the good old man."

The Bishop urged Travis to give up the school and re-enter the itinerant ranks, which Travis did at the very next conference.

He Reaches North Carolina

From Marion the party passed into North Carolina. Asbury could not reach the conference, but he was in Raleigh in February and spoke to the society in the home of the eldest son of Dr. John King.

Memories must have crowded the mind of Asbury. John King, medically educated in England, had preceded him to America by two years, and had stood on a horse-block in front of a blacksmith shop at Front and Center Streets to preach the first Methodist sermon in Baltimore the year before Asbury landed. He married the daughter of Colonel and Senator Benjamin Seawell and located in 1781 to settle on land bought in Halifax County from Gabriel Long, the man who gave the first money for Methodist education in America. He later acquired large acreage near Raleigh and moved there; his grave was nearby and there lived Mrs. Perry his widow. His son, Joel, was the brother-in-law of Green Hill, and when that famous man moved to Tennessee, Joel King lived in the house near Louisburg where was held in 1785 the first Annual Conference after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But Asbury could enter none of these things in his *Journal*.

Too late for the conference at Raleigh, Asbury set his heart on the General Conference which was to assemble at Baltimore on the first of May. Surely he could make the trip in two months! But he did not.

He went to the home of William Williams near Louisburg—near the Green Hill House, now a shrine of Methodism. There in an earlier day Coke had objected to the passage of Jesse Lee's character because Lee attacked his sermon on slavery—but Coke was forced to withdraw his objection and

apologize. Here on February 29th John Wesley Bond reported to Bishop McKendree that Asbury was a little better, but still very feeble.

The Bishop now entered Virginia, although Bond opposed his attempt to reach Baltimore because he knew it was not possible. On March 4, 1816, they were at the home of Matthew Myrick in Brunswick County. Bond had not dispatched his letter to McKendree, and he opened it here to enclose another letter and one from Asbury himself. These letters dealt mainly with sending missionaries to the German population, and Asbury suggested that Presiding Elders Robert R. Roberts and Henry Boehm be exchanged because the latter preached in the German tongue. This could not be done because Roberts was elected as the Bishop to succeed Asbury on the fourteenth of May.

Preaches His Last Sermon

With amazing fortitude the dying Asbury went to Richmond. He could neither walk nor stand, but he insisted on preaching and would not be dissuaded, saying that he must again deliver the gospel message in this beloved city. Bond gently lifted him from the chaise and placed him in a chair, and he was thus carried into the old church on Franklin and Nineteenth Streets. Seated on a table and supported by pillows he preached his last sermon. He spoke nearly an hour, with frequent stops to gasp for breath, on "He will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

The rest is known history and can be read in Hollingsworth's account at the end of the *Journal*.

At a snail's pace Asbury crept on towards Baltimore, advancing scarcely ten miles a day. Six miles south of Spottsylvania his strength failed utterly and Bond carried him in arms into the cabin of George Arnold, an old friend. Two days he lingered, declining a physician who could do nothing or even arrive in time, calling the family around him for Brother Bond's little service, unable to swallow barley water, lifting holy hands in token of complete victory.

Then "as he sat on a chair, with his head reclined on the hand of brother Bond, without a struggle, and with great composure, he breathed his last." Francis Asbury, greatest of the Circuit Riders, had gone to join the other Immortals, trying in the gathering mists of death to take up a missionary collection.

"The brave pilgrim's journey is over. The greatest itinerant of the ages has come at last to the end of the Long Road, and behold there is a House at the end of the Road, and a light in the window and a welcome. At last the Man without a home has found his Home."

McKendree was ill with rheumatism in the home of Dr. Henry Wilkins, an old friend who lived between Baltimore and Philadelphia, when Bond's messenger came with the news: "Our dear father has left us, and has gone to the Church Triumphant. He died as he lived—full of confidence, full of hope—at four o'clock this afternoon, Sunday, March 31, 1816." There was a funeral, attended by a large concourse of people from the neighborhood, and he was buried there at Arnold's where he fell.

Removed to Baltimore

But Asbury's travels were not over. On the first day of the General Conference the male members of the church in Baltimore presented a petition for the removal of his body to that city. The Conference agreed, thanked Brother Arnold "for his attention to our venerable father," and appointed Bond to supervise the removal.

Asbury was brought to Baltimore on Thursday, May 9th, to the house of William Hawkins, and the General Conference adjourned to attend his funeral on the following morning.

Baltimore might have been called the headquarters city of American Methodism. There the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed, there Asbury had been elected and ordained, and there all the General Conferences save one had met. But none of Asbury's previous visits to the city were so impressive or honorable as his coming in death.

The whole General Conference and an immense throng of citizenry assembled at Light Street Church, from whence the body of the great leader was taken to the Eutaw Street Church. McKendree headed the "vast procession," followed by the General Conference and the people. Among the marching mourners were Jesse Lee, Asbury's opponent, who was to follow his chief in six months and eventually to rest by his side, William Black, the British fraternal delegate who had come down from Canada to the Christmas Conference and had witnessed Asbury's ordination there, and Henry Boehm and John Wesley Bond, who had been his travelling companions. McKendree delivered a brief oration and the "Prophet of the Long Road" was interred in the vault of Eutaw Street Church. A noble epitaph was placed over the tomb and there he reposed for nearly forty years.

In 1854 the body was removed to the God's Acre of Mount Olivet Cemetery where rest the remains of other stalwarts like Jesse Lee, Robert Strawbridge, Reuben Ellis, Wilson Lee, John Haggerty, and Bishops George, Emory, and Waugh.

Faithful to His Charge

Thirty-two years had passed since Asbury had been ordained Deacon, Elder, and Superintendent on three successive days in this city of his final rest. On that occasion Bishop Thomas Coke, fresh from the holy hands of John Wesley, told Asbury that a good bishop "husbands every golden moment, picks up every fragment of time, and devotes his little all to the service of his LORD. He looks with deepest contempt on filthy lucre, and is perfectly satisfied with the 'Riches of CHRIST.'" "Oh thou Man of GOD," charged Coke to the new Bishop, "be not thou ashamed of the Testimony of our LORD, but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the Power of GOD. Endure hardship as a good Soldier of JESUS CHRIST. Do the work of an Evangelist, and make full proof of thy Ministry. And thy GOD will open to thee a wide door

indeed, which all thine enemies shall not be able to shut. He will carry his Gospel under thy direction from sea to sea, yea, perhaps, from one end of the Continent to the other."

Francis Asbury had been faithful to that charge and the success of his ministry had fulfilled that prediction. He had exemplified literally the conception of the good Bishop, for he had looked with contempt upon filthy lucre and was satisfied with the riches of Christ.

For forty-five years he was a man without a home; there was not even a rented room which he could call his own. His home was the saddle and the open road, and he ate and slept wherever he happened to be at the time. He slept beneath the trees on the hard ground, in the carousing taverns, in one-room filthy cabins with numerous others and even with animals; he also stayed in the great homes of the rich and the mansions of Governors, but in his *Journal* he drew no comparisons between them.

He surpassed Wesley by travelling 270,000 miles, and he averaged a sermon a day for nearly half a century. When he reached these shores there were a dozen lay preachers and a thousand "members in society"; when he died there were 700 preachers and 214,000 communicant members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He held 224 conferences, ordained 4,000 preachers, and saw the increase of Methodists outstrip the growth of the population five to one.

This was the preacher who was known as "the man who rambles America" and of whom it was said that he was "the most familiar figure on every road." His enemies called him a tyrant but the results of his administration answered them. He was attacked, but the armor of his character and influence turned every arrow. There were schisms in the Church, but they came to nothing. Across the intervening years American Methodism has had many great leaders, but in administrative and executive genius, in self-abnegation and evangelistic influence, none has quite attained the stature of Francis Asbury.

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OF THE JOURNAL AND LETTERS OF
FRANCIS ASBURY

Edited by

ELMER T. CLARK

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assisted by a corps of Consulting Editors and

Regional Research Editors

The *Journal* of Bishop Francis Asbury has been out of print for more than a hundred years and is unknown to most Methodists. It has never been annotated. The Letters of Asbury have never before been collected.

These basic documents of American Methodism are now being published in a Standard Edition. This is the greatest Methodist historical project of the generation.

The forthcoming work is under the sponsorship of the Historical Publications Commission of the United States Government, the World Methodist Council, and the associated Methodist Historical Societies of the world. This is the highest sponsorship ever accorded to any Methodist publication.

It will be published in the Western Hemisphere by the Abingdon Press of Nashville and New York, and in the Eastern Hemisphere by the Epworth Press of London. The first two volumes should be ready for delivery in the autumn of 1956.

World-Wide Acclaim

The work has been acclaimed in advance by Methodist leadership of the world:

Dr. W. E. Sangster, London, former President of the British Conference, Secretary of the Home Mission Department: "An event for historians and ecclesiastics alike."

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Bishop
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In The Making of
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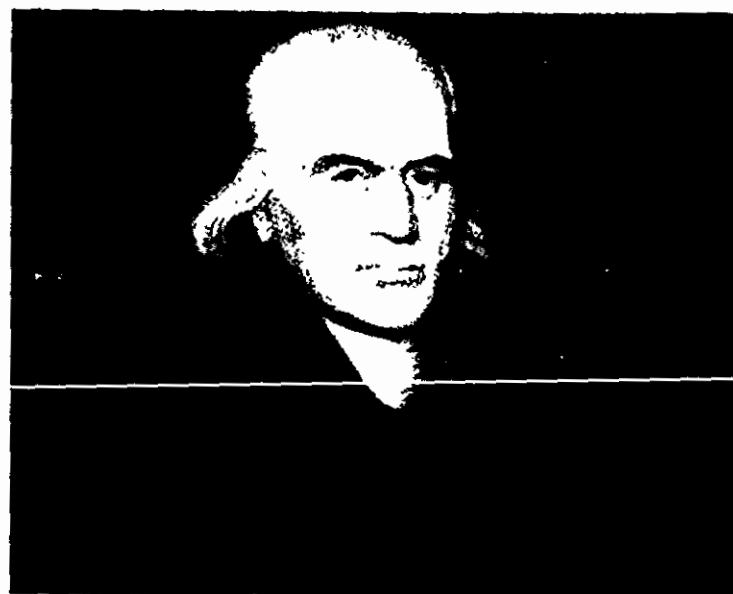
**by
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of the arrival of Asbury in America

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FRANCIS ASBURY 1745-1816
(The John Paradise portrait of Asbury at 63)

Reared at Great Barr, near Birmingham in England, Francis Asbury was converted at fifteen, and became a Methodist Local Preacher in 1762. He entered Wesley's full-time ministry in 1767 and volunteered to come to America in 1771. He alone of Wesley's "Missionaries" remained in America during the Revolutionary War. Elected Bishop of The Methodist Episcopal Church at the organizing Christmas Conference of 1784 Asbury was ordained Deacon and Elder by Thomas Coke, assisted by the Elders whom Wesley had ordained and sent to America and by Asbury's friend Philip William Otterbein, founder of the United Brethren in Christ. Asbury never married. Under his administrative oversight American Methodism developed its characteristic features. He held nearly all the Conferences until 1816, ordained practically all of the early Methodist preachers, and appointed them to their Circuits. He manipulated the new denomination in a superb strategy of expansion so that he may rightly be called "the Father of American Methodism."

BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY IN THE MAKING OF AMERICAN METHODISM

The Nature of John Wesley's Movement

Methodism arose as a system of spiritual nurture under the leadership and oversight of John Wesley. In his annual Conferences, starting in 1744, Wesley gradually developed his *Rules for the United Societies* which he published in his Larger Minutes as a discipline for his Societies. These Rules set up following provisions: The preaching anywhere a hearing could be obtained of the gospel of the Free Grace of God to all who would repent and believe; the organizing of those who "manifested a desire to flee from the wrath to come" into Classes with a Class Leader; the organizing of these Classes or Societies into Circuits ministered to by Lay Preachers raised up by Wesley as his "Helpers"; the Class Meeting in which the members witnessed to their spiritual experiences and growth in grace, and in which the Christian life and morality were enforced by witnessing, encouragement, rebuke if needed, and sometimes by expulsion; regular attendance was mandatory and candidates or seekers were admitted to the Class Meeting only once or twice before joining or being shut out. Quarterly Meetings of the Class Leaders and members of Circuit were held under the oversight of the Helper or Circuit Rider in which the spiritual examination of the Class Leaders was made; Circuit busi-

ness conducted; and preaching, prayer meetings, and a "Love Feast" would be held. Wesley, himself, itinerated constantly in these Circuits, raising up and appointing the preachers, authorizing the construction of Chapels, seeing that the provisions of the discipline were adhered to, insisting that his Societies were a Movement within the Church of England, and cooperating with evangelical clergymen wherever possible. He admitted candidates to be his Helpers On Trial at his annual Conference sessions, and, if they proved acceptable in their Circuit ministry, received them into Full Connection.

This system of spiritual discipline was devised by Wesley as a vehicle for his doctrine of Free Grace or Arminianism. Basically this was a reaction against the prevalent Calvinism of the times with its emphasis upon the doctrine of Election or Limited Grace, and the spiritual inertia of the Church of England. Wesleyan doctrine, by the time of the emergence of American Methodism, had been formulated in three main sources. They were: the four volumes of Wesley's *Sermons*, published in 1746, 1748, 1750, and 1760 containing the 44 "standard sermons"; Wesley's *Notes Upon the New Testament*; and *The Larger Minutes*. To this was added, in the 1770's, John Fletcher's *Checks on Antinomianism*.

The Problem of Transferring this System of Spiritual Nurture to the British Colonies in North America

The primary task of the first two decades of American Methodism was that of transferring the

essentials of this Wesleyan system of Doctrine and Discipline to America. The effective instruments of God in making the transfer were Thomas Rankin and Francis Asbury.

As is well known the first American Methodist Societies were raised up in Maryland, New York, and Philadelphia in the 1760's under the leadership of three of Wesley's Local Preachers, Robert Strawbridge, Philip Embury, and Thomas Webb, acting on their own initiative. The appeal to Wesley for preachers in 1768 laid a burden on the heart of the founder of Methodism as it raised the question — how could the system of spiritual nurture evolved over three decades in England be successfully transferred to the British Colonies in North America? Wesley clearly saw that the transfer was, basically, a matter of competent leadership. For three years, from 1769 to 1772, he seriously considered coming to America himself to oversee the Movement that had sprung up here.

When Boardman and Pilmoor were sent to America in 1769 Boardman was placed in charge as "Assistant." Asbury volunteered "for America" at the Conference of 1771 and arrived at Philadelphia on October 27th of that year. He had traveled Circuits in England for five years and had been admitted to Wesley's Itineracy as a "Helper" in 1767. Born in 1745 he was 26 years old when he arrived on these shores 200 years ago.

Asbury quickly perceived that the Circuit system was not being followed by Boardman and Pilmoor. As early as November 19, 1771 he said: "I remain in New York, though unsatisfied with our being both

in town together. I have not yet the thing I seek—a circulation of preachers . . . I am fixed to the Methodist plan . . . My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think that I shall show them the way." We see his hand in the events of 1772 with the establishment of the first Circuits around New York and Philadelphia, with Boardman's contact with the Strawbridge Methodism in Maryland and with his preaching tour in New England as far as Boston, and with Pilmoor's year long tour into the south reaching as far as Charleston, South Carolina.

Captain Webb went to England to the Conference of 1772 seeking the appointment of a strong disciplinarian for the Methodist Work, and Wesley appointed Thomas Rankin to take over as his "General Assistant" in America in 1773. On October 10, 1772 Asbury received a letter from Wesley naming him as "assistant" for America, replacing Boardman until the coming of Rankin. Under Rankin's administration during the five years until 1778 the Wesleyan Rules and Doctrines were effectively established, the number of Circuits was increased to 15, the number of preachers to 36, and the membership in the Societies to 6,968. Asbury worked diligently under Rankin's supervision, but he became increasingly unhappy with his superior because of his authoritarian methods. The achievement of Rankin and the other Wesleyan itinerants in effectively establishing the Wesleyan Discipline in America in the five years from 1773 to 1778 was the foundation upon which Asbury built when he fell into command of the Movement on this side of the Atlantic.

How the solving of the Near Schism of 1779-1780 placed Asbury in command of American Methodism

The period from 1778 to 1782 was crucial for American Methodism and a division of the Movement over the question of the administering of the sacraments by the Itinerants was narrowly averted under Asburian leadership. It was the prevention of this near schism which set Asbury in command of American Methodism and commenced his annual itinerating over the entire Movement in this country.

Seen in the light of history the impact of the Revolutionary War upon infant American Methodism was providential. It forced the Americanization of the Movement and raised up the great leader who was to guide it for the next thirty-seven years.

Rankin had administered the work in an Annual Conference session, beginning in 1773, and by some itinerating among the Circuits. By 1777 Wesley's tory position had rendered his English preachers unacceptable, and it was expected that by the end of the year they would all have returned to England. At the Conference of 1777 on May 20th farewells were said and Rankin named a committee of five American preachers to superintend the work. These men were: Philip Gatch, Edward Dromgoole, Daniel Ruff, William Glendenning, and William Watters. By the time of the Conference session held in May 1778 the twenty-nine young American preachers were bereft of leadership. All of Wesley's preachers had returned to England except Asbury

and he was "shut up" in Delaware. On March 13, 1778 he wrote in his *Journal*, "I was under some heaviness of mind. But it was no wonder: three thousand miles from home — my friends have left me — I am considered by some an enemy of the country — every day liable to be seized by violence, and abused. However, all this is but a trifle to suffer for Christ, and the salvation of souls. Lord, stand by me!"

The departure of so many of the Anglican clergy during the Revolution denied the sacraments to the Methodist people, many of whom had availed themselves of this privilege, and increasing pressure was being brought for the Methodist Itinerants to administer them. This was a departure from the Wesleyan Rule that the preachers were unordained laymen and could not administer the sacraments. This had been an issue in Maryland from the earliest days when Strawbridge had administered the sacraments without ordination, and the Methodist revival in Virginia in 1775 and 1776 had made it an insistent issue in that region.

By the time of the Conference session in the spring of 1779 this issue brought about a division in emerging American Methodism. After a few weeks of persecution in the Spring of 1778 Asbury was cleared of suspicion of disloyalty and began to give strong leadership to the Methodism on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake in Maryland and Delaware. Being informed of the probable action of the Virginia preachers, he called a Conference of the northern preachers at Judge Thomas White's on April 28, 1779. Seventeen preachers, including Asbury, accepted the authority of this Conference. To

the question, "Shall we guard against a separation from the Church, directly or indirectly?" the answer was given, "By all means." This Conference also asserted that Asbury should act as "General Assistant in America."

The southern preachers met in Conference at the Broken Back Church in Fluvanna County, Virginia on May 18, 1779. When the question of administering the sacraments came to a vote 18 out of the 27 preachers present voted to change the Rules. A presbytery of four men, Philip Gatch, Reuben Ellis, Thomas Foster, and Leroy Cole was set up to ordain each other, and then to ordain as many of the preachers as wished to administer the sacraments to Methodists only. These men administered the sacraments in the southern Circuits during the next year, much to the satisfaction of the people.

By the spring of 1780 Asbury felt it to be safe to leave his wartime sanctuary in Delaware. At the Conference of the northern preachers held in Baltimore under Asbury's presidency on April 24, 1780 action was taken disowning the Virginia brethren as "no longer Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley and us until they come back." Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson and William Watters were then sent to the Conference of the southern preachers held at Manakintown, Virginia on May 9th to try to heal the division. After much prayer and heart-searching the southern preachers agreed to suspend the administration of the ordinances for one year. A condition of this agreement was the provision that Asbury lay the problem of the need of the sacraments by American Methodism before John Wesley, and that he travel through the southern Circuits explaining the Methodist Rule to the people.

A background factor prompting this compromise by the southern preachers was the trend of the war in 1780 pointing to the probable disestablishment of the Anglican Church in America.

From April 12, 1780 to April 24, 1781 Asbury made his first supervisory tour of the Circuits, covering about 4,000 miles in Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. In the Conference of 1781 thirty-nine of the preachers signed an agreement "to preach the old Methodist doctrine, and strictly enforce the discipline, as contained in the Notes, Sermons, and Minutes published by Mr. Wesley, as far as they respect both preachers and people, according to the knowledge we have of them, and the ability God shall give; and (are) firmly resolved to the discountenance a separation among either preachers or people." Only one of the preachers refused to sign this agreement. Then in the Conference of 1782 it was agreed to "erase the question respecting the ordinances."

Thus we see it was the decision of Francis Asbury to remain in America, and his leadership in settling this near schism over the Rules respecting the administration of the sacraments, which made possible the emergence of The Methodist Episcopal Church as a united body.

The Americanization of the Wesleyan Movement — Creation of the Methodist Episcopal Church

The next five years, 1782 to 1787, saw the Americanization of the Wesleyan Movement in this coun-

try. The Conference of 1782 reaffirmed and expanded the authority given to Asbury by the Delaware Conference of 1779 by inserting the question in the Minutes, "Do the brethren in Conference unanimously choose brother Asbury to act according to Mr. Wesley's original appointment, and preside over the American Conferences and the whole work?" with the answer "yes." It was not until December 24, 1783 that Asbury received a letter from Wesley naming him General Assistant in America. The failure of John Wesley to provide for the leadership of the American portion of his Movement until more than five years had elapsed after the return of Rankin can only be explained by the conjecture that Wesley's distrust of Asbury was being fostered by the influence of Rankin. It is clear that Asbury came into the leadership of American Methodism by the action of the American preachers in Conference assembled, and not by the appointment of John Wesley.

The manner in which Asbury and the American preachers received Wesley's provision for Methodism in this country in 1784 further sets forth the Americanization of the Movement. With the achieving of American independence, and the disestablishment of the Church of England in this country, the problem confronting John Wesley, from his point of view, was how to give to American Methodism the ecclesiastical authority and organizational polity and leadership that would enable it to function in the new nation and provide for the Methodist people in every way, including provision for the ordinances of the Church. He seemed to feel that an accommodation might be achieved that would permit a continued union with English Methodism. Thus the *Discipline* of the Christmas Conference,

acting on the instructions of Wesley as conveyed by Coke, has as its second question: "What can be done to the further union of the Methodists?" With the answer: "During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the gospel, ready in matters belonging to Church Government, to obey his commands. And we do engage, after his death, to do everything that we judge consistent with the cause of religion in America and the political interests of these States, to promote and preserve our union with the Methodists of Europe."

Wesley ruled English Methodism with autocratic authority. He considered the actions of his Conferences as advisory only. He made the final decisions and expected them to be carried out. This is the way Rankin ruled the Movement in this country in the 1770's. But under Asbury the Conference came to have decisive authority. Thomas Coke, Richard Whatcoat, and Thomas Vasey, Wesley's emissaries to America, landed in New York on November 3, 1784, and met with Asbury at Barratt's Chapel in Delaware on November 14th. Coke's *Journal* illuminates the decision making authority of the preachers under Asbury's administration. "After dining in company with eleven of our preachers at Sister Barratt's, about a mile from the Chapel, Mr. Asbury and I had a private conversation concerning the future management of our affairs in America. He informed me that he had received some intimations of my arrival on the continent, and as he thought it probable that I might meet him that day, and might have something of importance to communicate to him from Mr. Wesley, he had therefore collected a considerable number of the preachers to form a council; and if they were of the opinion that it would be expedient im-

mediately to call a Conference, it should be done. They were accordingly sent for, and after debate, were unanimously of that opinion. We therefore sent off Freeborn Garrettson, like an arrow, from North to South, directing him to send messengers to the right and left, and to gather all the preachers together at Baltimore on Christmas Eve."

Thus we see the Christmas Conference was not called by the authority of John Wesley. He had not envisioned the preachers as having authority over the new Church. Apparently he had intended that his Superintendents should ordain whom they chose and that they should be the sole ecclesiastical rulers, under himself, of the Methodism that had arisen in America. But the organizing Christmas Conference was called by a Council of the Preachers, after debate. And when the Conference met from December 24, 1784 to January 2, 1785 its decisions in creating the new Church were made, after debate, by majority vote. Asbury refused the Superintendency unless he was elected by the Preachers, and it was done. Coke was also elected. And the men to be ordained Deacons and Elders were elected on the recommendation of a Council that had assembled at Perry Hall for a week before the Conference. Wesley's *Larger Minutes* were studied by the Council at Perry Hall, revised to fit the American scene, and adopted by the Conference by vote as the first *Discipline* of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Articles of Religion and the Ritual sent over by Wesley were adopted unchanged thus retaining the spiritual authority of Methodism's founder in these vital matters. But Wesley's temporal authority was almost eliminated.

The final step in this Americanization of Method-

ism as an independent Church occurred in 1787. The plan for the Conference of 1787 was set to meet in three sections: Salisbury, North Carolina on May 17th; at Petersburg, Virginia on June 19th; and at Abingdon, Maryland on July 24th. On Coke's second trip to America he brought instructions from Wesley that a General Conference should be called to meet at Baltimore on May 1, 1787; that Richard Whatcoat was appointed to be a General Superintendent along with Asbury; and that Freeborn Garretson was to be sent as Superintendent to Nova Scotia. The Baltimore section of the Conference was changed to the May 1st date. But when the preachers assembled they rejected Wesley's appointments of Whatcoat and Garretson. Moreover the preachers rescinded the action of the Christmas Conference in which they had accepted Wesley's authority as his "sons in the gospel." John Wesley never understood American democracy, whereas Asbury had come to see the necessity of governing by the consent of those governed.

Thus as the young republic was shaping its instruments of government, a new Church, providentially equipped in doctrine, leadership, and organization, had been raised up to meet the spiritual needs of the expanding new nation. American religion was at low ebb, the influence of the Great Awakening in the forty years before the Revolution having been largely dissipated during the war. The first census of 1790 returned only eight percent of the population as members of any Church.

Asbury an Itinerating Field Marshal of the Lord

From the beginning of Asbury's administration he kept constantly before him the single objective,

"to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land." In his annual tours he sought to visit every segment of the expanding Church every year. He was not just an itinerating "prophet of the long road." Rather he was a field marshal of the Lord as he commanded the Methodist Circuit Riders in a superb strategy of Church expansion, following the pioneers in the dynamic expansion of the young United States of America. Beginning in 1780 he tried to visit every Circuit each year; then, beginning in 1788, his annual tours reached every Presiding Elder's District each year; then, after the creation of the Annual Conferences in 1796, his travels were designed to get him to each Conference session. From 1785 until 1816 there were two hundred fifty District and Annual Conference sessions and Asbury presided at all but fourteen, which he missed only on account of illness. He ordained practically all the early preachers and appointed them to their positions. He was an able administrator and one of the frustrating things about his *Journal* is that he seldom recorded his plans and we have to arrive at them by observing the development of the Church under his leadership.

Evolution of the governing General Conference, and the Annual Conferences

The Christmas Conference authorized the ordination of eighteen of the American preachers as elders. With Coke, Asbury, Whatcoat and Vasey this made a body of twenty-two elders. Two were sent to Canada and two to Antigua in the West Indies. Georgia and Charleston were created as new Circuits and each of them was assigned an ordained elder as the itinerant. The preachers assigned to

New York and St. Mary's were elders. Ten of the Americans plus Whatcoat and Vasey were assigned over groupings of Circuits to make possible the administration of the sacraments in the Quarterly Meetings. Asbury quickly began to use them as administrative assistants and thus the Presiding Eldership, now the District Superintendency, was born.

The Christmas Conference was an organizing Convention. It made no provision for an over-all governing body for the new Church. Asbury attempted to meet this need in 1789 by calling the Presiding elders together in a Governing Council. This Council met annually for only two years. Since it was a creature of the Bishop, denying the authority of the preachers, it met with opposition, and, in 1792, the first quadrennial General Conference was called.

In like manner the Annual Conferences arose under Asbury's oversight as an expedient means of administering the work and making the appointments of the preachers as the Church expanded numerically and geographically. Thomas Rankin held the first Conference of American Methodism in 1773 and it met in one session annually until 1779. It met in two sections from 1779 to 1784, and in three sections from 1785 to 1787. Starting in 1788 Asbury began to increase these sectional Conferences, scheduling them to meet according to his planned itinerary. During the year he would often deviate from the plan to meet changed circumstances. Thus for 1788 six Conferences were planned and eight were held; for 1789 eleven were planned and ten were held; for 1790 fourteen were planned

and twelve were held; and for 1791 thirteen were planned but only ten were held. The Conferences for 1791 were all crowded into the Spring of the year to accommodate the itinerary of Dr. Coke, who was in the country that Spring, and to allow Asbury time for his first tour of New England. For 1792 seventeen Conferences had been planned and fifteen were held, with an adjustment of dates placing the Baltimore session October 30th, followed by the first General Conference on November 1st.

During the 1792-1796 quadrennium Asbury began combining these sectional Conferences for greater administrative facility in making the appointments. Thus in 1793 twenty Conferences were scheduled but only fourteen were held; for 1794 fourteen were scheduled and ten were held; for 1795 the number scheduled was reduced to seven and all seven were held; and in 1796 seven Conferences were scheduled but nine were held.

The General Conference of 1796 created the six original Annual Conferences with geographical boundaries. They were: New England, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Virginia, South Carolina, and Western. In 1800 the New England Conference was divided into New England and New York. These were the seven original Annual Conferences with geographical boundaries. The Conferences held before 1796 were looked upon by Asbury as District Conferences held regionally for the convenience of the preachers, with himself supplying the connecting link by his annual tour in which he presided over them consecutively, conducted the business, and ordained and appointed the preachers. Apparently he carried the records of the admission of preachers,

the ordinations, the reports of statistics, and the appointments with him for the year, turning them in at Philadelphia as the report of the denomination for the year. The appointments are not listed for Districts within Annual Conferences until 1802, and the statistics of members are first listed within Districts of Conferences in 1803. It was not until 1805 that admissions of preachers and ordinations were listed by Conferences.

There was agitation during the 1804-1808 quadrennium for the creation of a diocesan episcopacy with the election of a bishop for each Conference. Instead the 1808 General Conference elected William McKendree as a General Superintendent to serve along with Asbury, adopted the Restrictive Rules generally regarded as the Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and created the delegated General Conference. We see the strong hand of Asbury in these actions. Only two additional, Annual Conferences were created during Asbury's lifetime. In 1810 Asbury by his own action created the Genesee Conference to administer the Circuits that had grown up around Lake Ontario, both in New York State and Canada. The 1812 General Conference confirmed this action, with some criticism of Asbury for exceeding his authority in creating the Conference. That first delegated General Conference also divided the original Western Conference into Tennessee and Ohio Conferences.

Thus the General and Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church were evolved between 1785 and 1812 under the guiding hand of Bishop Asbury as administrative agencies to meet the needs of the expanding Church.

The Early Methodist Circuit System

The key structure in early American Methodism was the Circuit. By the time of the Christmas Conference its characteristic features had been developed. The normative Circuit consisted of twelve preaching places for a one-preacher two-week Circuit, or twenty-four preaching places or Classes for a two-preacher four-week Circuit. The preaching places were located in homes from five to ten miles apart. Asbury would send one or two men into an area to create a Circuit. Preaching was carried out six or seven days per week. In the two-preacher arrangement the men followed each other at two-week intervals. If a Class could not be organized at a preaching place after two or three services the place would be abandoned and a more favorable location would be sought in the same neighborhood. After the arrangement of the Circuits under Presiding Elders, beginning in 1785, Quarterly Meetings of the Circuits were held. These were two-day meetings held on a Saturday and Sunday presided over by the Presiding Elder. The collections of the Classes would be reported and the temporal business of the Circuit conducted. A love feast, the administration of the sacraments, and preaching would mark these high times in the life of the Circuit. Asbury directed his itinerary to attend as many Quarterly Meetings as possible. The preachers would report to the Bishop in the Conference sessions, and where the prospects warranted it Asbury would divide the Circuit and put two preachers on each part expecting them to organize new Classes and come up with a full Circuit at the next Conference. This was an important technique of expansion and evangelism in early Methodism.

After the beginning of the Campmeeting as an interdenominational sacramental service on the western frontier in 1800 Asbury recognized its value as an evangelizing agency. Writing to Thornton Fleming, Presiding Elder of the Pittsburgh District, on December 2, 1802 Asbury said: "I wish you would also hold Campmeetings; they have never been tried without success. To collect such a number of God's people together to pray, and the ministers to preach, and the longer they stay, generally, the better — this is field fighting, this is fishing with a large net." When Asbury came through western Pennsylvania in August 1803 he found Fleming had taken his suggestion seriously and had arranged the first Asbury-called Campmeeting near Brownsville, Pennsylvania. So useful was the Campmeeting to early Methodism that by 1812 the summer Quarterly Meeting of nearly every Methodist Circuit was held as a Campmeeting. This greatly accelerated the creation of new Circuits as the converts opened their homes for preaching and the organizing of new Classes.

Another factor making for the rapid spread of Methodism, especially on the western frontier, was the migration of Methodist families westward. They would send a request to Asbury for the establishment of preaching in their homes in the new settlements and the Bishop would send preachers. Thus Methodism blanketed the nation. By the time of Asbury's last Conferences, in 1815, 167,978 white and 43,187 negro members were reported. The 704 preachers were appointed to man 53 Districts in 9 Annual Conferences with 402 Circuits. Counting 12 Classes for the 202 single preacher appointments and 24 Classes for the 200 two-preacher Circuits gives approximately 7,224 Methodist preaching

places by the time of Asbury's death. It is little wonder that the American Church historian Philip Schaff called the Methodist Circuit System "the best army of conquest for the Lord that has ever been devised." This System may well be called Asburian since his was the primary guiding influence in its development.

The secret of the effectiveness of the System lay in the three-fold conditions under which the Itinerants labored. These conditions were: 1. The equal pay of all the Itinerants; \$64 per year at first, then \$80 in 1800, then, after 1808, \$100. 2. The limited tenure of a preacher on a Circuit, six months at first, and set a maximum of two years in 1804. And 3. The unlimited power of the Bishop to make the appointments. Asbury carefully guarded this power, seeing it as the means of maintaining the unity and flexibility of the Circuit System to meet the needs of the expanding Church in the expanding nation. This power of making the appointments was an issue in every General Conference from 1792, when it was the occasion of the O'Kelly schism, until 1828, when the "reformers" who contended for a limitation on this power withdrew to form the Methodist Protestant Church. Asbury didn't trust either Coke or Whatcoat with the making of the appointments, and relinquished it to McKendree only in limited fashion after 1808. To the charge of autocracy leveled against him in this matter Asbury doggedly and humbly contended that he held the power of the appointments closely for the good of the Church.

Asbury's Strategy of Geographical Expansion

To understand the manner in which Methodism expanded to occupy the nation we need to be aware of Asbury's strategy of geographical expansion. The region of Methodist origins was the Atlantic seaboard from New York City to northern North Carolina and inland to the Appalachian Mountains. The rest of the nation to the Mississippi river was occupied in five Asbury-directed expansion thrusts.

After the Treaty of Fort Stanwix with the Iroquis Indians, in 1768, legal settlement was opened west of the mountains as far as the Ohio river and down the Ohio to the mouth of Tennessee. Settlers flooded into the region of southwestern Pennsylvania, western Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. The first Asbury-directed expansion of Methodism into the region was in 1783. That year he appointed Jeremiah Lambert to form a Circuit on the headwaters of the Holston, and sent Richard Owings, Strawbridge's first Local Preacher, to lay plans for a Circuit among relatives and friends in western Pennsylvania who had emigrated from the Baltimore region. The next year Asbury appointed two preachers, John Cooper and Samuel Breeze, to organize the original Redstone Circuit in western Pennsylvania and western Virginia. Between 1784 and 1815 Asbury made twenty tours through this northern section of the western expansion of Methodism. In 1788 he made his first trip into the Holston valley in the southern section of this westward expansion. His first trip into Kentucky was in 1790, and by the last tour of 1815 he had included this Kentucky-Tennessee region in twenty-

three of his annual tours. After the Treaty of Greenville, in 1795, with the western Indians, opening the region west and north of the Allegheny and Ohio rivers to legal settlement settlers flooded into the Northwest Territories and Circuits began to be organized among them as early as 1797. By 1816 there were 109 Circuits west of the mountains reporting 50,806 members.

The thrust southward into South Carolina and Georgia began in 1785 with the appointment of Beverly Allen to Georgia, John Tunnell to Charleston, and Woolman Hickson to Georgetown. Asbury reached Charleston in his tour of 1785, and included Georgia for the first time in 1788. He visited this region of the deep south thirty-three times in his annual tours between 1785 and 1816 spending the winter months in the southern Circuits. By 1816 the South Carolina Conference reported 39,494 members in forty-seven Circuits.

As soon as the Revolutionary War was over, in August of 1783, Asbury returned to New York and found that the Society at John Street Church had survived the British occupation. In 1788 Asbury readied a dynamic thrust to occupy the upper Hudson valley. Selecting Freeborn Garrettson as Presiding Elder, six potential Circuits were laid out reaching from New Rochelle on Long Island Sound to Lake Champlain, and nine young preachers were assigned to them to establish Methodism in the region under Garrettson's oversight. So effective was this effort that in its first three years, from 1788 to 1791, it had grown into two Presiding Elder's Districts manned by twenty-three preachers and reporting 3,809 members. By 1807 new Circuits were being created around Lake Ontario, both in New

York and Canada. In his tour that year Asbury included the Finger Lakes region as far westward as Lyons, and in his tour of 1810 he organized the Genesee Conference in Daniel Dorsey's granary near Lyons. By 1816 the upper Hudson region plus the Genesee Conference reported 25,098 members organized in seventy-one Circuits. Asbury supervised the work by including the region in his annual tours fifteen times between 1791 and 1815.

Bishop Asbury employed a similar strategy in the Methodist invasion of Congregational New England. In 1789 Jesse Lee and Andrew Van Nostrand were appointed to organize the Stamford, Connecticut, Circuit. The next year Lee was made the Presiding Elder over four Circuits reaching to Boston, and in 1791 Asbury included New England in his tour for the first time. He included New England in his annual tours twenty-one times between 1791 and 1815. By 1816 there were 11,974 members in the New England Conference organized in sixty Circuits.

Asbury the Theological Tutor of early American Methodism

By the time Wesley's *Discipline* emerged as the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church it had been so changed that we may properly call its American form Asburian. But the Wesleyan *Doctrines* of free grace, assurance of experiential salvation, growth in grace to christian perfection or perfect love, and the christian witness for the godly life as the fruits of the Spirit were transferred to American Methodism intact. Asbury's mind was

saturated with Wesleyan doctrine. He insisted that the young preachers read Wesley's Sermons and Notes and they they have a personal experience of salvation. They all heard the Bishop preach these doctrines in Conferences, in Quarterly Meetings, in Camp Meetings and in their Circuits as his annual itinerary would bring them into contact with him. The new History of American Methodism assets "It was Francis Asbury who exercised the primary role of theological tutor for early American Methodism. Throughout his ministry Asbury continued in his concern to preach, defend, and establish others 'in the grand doctrines of the gospel — man's original rectitude — his fall — the atonement — repentance — justification — sanctification — the resurrection — the last judgment, and final rewards and punishments.'"¹

The name "Asbury" has passed into the language of Methodism and America. Children, Churches, Colleges, and Towns have been named for him. Historians of the federal Government have included him in the list of the three-score most significant founders of America. All of the American Methodism bears the imprint of Francis Asbury's hand and mind and spirit. And all of Christian America owes an immeasurable debt to Asbury and the early Methodist Circuit system. The dynamic Methodist evangelism that flourished under the guiding hand and oversight of Francis Asbury operated, largely, in a vacuum of spiritual need in the life of the young Republic. All who are concerned that the

¹ History of American Methodism, Vol. I, 335, Abingdon 1964. Asbury, Journal, October 23, 24, 1799.

Christian way of life may triumph can look at the toilsome suffering life of dedication and achievement lived by Francis Asbury and thank God that in his providence such a leader was raised up to guide the forces of righteousness in such a crucial age.

THE AMERICAN METHODIST
BICENTENNIAL HYMN

As a part of the celebration of the Bicentennial of American Methodism carried on under the leadership of The Association of Methodist Historical Societies in 1966 the Contests Committee conducted a contest to secure a Bicentennial Hymn. A hymn titled GOD OF THE GENERATIONS, written by Delia Chaffee Berry, former faculty member of the College of Business Administration of Syracuse University, was chosen for first prize. Its use in Asbury Bicentennial Programs is suggested.

Sing to the tune of "Lead on, O King Eternal."
Lancashire 7.6.7.5.D

God of the generations, we offer Thee our song
Of praise and adoration, for through the
centuries long

Thy grace has led our people on life's ascending
ways;
And now, God of the ages, we lift our hymn
of praise.

We thank Thee for the high road our faithful
fathers trod,
For witness of the Spirit that they were born
of God,

For circuit riders called by Thee who traveled
far and wide
To tell the matchless story of Jesus crucified.

Man now seeks other planets; he walks in stellar
space;
He plumbs the ocean's darkness, all knowledge
to embrace;

But yet he yearns to find Thee, to hear Thy voice
so still.

How shall Thy church make answer, her mission
to fulfill?

Where greed and envy flourish, where hate holds
evil sway,
Where poverty and sorrow delay God's holy day,
There let Thy Church speak boldly, reach out her
loving hand,
And lead men of all nations to find the
Promised Land.

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of Methodist Historical Societies

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

WALLACE GUY SMELTZER is the historian of the Western Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church. He served on the executive committee of The Association of Methodist Historical Societies from 1960 to 1968, being the Contests Chairman for the Methodist Bicentennial in 1966. He was a regional editor for the annotated edition of *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* published in 1958. His 100 koda-chrome slide Illustrated Lecture, *The Origins and Early Development of American Methodism* was distributed from 1963 to 1966 and has enjoyed wide use. He is the author of *Methodism on the Headwaters of the Ohio*, the 448 page history of western Pennsylvania Methodism, published in 1951, and in 1969 he edited the 923 page Historical Records Volume of the Western Pennsylvania Conference titled *Methodism in Western Pennsylvania: 1784-1968*. He is a native of western Pennsylvania; a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania (then Indiana State Normal School) in 1921; a graduate of Grove City College, B.S. in 1926, and D.D. in 1948; and a graduate of The Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (then Western) S.T.B. in 1932. He served as a pastor in Western Pennsylvania Methodism from 1925 to 1965, including a tour of duty as a navy chaplain, 1943-1945. He participated in the Guam and Okinawa campaigns of World War II as senior headquarters chaplain, III Amphibious Corps, USMC.

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LIVING SELECTIONS FROM
THE GREAT DEVOTIONAL CLASSICS

*Selections from
the Journal of
Francis Asbury*

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by
J. MANNING POTTS

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by

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INTRODUCTION

Francis Asbury (1745-1816), the prophet of the long road, more nearly than any other person can be called the founder of The Methodist Church in America even though there were other Methodist preachers who preceded him to the New World. He took the experimental religion, the "rational scriptural, and preachable theology," and most of the polity of John Wesley and made them practical in the wilderness of America. His was a dynamic faith, and he preached a personal gospel with all its implications. He denounced slavery, drinking, gambling, war, and other social evils. He taught the three R's and did much to stamp out illiteracy. He built schools and colleges. He founded Sunday schools. He preached to the people in jails, and had an interest in men wherever he found them.

Asbury went up and down the land for 45 years in an ever-widening circle of travels, often on horseback, frequently in a chaise, a fly cart, a sulky, or, in his old age, sometimes in a closed carriage, winning converts and emphasizing that his purpose was to "reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness" over this land.

It has been said that the early circuit riders made as great a contribution to the development of America as did the great statesmen. There were many of these in several denominations, but Francis Asbury stands out in

front of these early pioneers. He rode further than any, preached more sermons, visited more homes, touched more people, organized more churches, and lived longer. When he died, he left churches and the impress of his personality from Ontario to Georgia, from Virginia to Ohio, and upon all the states within that circuit. He sent out other preachers. They carried the Gospel in new states and territories, and the preachers soon established a reputation for following the pioneers wherever they went. Asbury was truly the prophet of the long road, though often beset with sickness. In spite of his ills he traveled.

In this booklet the material, arranged in chronological order, has been taken from Asbury's *Journal*, Hollingsworth's 1821 edition. The prayers are from the pen of the editor of the booklet.

To Dr. J. Minton Batten, Professor of Church History, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, the editor is deeply indebted. He is also indebted to staff members for their help in the compilation, especially to the Reverend Brooks B. Little, Miss Clarice Winstead, Mr. Russell Q. Chilcote, and Mr. Harold L. Hermann.

—J. MANNING POTTS
Editor, *The Upper Room*
Nashville, Tennessee

HIS CONVERSION EXPERIENCE

[*New York, July, 1774.*] *Lord's day, 24.*
I remember when I was a small boy and went to school, I had serious thoughts, and a particular sense of the being of a God; and greatly feared both an oath and a lie. At twelve years of age the Spirit of God strove frequently and powerfully with me: but being deprived of proper means and exposed to bad company, no effectual impressions were left on my mind. And, though fond of what some call innocent diversions, I abhorred fighting and quarrelling: when anything of this sort happened, I always went home displeased. But I have been much grieved to think that so many Sabbaths were idly spent, which might have been better improved. However, wicked as my companions were, and fond as I was of play, I never imbibed their vices. When between thirteen and fourteen years of age, the Lord graciously visited my soul again. I then found myself more inclined to obey; and carefully attended preaching in West-Bromwick; so that I heard Stillingfleet, Bagnet, Ryland, Anderson, Mansfield, and Talbot, men who preached the truth. I then began to watch over my inward and outward conduct; and having a desire to hear the Methodists, I went to Wednesbury, and heard Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Ingham, but did not understand them, though one of their subjects is fresh in my memory to this day. This was the first of my hearing the Methodists. After that, another person went with me to hear

them again: the text was, "The time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine." My companion was cut to the heart, but I was unmoved. The next year Mr. M[athe]r came into those parts. I was then about fifteen; and, young as I was, the word of God soon made deep impressions on my heart, which brought me to Jesus Christ, who graciously justified my guilty soul through faith in his precious blood; and soon showed me the excellency and necessity of holiness. About sixteen I experienced a marvellous display of the grace of God, which some might think was full sanctification, and was indeed very happy, though in an ungodly family. At about seventeen I began to hold some public meetings; and between seventeen and eighteen began to exhort and preach. When about twenty-one I went through Staffordshire and Gloucestershire, in the place of a travelling preacher; and the next year through Bedfordshire, Sussex, &c. In 1769 I was appointed assistant in Northamptonshire; and the next year travelled in Wiltshire. September 3, 1771, I embarked for America, and for my own private satisfaction, began to keep an imperfect journal.*

I. EARLY YEARS

[September, 1771 (At Sea).] Thursday, 12th. I will set down a few things that lie

*This excerpt from Asbury's *Journal*, Vol. I, p. 120, is taken out of sequence to provide background of Francis Asbury's early life.

on my mind. Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No, I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do.

[September, 1771 (At Sea).] On the Lord's day, September 22, I preached to the ship's company on John iii, 23; but alas! they were insensible creatures. My heart has been much pained on their account. I spent my time chiefly in retirement, in prayer, and in reading the Appeals, Mr. De Renty's life, part of Mr. Norris's Works, Mr. Edwards on the Work of God in New-England, the Pilgrim's Progress, the Bible, and Mr. Wesley's Sermons. I feel a strong desire to be given up to God—body, soul, time, and talents; far more than heretofore.

[Philadelphia, 1771.] October 27. This day we landed in Philadelphia, where we were directed to the house of one Mr. Francis Harris, who kindly entertained us in the evening, and brought us to a large church, where we met with a considerable congregation. Brother Pilmore preached. The people looked on us with pleasure, hardly knowing how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection, and receiving us as angels of God. O that we may always walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called! When I came near the American shore, my very heart melted within me, to think from whence I came, where I was going, and what I was going about. But I felt my

mind open to the people, and my tongue loosed to speak. I feel that God is here; and find plenty of all we need.

[*New York, November, 1771.*] *Thursday, 22.* At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality. I have nothing to seek but the glory of God; nothing to fear, but his displeasure.

[*Pennsylvania, 1772.*] *April 11.* Found an inattention to study, an unsettled frame of mind, much insensibility of soul, and a backwardness to prayer. Lord, help me with an active warmth to move, and with a vigorous soul to rise!

[*New York, September, 1772.*] *Wednesday, 23.* In the morning I preached, and felt a measure of peace, and stronger confidence in my soul towards God.

I am now twenty-seven years of age, and have had a religious concern on my heart about fourteen years; though I felt something of God as early as the age of seven.

[*Maryland, November, 1772.*] *Tuesday, 24.* Preached at Winchester [now Westminster], in an unfinished house; and while the rain beat in upon me, many people looked and wondered at the stranger. However, I delivered my message with some energy, and then rode three miles to Richard Owing's,

where the Lord enabled me to preach with much feeling to a great number of people.

Wednesday, 25. We rode about twenty miles to my old friend Joshua Owing's, the forest-home for the Methodists at that time, and found a very agreeable house and family. The old man is "an Israelite indeed." He was once a serious Church-man, who sought for the truth; and now God has revealed it to him. The Lord has also begun to bless his family. He has one son a preacher, and the rest of his children are very thoughtful.

[*Maryland, 1773.*] *Lord's day, January 10.* Many people attended at J. P.'s to whom I preached twice, with some life, and then went three miles into the Neck; and felt much power while preaching on perfect love. The more I speak on this subject, the more my soul is filled and drawn out in love. This doctrine has a great tendency to prevent people from settling on their lees.

[*Pennsylvania, April, 1773.*] *Friday, 23.* This morning my mind was in a calm and even frame—sweetly fixed on God as its prime object. But I greatly long for more grace—to receive esteem or disesteem with equal cheerfulness—to be something or nothing, as God would have me to be. My heart was at liberty, while employed in speaking for God this evening.

[*Maryland, December, 1773.*] *Tuesday, 7.* Yesterday I was very ill all the day with a fever; but feel something better to-day. God

is the portion of my soul. He favours me with sweet peace, and sanctifies all my afflictions. Lord, evermore keep me, and conduct me in safety to thy blessed presence above!

[*Maryland, February, 1774.*] *Friday, 18.* While preaching at the house of Mr. Moore, his father and mother were moved by the word of God. But after lying down at night to rest, my heart was oppressed with inexpressible feelings for the inhabitants of Baltimore. I am pressed under them as a cart full of sheaves; and would rather be employed in the most servile offices, than preach to them, if it were not from a sense of duty to God, and a desire to be instrumental in saving their souls. If honour and worldly gain were held out as motives to this painful work, they would to me appear lighter than vanity. But, Lord, thou knowest my motives and my ends!

[*Maryland, March, 1774.*] . . . much indisposed on *Friday*. . . Though I continued very unwell the next day, I went to church, and heard Mr. Chase deliver a good discourse on retirement and private devotion; and afterward I attempted to preach at the Point, but found myself much worse at my return to town. My indisposition and weakness of body have so pressed me down for some time past, that I do not expect to abide long in this world of danger and trouble; neither do I desire it. But, come life or come death, let the will of the Lord be done! After the physicians had given over I. I. and thought they could do him no more service, we had recourse to that

old-fashioned remedy, *prayer*; and had reason to believe the Lord in mercy heard us.

[*New York, May, 1774.*] *Lord's day, 29.* I visited Mr. W[right], who is going to England; but found he had no taste for spiritual subjects. Lord, keep me from all superfluity of dress and from preaching empty stuff to please the ear, instead of changing the heart! Thus has he fulfilled as a hireling his day.

[*New York, July, 1774.*] *Thursday, 14.* My mind is in peace. I have now been sick near ten months, and many days closely confined; yet I have preached about three hundred times, and rode near two thousand miles in that time; though very frequently in a high fever. Here is no case, worldly profit, or honour. What, then, but the desire of pleasing God and serving souls, could stimulate to such laborious and painful duties?

[*New York, August, 1774.*] *August 1.* I have great discoveries of my defects and weaknesses. My soul is not so steadily and warmly devoted to the Lord as it might be. Lord, help me, and supply me with grace always! In preaching from Ephesians ii, 12, 13, I had great freedom. It seems strange, that sometimes, after much premeditation and devotion, I cannot express my thoughts with readiness and perspicuity; whereas at other times, proper sentences of Scripture and apt expressions occur without care or much thought. Surely this is of the Lord, to convince us that it is not by power or might, but by his Spirit

the work must be done. Nevertheless, it is doubtless our duty to give ourselves to prayer and meditation, at the same time depending entirely on the grace of God, as if we had made no preparation.

[*New York, September, 1774.*] *Lord's day, 18.* Losing some of my ideas in preaching, I was ashamed of myself, and pained to see the people waiting to hear what the blunderer had to say. May these things humble me, and show me where my great strength lieth! In meeting the society I urged the necessity of more private devotion, and of properly digesting what they hear. Set off the next morning for New Rochelle, and found E. D. in distress of soul. This is an agreeable family, and the children are both affectionate and obedient to their parents. I hope she and the rest of them will become true Christians, and be finally bound up in the bundle of life.

[*Virginia, May, 1775.*] *Monday, 29.* With a thankful heart I landed at Norfolk, after having been much tossed about by contrary winds in the bay. My accommodations on board the vessel were also very indifferent, so that it was a disagreeable and fatiguing passage. . . .

Here I found about thirty persons in society after their manner; but they had no regular class-meetings. However, here are a few who are willing to observe all the rules of our society. Their present preaching-house is an old, shattered building, which has formerly

been a play-house. Surely the Lord will not always suffer his honour to be trampled in the dust. No; I entertain a hope that we shall have a house and a people in this town. My heart is filled with holy thoughts, and deeply engaged in the work of God. On *Tuesday* evening about one hundred and fifty souls attended to hear the word, and about fifty at five o'clock on *Wednesday* morning, which, by the presence of the Lord, was found to be a good time. I then went over to Portsmouth, and found my spirit at liberty in preaching to a number of souls there.

[*Virginia, 1775.*] *Friday, June 2.* The Lord is pleased to show me the danger which a preacher is in of being lifted up by pride, and falling into the condemnation of the devil. How great is the danger of this! A considerable degree of ballast is highly necessary to bear frequent and sudden puffs of applause. Lord, fill me with genuine humility, that the strongest gusts from Satan or the world may never move me!

[*New Jersey, April, 1776.*] *Monday, 22.* I found Christ in me the hope of glory: but felt a pleasing, painful sensation of spiritual hunger and thirst for more of God. On *Tuesday* I rode to Burlington, and on the way my soul was filled with holy peace, and employed in heavenly contemplations: but found, to my grief, that many had so imbibed a martial spirit that they had lost the spirit of pure and undefiled religion. I preached from

Rom. xiii, 11, but found it was a dry and barren time. And some who once ran well now walk disorderly. On *Wednesday* I rode to *Trenton*; and found very little liberty in preaching among them; thus has the Lord humbled me amongst my people. But I hope, through grace, to save myself, and, at least, some that hear me.

{*Maryland, June, 1776.*} *Thursday, 27.* This was a day of trials. Satan drew my thoughts into a train of reasoning on subjects which were out of my reach; for secret things belong to God, but things which are revealed belong to us and our children. Thus, while I was soaring out of the region of my duty, I became inattentive to what immediately concerned me, and oversetting my chaise, broke it very much. Though, blessed be God, my body was preserved.

{*Virginia, June, 1776.*}* *Sunday, 30.* I was comforted by the sight of my dear brother S{hadford}. But I was weak in body, through riding so far in extreme heat, and much exercised in mind; and did not know how I should be able to go through the labour of the day. We went to the chapel at ten, where I had liberty of mind, and strength of body beyond my expectation. After preaching I met the society, and was more relieved, both in body and mind. At four in the afternoon I preached again, from "I set before thee an

*Events which took place on this date were written into the *Journal* in December, 1778.

open door, and none can shut it." I had gone through about two-thirds of my discourse, and was bringing the words home to the present—Now, when such power descended, that hundreds fell to the ground, and the house seemed to shake with the presence of God. The chapel was full of white and black, and many were without that could not get in. Look wherever we would, we saw nothing but streaming eyes, and faces bathed in tears; and heard nothing but groans and strong cries after God and the Lord Jesus Christ. My voice was drowned amidst the groans and prayers of the congregation. I then sat down in the pulpit; and both Mr. S{hadford} and I were so filled with the divine presence, that we could only say, This is none other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven! Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven, wives their husbands: parents their children, and children their parents: brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. In short, those who were happy in God themselves were for bringing all their friends to him in their arms. This mighty effusion of the Spirit continued for above an hour in which time many were awakened, some found peace with God, and others, his pure love. We attempted to speak or sing again and again: but no sooner we began than our voices were drowned. It was with much difficulty that we at last persuaded the people, as night drew on, to retire to their own homes.

[*Maryland, July, 1776.*] *Monday, 15.* We set off for the springs. Mr. D[allam] overtook us in the evening; and that no opportunity might be lost, I lectured at night in the tavern where we lodged. And both the tavern-keeper and his wife appeared to have some thought about their souls. On *Tuesday*, we reached Frederick, and collecting as many people as we could by a short notice, I preached from 2 Corinthians vi, 2, and found my spirit at liberty. My body complains of so much travelling, for which it is almost incompetent; but the Spirit of the Lord is the support and comfort of my soul. I was thrown out of my chaise the next day, but was providentially kept from being much hurt.

[*Maryland, July, 1776.*] *Monday, 29.* My present mode of conduct is as follows—to read about a hundred pages a day; usually to pray in public five times a day; to preach in the open air every other day; and to lecture in prayer-meeting every evening. And if it were in my power, I would do a thousand times as much for such a gracious and blessed Master. But in the midst of all my little employments, I feel myself as nothing, and Christ to me is all in all.

[*Maryland, December, 1776.*] *Lord's day, 8.* My present practice is, to set apart about three hours out of every twenty-four for private prayer; but Satan labours much to interrupt me; nevertheless, my soul enjoys a sweet and peaceful nearness to God, for the most part, in these duties.

[*Maryland, March, 1778.*] *Monday, 16.* I applied myself to the Greek and Latin Testament; but this is not to me like preaching the Gospel. However, when a man cannot do what he would, he must do what he can.

[*Maryland, April, 1778.*] *Tuesday, 7.* My soul was kept in peace; and I spent much of my time in reading the Bible and the Greek Testament. Surely God will stand by and deliver me! I have none other on whom I can depend. And he knows with what intention and for what purposes I came into this distant and strange land, and what little I have suffered for his cause.

[*Delaware, March, 1779.*] *Lord's day, 28.* My mind was much drawn out in prayer, and I believe I have not spent more time in this exercise for many years past, if ever, than I do now. But my mind has been much perplexed about wandering thoughts in prayer, though Mr. Wesley's deep and judicious discourse on that subject has afforded me no small satisfaction. He hath both shown the causes of those thoughts, which are not sinful, and incontestably proves that they contract no guilt. Yet a devout and tender mind must be grieved, to find any kind of temptation in that sublime exercise wherein the whole soul desires to be employed.

[*Delaware, July, 1779.*] *Friday, 23.* Arose, as I commonly do, before five o'clock in the morning, to study the Bible. I find none like

it; and find it of more consequence to a preacher to know his Bible well, than all the languages or books in the world—for he is not to preach these, but the word of God.

[*Delaware, November, 1779.*] *Wednesday, 17.* I have read through the Book of Genesis; and again have read the Confession of Faith, the Assembly's Catechism, Directory of Church Government, and Form for the Public Worship: now I understand it better than I like it. I purposed to rise at four o'clock, as often as I can, and spend two hours in prayer and meditation; two hours in reading, and one in recreating and conversation; and in the evening, to take my room at eight, pray and meditate an hour, and go to bed at nine o'clock: all this I purpose to do, when not travelling; but to rise at four o'clock every morning.

[*Delaware, January, 1780.*] *Friday, 28.* A fine day for travelling: yesterday was so cold, it was hardly possible to travel without getting one's limbs frozen. I rose soon after five o'clock, prayed four times before I left my room, and twice in the family. I then set out for Isaac Moore's below Broad-creek, met with some difficulty in the way from the ice, but came there safe. Was variously exercised with thoughts, and had hard fightings. After riding twenty-five miles I took a little food, this being a day of abstinence and prayer with me.

[*North Carolina, September, 1780.*] *Sunday, 3.* This day nine years past I sailed from Bristol, Old England. Ah! what troubles have

I passed through! Wha. sickness! What temptations! But I think, though I am grown more aged, I have a better constitution, and more gifts; and I think much more grace. I can bear disappointments and contradiction with greater ease.

[*Delaware, November, 1780.*] *Tuesday, 7.* I was closely engaged in reading a volume of Mr. Wesley's Journal of above three hundred pages; ended it on Wednesday morning. I felt dejection of spirits for want of public exercise; I have had so much of this, that within this six months, I have travelled, according to my computation, two thousand six hundred and seventy-one miles; yet am uneasy when still. I proposed meeting the children when I came again: I appointed a place for them to sit, and desired the parents to send a note with each, letting me know the temper, and those vices to which the child might be most subject.

[*New York, September, 1786.*] I was taken ill, and was confined about eight days, during which time I was variously tried and exercised in mind. I spent some time in looking over my journals, which I have kept for fifteen years back. Some things I corrected, and some I expunged. Perhaps, if they are not published before, they will be after my death, to let my friends and the world see how I have employed my time in America. I feel the worth of souls, and the weight of the pastoral charge, and that the conscientious discharge of its important duties requires some-

thing more than human learning, unwieldy salaries, or clerical titles of D.D., or even *bishop*. The eyes of all—both preachers and people, will be opened in time.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, we thank Thee for Francis Ashur, and others like him, that great body of circuit riders who helped to make American history, both secular and religious. They had their part in founding a nation. Their works do follow them. Help me today to be true to the Christ who challenged them to chart paths through the wilderness in order that men and women and boys and girls might know Christ as their Saviour. Give me this kind of love and this kind of passion to bring others to Thee. In His name. Amen.

II. MIDDLE LIFE

[*New York, May, 1787.*] *Saturday, 26.* Rode to ———: our friends had procured the Presbyterian church for me. I felt a spirit of life on these words, "Be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." I called to see my old friend and assistant, James Glaisbrook, who was the first preacher I travelled with upon a regular appointment in England. He is now a Presbyterian minister; much changed in his outward man, but I believe his sentiments are much the same as when I first knew him. The Lord be with and bless him!

[*West Virginia, July, 1788.*] *Thursday, 10.* We had to cross the Alleghany Mountain again at a bad passage. Our course lay over mountains and through valleys, and the mud and mire was such as might scarcely be expected in December. We came to an old, forsaken habitation in Tyger's Valley. Here our horses grazed about, while we boiled our meat. Midnight brought us up at Jones's, after riding forty or perhaps fifty miles. The old man, our host, was kind enough to wake us up at four o'clock in the morning. We journeyed on through devious lonely wilds, where no food might be found, except what grew in the woods, or was carried with us. We met with two women who were going to see their friends, and to attend the quarterly meeting at Clarksburg. Near midnight we stopped at A———'s, who hissed his dogs at us: but the women were determined to get to quarterly meeting, so we went in. Our supper was tea. Brothers Phoebus and Cook took to the woods; old ——— gave up his bed to the women. I lay along the floor on a few deer-skins with the fleas. That night our poor horses got no corn; and the next morning they had to swim across the Monongahela. After a twenty miles' ride we came to Clarksburg, and man and beast were so outdone that it took us ten hours to accomplish it.

[*Tennessee, April, 1790.*] *Tuesday, 6.* We were compelled to ride through rain, and crossed the Stone Mountain: those who wish

to know how rough it is may tread in our path. What made it worse to me was, that while I was looking to see what was become of our guide, I was carried off with full force against a tree that hung across the road some distance from the ground, and my head received a very great jar, which, however, was lessened by my having on a hat that was strong in the crown. We came on to the dismal place called Roan's Creek, which was pretty full. Here we took a good breakfast on our tea, bacon, and bread.

[*Kentucky, May, 1790.*] *Tuesday, 11.* Crossed Kentucky River. I was strangely undone for want of sleep, having been greatly deprived of it in my journey through the wilderness; which is like being at sea, in some respects, and in others worse. Our way is over mountains, steep hills, deep rivers, and muddy creeks; a thick growth of reeds for miles together; and no inhabitant but wild beasts and savage men. Sometimes, before I am aware, my ideas would be leading me to be looking out ahead for a fence; and I would, without reflection, try to recollect the houses we should have lodged at in the wilderness. I slept about an hour the first night, and about two the last: we ate no regular meal; our bread grew short, and I was much spent.

I saw the graves of the slain—twenty-four in one camp. I learn that they had set no guard, and that they were up late, playing at cards. A poor woman of the company had dreamed three times that the Indians had sur-

prised them all; she urged her husband to entreat the people to set a guard, but they only abused him, and cursed him for his pains. As the poor woman was relating her last dream the Indians came upon the camp; she and her husband sprung away, one east, the other west, and escaped. She afterward came back and witnessed the carnage. . . .

[*South Carolina, March, 1791.*] *Saturday, 26.* We had white and red Indians at Carawba; the Doctor [Coke] and myself both preached. I had some conversation with the chiefs of the Indians about keeping up the school we have been endeavoring to establish amongst them.

[*Virginia, April, 1791.*] *Friday, 29.* The solemn news reached our ears that the public papers had announced the death of that dear man of God, John Wesley. He died in his own house in London, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after preaching the Gospel sixty-four years. When we consider his plain and nervous writings; his uncommon talent for sermonizing and journalizing; that he had such a steady flow of animal spirits; so much of the spirit of government in him; his knowledge as an observer; his attainments as a scholar; his experience as a Christian; I conclude, his equal is not to be found among all the sons he hath brought up, nor his superior among all the sons of Adam he may have left behind.

[*Connecticut, June, 1791.*] *Saturday, 4.* In the evening I went on to Reading. Surely

God will work powerfully amongst these people, and save thousands of them. We have travelled about twenty-four miles this day over very rough roads; the weather is cold for the season; my horse is very small, and my carriage is inconvenient in such rocky, uneven, jolting ways. This country is very hilly and open—not unlike that about the Peak of Derbyshire. I feel faith to believe that this visit to New-England will be blessed to my own soul, and the souls of others.

[*Rhode Island, June, 1791.*] *Sunday, 19.* Came to Providence. I attended the ministry of Mr. M——, a Baptist, in the forenoon; and Mr. S——, a New Light, in the afternoon. In the evening I preached with some life, on Isai. lxi, 1-3. There are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Independents or Congregationalists, here: but the Baptists appear to be the leading people. I found a few gracious souls, and some seeking. . . .

[*Rhode Island, June, 1791.*] *Monday, 20.* I visited some serious families that truly love and fear God. The afternoon I spent very agreeably with the old prophet Mr. Snow, aged about seventy years: he was awakened by the instrumentality of Gilbert Tennant, whose memory I revere. He told me much about Mr. Whitefield, and old times, and of the ministers of old times—of himself, his awakening, and conversion to God—of his riding thirty miles to Newport, in exceeding cold weather, to bring Mr. Tennant to Providence.

[*Maryland, 1791.*] *Monday, December 5.* I went from house to house through the snow and cold, begging money for the support of the poor orphans at Cokesbury [College].

[*Virginia, 1791.*] *Wednesday, December 7.* A day to be remembered. We stopped once in forty-three miles: when we reached Oxen Hill Ferry, opposite to Alexandria, I was nearly frozen, being hardly able to walk or talk. We crossed the Potomac in an open boat, on whose icy bottom the horses with difficulty kept their feet; and still worse it would have been, had I not thoughtfully called for some straw to strew beneath them; we had five of them on board and the waves were high.

[*Virginia, January, 1792.*] *Thursday, 5.* Rode to W. B.——'s: there were but few people. On our way thither brother M—— would stop to feed: I believe the Lord sent me to speak a word to a broken-hearted, forsaken, distressed woman. My soul enjoys peace; but excessive labour, and bodily suffering from the cold, prevent that deep communion with God I wish for: I do little except reading a few chapters in my Hebrew Bible.

[*South Carolina, February, 1792.*] *Monday, 27.* We rode thirty miles to White Oak meetinghouse—a painful journey; the weather was cold, and the house open; the people, however, were attentive. It is not pleasing to the flesh to take only a little tea at seven o'clock in the morning and then go until six

at night before we have a table spread; and ah! how few Christian houses! I had my trials in the evening.

[*Kentucky, April, 1792.*] *Monday, 23.* I rode to Bethel. I found it necessary to change the plan of the house, to make it more comfortable to the scholars in cold weather. I am too much in company, and hear so much about Indians, convention, treaty, killing, and scalping, that my attention is drawn more to these things than I could wish. I found it good to get alone in the woods and converse with God.

[*Pennsylvania, June, 1792.*] *Sunday, 10.* We have founded a seminary of learning called Union School; brother C. Conway is manager, who also has charge of the district: this establishment is designed for instruction in grammar, languages, and the sciences.

I have had some awful thoughts lest my lameness should grow upon me, and render me useless. I sometimes have fears that I am too slack in speaking in public, at conferences; I also feel that want of time and places to pursue my practice of solitary prayer, being frequently obliged to ride all the day and late at night, that I may in time reach the appointed places to preach.

[*Kentucky, May, 1793.*] *Tuesday, 7.* We rode down to the Crab Orchard, where we found company enough, some of whom were very wild: we had a company of our own, and refused to go with them. Some of them gave us very abusive language: and one man went

upon a hill above us, and fired a pistol towards our company. We resolved to travel in our order, and bound ourselves by honor and conscience to support and defend each other, and to see every man through the wilderness. But we could not depend upon wicked and unprincipled men, who would leave and neglect us, and even curse us to our faces. Nor were we at liberty to mix with swearers, liars, drunkards; and, for aught we know, this may not be the worst with some. We were about fourteen or fifteen in company; and had twelve guns and pistols. We rode on near the defeated camp, and rested till three o'clock under great suspicion of Indians: we pushed forward; and by riding forty-five miles on *Wednesday*, and about the same distance on *Thursday*, we came safe to Robinson's station, about eight o'clock.

[*Massachusetts, July, 1794.*] *Monday, 21.* I came to Boston unwell in body, and with a heavy heart. I passed the road and bridge from the University to Boston. A noble road and grand bridge. We have very agreeable lodging in this town: but have to preach, as did our Lord, in an upper room. We had a prayer-meeting, and the Lord was present to bless us.

[*South Carolina, February, 1796.*] *Friday, 5.* I spent in reading and writing, and observed it as a day of fasting and prayer. I felt myself under dejection of spirit. Ah! what a dreary world is this! my mind is under solemn impressions—the result of my re-

fections on God and souls. I will endeavour not to distress myself above measure. If sinners are lost, I cannot save them, neither shall I be damned for them. I was happy last evening with the poor slaves in brother Wells's kitchen, whilst our white brother held a sacramental love feast in the front parlour up stairs. . . .

[*Maryland, June, 1797.*] *June 25.* I met the male members of the society *Sabbath morning*, as I had met the sisters and the official members in the preceding week. I obtained the liberty of the managers of the African academy to congregate the fathers as well as to teach the children. We had nearly five hundred coloured people. Brother Willis preached on Acts vii, 7, and I added a few words. In the afternoon I gave a short exhortation at Mr. Otterbine's church, on Howard's Hill. I am now waiting for the making of a sulky. Thomas Barber, from Birmingham, (England,) took a second likeness of me, at the desire of my mother, to send to England. I am trying to organize the African church.

[*Virginia, March, 1798.*] *March 4.* I can only make a few weak observations. What little pen-work I dare do, has been in writing a letter to York. I shall only journalize a little, and never enter deeply into my other subjects. I scorn to be idle; the past week hath been spent in the cotton work with my fingers, and in hearing the children read, and instructing them in the English grammar.

[*Delaware, June, 1799.*] *Sabbath day, 2.* After meeting, I rode to Duck Creek Cross Roads, and called at Dr. Cook's to see Thomas White's children. Doctor Anderson, Dr. Ridgely, and Dr. Neadham considered my case; they advised a total suspension from preaching, fearing a consumption or a dropsy in the breast.

[*Delaware, June, 1799.*] *Monday, 3.* I obtained one person at the Cross Roads, and another at Dickinson's meeting-house. I dined with Mr. Moore near the Appoquimink bridge, and then rode on to Wilmington; we have made forty miles this day. What with labour and fevers my rest is greatly interrupted.

Prayer

Our Father, we realize our dependence on Thee. When we are weak, then we are strong. Afflictions may be our crosses, but they can become crowns if we will sanctify them as is our privilege. Help us to take the sicknesses, the burdens, the losses, the calamities and use them as means of grace to center our affections on our Saviour. Give me this kind of courage, this kind of faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

III. LATE YEARS

[*North Carolina, February, 1801.*] We have ridden at least five hundred and fifty, if not six hundred, miles, over the hills, barrens, swamps, savannahs, rivers, and creeks, of South Carolina.

At Gause's Manor, or more properly *town*, we were pleasantly situated. I had a most solemn visit to the sea-beach, which to me was a most instructive sight: the sea reminded me of its great Maker, "who stayeth the proud waves thereof;" its innumerable productions; the diversified features of its shores—the sand-hills; the marsh; the pimenta, tall and slender; the sheep and goats frisking in the shade or browsing in the sun: or the eye, directed to the waters, beholds the rolling porpoise; the sea-gulls lifting and letting fall from high the clam, which breaking, furnishes them with food; the eagles with hovering wings watching for their prey; the white sail of the solitary vessel tossed upon the distant wave—how interesting a picture do all these objects make!

[*Georgia, November, 1801.*] *Thursday*, 19. We started, hungry and cold, crossing at Malone's mill a branch of Oconee, and came to Henry Pope's in Oglethorpe. We have ridden about eighty miles this week of short and cold days. Why should a living man complain?—but to be three months together upon the frontiers, where, generally, you have but one room and fire-place, and half a dozen folks about you, strangers perhaps, and their family certainly, (and they are not usually small in these plentiful new countries,) making a crowd—and this is not all; for here you *may* meditate if you can, and here you *must* preach, read, write, pray, sing, talk, eat, drink, and sleep—or fly into the woods. Well! I have pains in my body, particularly my hip,

which are very afflictive when I ride; but I cheer myself as well as I may with songs in the night—with Wesley's, Warr's, and Stennett's sight of Canaan, in four hymns.

[*Maryland, April, 1802.*] *Monday*, 5. Whilst in Baltimore, I received an account of the death of my mother, which I fear is true. And here I may speak safely concerning my very dear mother: her character to me is well known. Her paternal descent was Welsh; from a family ancient and respectable, of the name of Rogers. She lived a woman of the world until the death of her first and only daughter, Sarah Asbury: how would the bereaved mother weep and tell of the beauties and excellencies of her lost and lovely child! pondering on the past in the silent suffering of hopeless grief. This afflictive providence graciously terminated in the mother's conversion. When she saw herself a lost and wretched sinner, she sought religious people, but "in the times of this ignorance" few were "sound in the faith," or "faithful to the grace given:" many were the days she spent chiefly in reading and prayer; at length she found justifying grace, and pardoning mercy. So dim was the light of truth around her, from the assurance she found, she was at times inclined to believe in the final perseverance of the saints. For fifty years her hands, her house, her heart, were open to receive the people of God and ministers of Christ; and thus a lamp was lighted up in a dark place

called Great Barre, in Great Britain. She was an afflicted, yet most active woman, of quick bodily powers, and masculine understanding; nevertheless, "so kindly all the elements were mixed in her," her strong mind quickly felt the subduing influences of that Christian sympathy which "weeps with those who weep," and "rejoices with those who do rejoice." As a woman and a wife she was chaste, modest, blameless; as a mother (above all the women in the world would I claim her for my own) ardently affectionate; as a "mother in Israel" few of her sex have done more by a holy walk to live, and by personal labour to support, the Gospel, and to wash the saints' feet; as a friend, she was generous, true, and constant. Elizabeth Asbury died January 6th, 1802; aged eighty-seven or eighty-eight years. There is now, after fifty years, a chapel within two or three hundred yards of her dwelling. I am now often drawn out in thankfulness to God, who hath saved a mother of mine, and, I trust, a father also, who are already in glory, where I hope to meet them both, after time, and cares, and sorrows, shall have ceased with me; and where glory shall not only beam, but open on my soul forever. Amen.

[*Tennessee, October, 1802.*] *Wednesday, 20.* I sent word to James Douthat to explain to the elders of Georgia and South Carolina my situation. I also dispatched John Watson to meet brother Snethen, and give him my plan to fulfill the appointments in Georgia—but behold, brother Snethen had had a fall

from his horse, and was left lame upon the road! I have been sick for twenty-three days; ah! the tale of woe I might relate. My dear M'Kendree had to lift me up and down from my horse, like a helpless child. For my sickness and sufferings I conceive I am indebted to sleeping uncovered in the wilderness. . . .

[*South Carolina, December, 1802.*] *Tuesday, 28.* Yesterday and to-day I have been busy writing letters. My general experience is close communion with God, holy fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, a will resigned, frequent addresses to a throne of grace, a constant, serious care for the prosperity of Zion, forethought in the arrangements and appointments of the preachers, a soul drawn out in ardent prayer for the universal Church and the complete triumph of Christ over the whole earth. Amen, Amen, so be it! I have finished many letters, and adjusted some plans. For my amusement and edification, I was curious to read the first volume of my journals. I compared my former with my latter self. It was little I could do thirty years ago; and I do less now.

[*Georgia, January, 1804.*] *Friday, 27.* We reached Georgetown. I have suffered in my flesh, and have had "deep waters" of a temporal and spiritual nature to wade through.

If I should die in celibacy, which I think quite probable, I give the following reasons for what can scarcely be called my choice. I was called in my fourteenth year; I began my public exercises between sixteen and seven-

teen; at twenty-one I travelled; at twenty-six I came to America: thus far I had reasons enough for a single life. It had been my intention of returning to Europe at thirty years of age; but the war continued, and it was ten years before we had a settled, lasting peace. this was no time to marry or be given in marriage. At forty-nine I was ordained superintendent bishop in America. Amongst the duties imposed upon me by my office was that of travelling extensively, and I could hardly expect to find a woman with grace enough to enable her to live but one week out of the fifty-two with her husband: besides, what right has any man to take advantage of the affections of a woman, make her his wife, and by a voluntary absence subvert the whole order and economy of the marriage state, by separating those whom neither God, nature, nor the requirements of civil society permit long to be *put asunder*? It is neither just nor generous. I may add to this, that I had little money, and with this little administered to the necessities of a beloved mother until I was fifty-seven: if I have done wrong, I hope God and the sex will forgive me: it is my duty now to bestow the pittance I may have to spare upon the widows and fatherless girls, and poor married men.

[*New York, May, 1805.*] *Friday, 31.* I read the latter part of Mr. Wesley's Journal. How great and unceasing were his labours; how various, comprehensive, and just are his observations on men, women, modes, manners,

doctrines, opinions, authors, and things! I have felt myself strongly urged to pray after every meal, where the families are in the habit of prayer; but I believe there are Methodist households that sometimes fall in my way, who never pray in this way. and is this our poor success, after eighteen years of faithful labours? God be gracious to us, and to such families and unfaithful souls!

[*Pennsylvania, July, 1809.*] *Friday, 21.* We were comfortable while resting at Doctor Hopkin's. Arrived at the ferry bank, no boat appeared, so I came back and called a meeting. Since we left Baltimore in April, we have made, we compute, two thousand miles. Such roads, such rains, and such lodgings! Why should I wish to stay in this land? I have no possessions or babes to bind me to the soil; what are called the comforts of life I rarely enjoy; the wish to live an hour such a life as this would be strange to so suffering, so toil-worn a wretch. But God is with me, and souls are my reward: I may yet rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. I might fill pages with this last week's wonders.

[*Canada, 1811.*] *Tuesday, July 2.* At eight o'clock we set sail, and crossed the St. Lawrence by rowing: the river here is three miles wide. We rode through Cornwall in the night, and came to Evan Roy's, making forty-four miles for the day's journey. It is surprising how we make nearly fifty miles a day over such desperate roads as we have lately travelled: we lose no time: Ah! why should

we—it is so precious! . . . *Tuesday*, I preached, and again on *Wednesday*: we rode along the banks of the river; they are neatly and pleasantly improved. We dined with Stephen Bailey, and went from thence with brother Glassford, in his calash. I asked him how we were to get out if we upset; his answer was actual experiment: the saplings on the side of the path broke the fall, so that we escaped unhurt. . . . *Friday*, I preached at the German settlement: I was weak in body, yet greatly helped in speaking. Here is a decent, loving people; my soul is much united to them. I called upon father Dulmage: and on brother Hicks—a branch of an old Irish stock of Methodists in New York. I lodged at David Brackenridge's, above Johnston. *Saturday*, we rode twelve miles for our breakfast. Reached Elizabethtown. Our ride has brought us through one of the finest countries I have ever seen: the timber is of a noble size: the cattle are well-shaped and well-looking: the crops are abundant, on a most fruitful soil: surely this is a land that God the Lord hath blessed.

[*South Carolina, 1812.*] *Wednesday, January 1, 1812.* A steady ride of thirty-eight miles brought us into Charleston. The highways were little occupied by travellers of any kind, which was the more providential to me, for my lameness and my light fly cart would have made a shock of the slightest kind disagreeable. I was anxious also to pass this first day of the new year in undisturbed prayer.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, in reading, meditation, writing, and prayer. I do not reject visitors.

[*New York, July, 1812.*] *Tuesday, 28.* I will leave Newtown this afternoon. There must be a great change here. We came away, after meeting, to Elijah Griswold's: my host is a brand plucked from the burning—strong drink had scorched him forty years. He had a pious son who watched over, and prayed for him; and he himself never closed his doors against the pious. The Lord heard prayer on his behalf, and has entirely delivered him from the love of whisky. I hear of another wonderful emancipation from the slavery of drunkenness.

[*New Hampshire, June, 1813.*] *Sunday, 6.* I preached in the morning and afternoon with little freedom. May we not expect increasing days of distress? Methodism in the east is as likely to be anything else as that which it ought to be, unless we have great displays of the power of God, and a strict discipline. We have a gracious rain in mercy, if not in answer to prayer. Knowing the uncertainty of the tenure of life, I have made my will, appointing Bishop M'Kendree, Daniel Hitt, and Henry Boehm, my executors. If I do not in the meantime spend it, I shall leave, when I die an estate of two thousand dollars, I believe: I give it all to the Book Concern. This money, and somewhat more, I have inherited from dear departed Methodist friends, in the

State of Maryland, who died childless; besides some legacies which I have never taken. Let it all return, and continue to aid the cause of piety.

[*New Jersey, 1814.*] *Tuesday, July 19.* I would not be loved to death, and so came down from my sick room and took to the road, weak enough. Attentions constant, and kindness unceasing, have pursued me to this place, and my strength increases daily. I look back upon a martyr's life of toil, and privation, and pain; and I am ready for a martyr's death. The purity of my intentions; my diligence in the labours to which God has been pleased to call me; the unknown sufferings I have endured; what are all these?—the merit, atonement, and righteousness of Christ alone make my plea. My friends in Philadelphia gave me a light, little four-wheeled carriage; but God and the Baltimore Conference made me a richer present—they gave me John Wesley Bond for a travelling companion; has he his equal on the earth for excellencies of every kind as an aid? I groan one minute with pain, and shout glory the next!

[*Ohio, August, 1814.*] *Tuesday, [23].* I preached in great weakness in Chilicothe; but my help was with me; in God will I make my boast. From the 24th to the 30th, we are at senator Worthington's. I pay my mite of worship in this amiable family in great weakness. The kind attentions I received are greatly beyond my deserts. Mrs. Worthington has taught her boys and girls, servants and chil-

dren, to read the holy Scriptures, and they are well instructed: I heard them more than one lesson with much satisfaction. O that all mothers would do likewise! I presume the worship of God is kept up in this house, though neither of the heads thereof have attached themselves to any society of professing Christians: doubtless God will bless them, and their children after them.

[*Ohio, November, 1815.*] *Sabbath, 22.* I ordained the deacons, and preached a sermon, in which Doctor Coke was remembered. My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop M'Kendree—I will take away my feet. It is my fifty-fifth year of ministry, and forty-fifth year of labour in America. My mind enjoys great peace and divine consolation. My health is better, which may in part be because of my being less deeply interested in the business of the conference. But whether health, life, or death, good is the will of the Lord: I will trust him; yea, and will praise him: he is the strength of my heart and my portion forever—Glory! glory! glory! Conference was eight days and a half in session—hard labour. Bishop M'Kendree called upon me to preach at the ordination of elders.

Prayer

Dear Father, how great a thing it is to read the intimate glimpses of men who have walked with Thee and thereby have gotten an insight into Thy goodness, Thy mercy, and Thy love. We are thankful for Thy servants who have

finished their courses in faith and now live within the celestial city. We thank Thee for Thy redemption which comes through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May He be mine today and may my life be a witness to His grace. In the Saviour's name. Amen.

IV. A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS DEATH AND BURIAL

Traveling with John W. Bond in a closed carriage they came to Richmond, Virginia, where he preached his last sermon March 24, 1816, in the old Methodist Church. He was almost too weak to deliver his sermon. He had to be carried to the pulpit from the carriage in which he rode and they seated him on a table prepared for that purpose. He spoke nearly an hour from the text, Romans ix: 28, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." After his sermon he was carried from the pulpit to his carriage and on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday he journeyed and finally came to the house of his old friend, Mr. George Arnold, in Sportsylvania County, Virginia. Here on Sunday, the 31st of March, 1816, he died in the 71st year of his age, having devoted about 55 years to the ministry, 45 of which were spent in America. He was buried at the home of Mr. Arnold but his body was moved a month later to Eutaw Place Church, Baltimore, where it remained for 40 years. It was then moved to Mount Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore, for its final interment.

ASBURY TRAIL
AWARD

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA



BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY (1745-1816)
ESQUESTRIAN MONUMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

WHAT a wonderful experience he must have had,
this prophet of the wilderness! Who shall say
where his influence, written upon the immortal souls
of men, shall end?

President Calvin Coolidge, in address at the
unveiling of the Asbury Monument.

THE ASBURY TRAIL AWARD

The Asbury Trail Award is offered to Explorers and their Dads under the joint sponsorship of the Boy Scouts of America and the Western North Carolina Historical Association. The Award consists of a Medal and a Certificate and will be conferred on those who fulfill the following conditions:

1. Hiking the old Cataloochee trail over which Bishop Francis Asbury crossed the mountains in 1810.
2. Reading one of the recommended books on the life of Asbury.
3. Submitting an essay of not less than one thousand words on Asbury and his contribution to America.

The official hike covers approximately twenty-three miles between Cove Greek Gap, North Carolina, and Davenport Gap, Tennessee, as indicated on the map in this folder. Other nearby points historically related to Asbury are also indicated on the map, but visits to them are optional.

Francis Asbury was the first Bishop elected and consecrated in America by any denomination. He was the virtual creator of the largest Protestant body in the United States.

The Asbury Trail Award, however, is not denominational. As the religious pioneer on the early frontier, Asbury's contribution to the country is recognized by all historians, and a bronze equestrian statue has been erected in Washington and was dedicated by the President of the United States. The Award may be earned by any Scout without regard to his affiliation.

Preparation for Hiking the Trail

Hikers on the Asbury Trail should remember that it is a twenty-three mile long, rugged mountain trail and not a one-day hike. Not less than two days will be required. All persons should be well prepared with equipment.

Most important in personal gear is a pair of sturdy leather hiking boots, preferably at least six inches high. Other equipment may be carried as desired.

There are ample camp sites along the Trail. The best is the Cataloochee Camp indicated on the map. Water is available at three or four spots, but canteens should be carried, also. Note the location of the Ranger Sta-

tion on the map; it is about two miles from the fork of the road indicated. The ranger will gladly give all needed advice and aid.

The mountains are cool at night and warm sleeping gear is a must.

Since most of the trail lies inside the Great Smoky Mountains National Park it is advisable to secure a permit for camping. This can be done by writing to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Headquarters, United States Park Service, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

For further information and enrollment address:

**DANIEL BOONE COUNCIL
Boy Scouts of America
New Medical Building
P.O. Box 7215
Asheville, North Carolina**



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FRANCIS ASBURY, THE PROPHET OF THE LONG ROAD
By Frank O. Salisbury, C.V.O., R.P.S., I.L.D., D.F.A.

The original of this finest portrait of Asbury is in the historical library at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. It has been exhibited at the Royal Society in London.

THE TRAIL

The old Cataloochee Trail runs from Cove Creek, North Carolina, to the area around Cosby, Tennessee.

In general it parallels Highway 284, and coincides with that road at several points. It skirts the border of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for 22 miles or more, and is inside and outside of the Park at various points.

The best description of the Trail is a report submitted to the National Park Service in 1940 by Mr. H. C. Wilburn, entitled *The Cataloochee Aboriginal Trail and Its Use and Development by White People*. This report may be seen at the Park Headquarters in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and in Washington, D. C.

It is still possible to identify parts of the Trail which do not coincide with the highway. There are indentations, "dug out" stretches, Indian "flats" or sites of settlements or resting places, a stone cairn or "Indian grave" and similar evidences, which are described and located in Mr. Wilburn's report.

The origin of the important Trail along which the Cherokees crossed the mountains is lost in antiquity. It was mentioned in literature as early as 1799, when it was called a "turnpike." The Indians had by that time abandoned their settlements along the Trail, although the area was in their hunting grounds and protected by law.

Francis Asbury crossed the Appalachian mountains around sixty times, using different routes. He frequently went from the Knoxville area by way of the present Marshall and Hot Springs to Asheville, or Buncombe Court House, North Carolina. Sometimes he went from the present Morganton, North Carolina, through the gap east of Roan Mountain near Elk Park to the present Elizabethtown and Bristol in Tennessee.

In 1810, however, he took "the new route" and followed the old Cataloochee Trail.

Asbury was accompanied on this trip by Bishop William McKendree, the Rev. Henry Boehm of Pennsylvania, a German-speaking preacher who often travelled with Asbury and whose father, Martin Boehm, was a Mennonite bishop and one of the founders of the United Brethren Church, and the Rev. John McGee, one of the founders of the Camp Meeting movement.

Asbury travelled through Kentucky to the McKendree home near Nashville and to the Holston country of East Tennessee. His party reached the home of Mitchell Porter, three miles south of Sevierville on the present Highway 71, between Sevierville and Gatlinburg. Porter's Chapel was there, at the present Zion's Cemetery. Then the party started up the mountain. The story is told in Asbury's famous *Journal*.

ASBURY'S JOURNAL

Thursday, November 29, 1810. We were in doubt whether we should take the old or the new route:¹ we took Mahon's road,² and got along pretty well, thirty miles, to the gate;³ the woman was sick, but the girls of the house were attentive and polite at Mr. Mahon's.

Friday, our troubles began at the foaming, roaring stream, which hid the rocks. At Catahouche⁴ I walked over a log. But O, the mountain—height after height, and five miles over! After crossing other streams,⁵ and losing ourselves in the woods, we came in, about nine o'clock at night to Vater Shuck's.⁶ What an awful day!

¹ The "new route" was the aboriginal Cataloochee Trail.

² Mahon's road was from near Pigeon Forge on Highway 71 to the head of Cosby Creek in Cocke County, Tennessee, where it intercepted present Highway 32 from Newport to the present Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

³ The Mahon home was at a toll gate near Cosby, Tenn.

⁴ This stream was Cataloochee Creek, which had various spellings. On the bank of the creek they fed the horses and asked a blessing on a meal of bread. John McGee drove the horses through the stream while Asbury, McKendree, and Boehm crossed on the log. (Boehm: *Reminiscences*, 328).

⁵ At the eastern foot of the mountain they came to Cove Creek, passed through a gate, and reached the settlements on Richland Creek and Pigeon River. They probably went up Jonathan Creek through Dellwood Gap and along Richland Creek where it now forms Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, since the better known trail led that way. Or they could have followed Pigeon River to the mouth of Richland Creek a few miles away. (Boehm, *op.cit.*, 328; Allen: *History of Haywood County*, 217ff.)

⁶ "Vater Shuck" was "Father" Jacob Shook (or Shuck), son of a Dutch immigrant and a Revolutionary soldier, who settled on Pigeon River at the present Clyde, North Carolina, in 1786, and is said to have built the first frame house in Haywood County. It is still standing, the home of Mrs. Mary Morgan, and the attic room which was used for preaching has been preserved with its pulpit and chair. Here was the first society in the county, probably formed by the Rev. Samuel Edney, the pioneer circuit rider of Western North Carolina. Shook bequeathed a tract of land for a camp meeting and the church was long known as Camp Ground. It is now Louisa Chapel. It stands on the original property and bears the date 1798. (Allen, *op.cit.*, 217-227, 593-596.)

Saturday, December 1. Last night I was strongly afflicted with pain. We rode, twenty-five miles, to Buncombe.⁷

Sabbath, December 2. Bishop M'Kendree and John M'Gee rose at five o'clock and left us to fill an appointment about twenty-five miles off.⁸ Myself and Henry Boehm went to Newton's academy,⁹ where I preached. Brother Boehm spoke after me; and Mr. Newton, in exhortation, confirmed what was said. Had I known and studied my congregation for a year, I could not have spoken more appropriately to their particular cases; this I learn from those who know them well. We dined with Mr. Newton: he is almost a Methodist, and reminds me of dear Whatcoat¹⁰—the same placidness and solemnity. We visited James Patton;¹¹ this is, perhaps, the last visit to Buncombe.¹²

⁷ At Buncombe Court House or Asheville the party probably stayed at the home of Daniel Killian, Asbury's favorite stopping place. The place still stands in the northern edge of Asheville and is inhabited by one of Killian's descendants. A marker has been erected there. Nearby is the Asbury Church, which grew out of the society in Killian's house and in which some Ashury relics are preserved.

⁸ These men doubtless preached in the home of the Rev. Samuel Edney at the present Edneyville, near Hendersonville. The Edney society is still active.

⁹ The Rev. George Newton, a Presbyterian and Asbury's friend, conducted a well-known school at Asheville.

¹⁰ Richard Whatcoat (1736-1806) came from England in 1784 and became a Bishop in 1800.

¹¹ James Patton and his sons, James W. and John E., were large property owners in Asheville and ran the Eagle Hotel. Patton Avenue is named for them. Among others who entertained Asbury at various times in the Asheville area were Senator Thomas Foster, George Swain, whose son was three times Governor and President of the University of North Carolina, Colonel James Lowry, half-brother of Governor Swain, William Mills, father-in-law of Samuel Edney, and many others both prominent and otherwise.

¹² This was not Asbury's last visit to Buncombe County. He visited the area each autumn until his death in the spring of 1816.

FRANCIS ASBURY 1745-1816

In Washington, D. C., there stands a great equestrian statue of Francis Asbury. It was unveiled by the President of the United States, who presented it to the nation in an address which extolled the preacher on horseback as one of the greatest figures in the pioneer period of American history. More recently the Historical Publications Commission of the United States Government placed the name of Asbury on the list of sixty great Americans whose works should be collected and published, along with such notables as Washington, Jefferson, Adams and Lincoln.

Who was this minister of the Gospel who holds such a secure place in our history?

Boyhood

Francis Asbury was born on August 20, 1745, about four miles from Birmingham, in England. His boyhood home, but not his birthplace, still stands on Newton Road in West Bromwich and is by the city preserved as an historic site.

He was the only son of Joseph (1715-1798) and Elizabeth Rogers (1715-1801) Asbury. He received but little formal education and at the age of thirteen became an apprentice at a nearby forge. Soon thereafter he became a convert of the Evangelical Revival then sweeping England under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley. He became a local preacher, and in 1768 he was admitted to the Conference.

America

The Revival had been brought to America by immigrants from Ireland. It arose almost simultaneously in Maryland and New York and a meeting house had been erected in each place, and an unfinished building had been bought in Philadelphia.

Help was needed and the people appealed to John Wesley for regular preachers. He responded by sending Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor late in 1769.

In 1771 Mr. Wesley called again for volunteers for America, and Francis Asbury and Richard Wright were chosen. They sailed in September and landed at Philadelphia on October 27, 1771.

On shipboard Francis Asbury began his famous *Journal*, later to be carefully edited and published in three volumes in 1821. Among other things he wrote these well-known words:

*"Whither am I going? to the New World.
What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my
own heart. To get money? No. I am going to
live to God and to bring others so to do."*

Asbury in America

On Monday, October 28, 1771, Asbury preached his first sermon in America at St. George's Church in Philadelphia, the oldest church house of the denomination in the United States, now in a National Park by act of Congress. Immediately thereafter he went to New York, where he encountered a problem in the administration of the infant societies.

It related to the famous system of itinerancy, or a "circulation of preachers," under which the ministers are changed at intervals. Asbury had been trained under Wesley's rule of frequent changes, but Boardman and Pilmoor preferred longer tenures. On November 27, 1771, Asbury wrote in his *Journal*:

"At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I will show them the way."

Show them the way he did. He became the first and greatest of the Circuit Riders, who carried religion, morals, education and general culture along the advancing frontier of this continent. He established the itinerant system which enabled the preachers to keep up with the migrating multitudes and to outstrip all others in growth.

At the Conference in 1774, after Boardman and Pilmoor had returned to England, it was officially determined that the preachers should exchange each six months and that those in New York and Philadelphia should move quarterly.

The first Conference met in 1773, stationed ten preachers, and reported 1160 "numbers in Society." Year by year Asbury, along with the ever-increasing number of preachers, rode circuits in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and as far south as North and South Carolina.

During the Revolutionary War the other British preachers left the country, but Asbury remained. For several months he was forced to go into seclusion in Delaware because his nationality brought him under suspicion. New York was cut off from the Conference. But by 1784 the number of preachers had increased to 83 and the "numbers in Society" to 14,988.

Organizing a Church

These people were not members of any Church. The preachers were all laymen: not one had been ordained and they were forbidden to give the Holy Communion to their flocks. After the ties with England and the Church of England were broken they were in an anomalous situation with reference to the ordinances, which the people were demanding from the hands of

their own preachers, but which both Wesley and Asbury opposed. The societies in the South broke away from those in the North in the controversy.

It was clear that something had to be done.

It was then that John Wesley made one of the important decisions of ecclesiastical history. The British Church authorities refused to ordain one of his preachers for America, and he took the momentous step of ordaining one with his own hands, though he was not a Bishop.

Wesley did this because his studies of the early Church convinced him, as they had convinced others, that Bishops were not a "third order" of the clergy. There were only two "orders," namely, deacons and elders or presbyters. Episcopacy was an office, and a Bishop was an elder who had been set apart to a certain office or work in the Church.

It followed, therefore, that Wesley, being an ordained elder or presbyter of the Church of England, had a right to set apart persons for this office or work in his own societies, and this he proceeded to do.

In September, 1784, assisted by James Creighton, also an elder, he "set apart" Thomas Coke, LL.D., another presbyter, as "superintendent" for America, and sent him to these shores with instructions to "set apart" or ordain Francis Asbury to the same office.

But Asbury, who knew Americans, refused to accept the ritual and office on Wesley's appointment but insisted upon learning the will of the preachers. They were called together at Baltimore in December, 1784, and at this famous Christmas Conference the first independent denomination in America was formally organized and Francis Asbury was unanimously elected to the office of "superintendent," which soon became Bishop.

On three successive days he was ordained deacon, elder, and Bishop by Dr. Coke, becoming the first Bishop of any Church to be ordained in America.

The New Bishop

Asbury was the superintendent of societies scattered along the Atlantic seaboard from New England to Charleston, South Carolina, and as far westward as the Holston country of East Tennessee across the Appalachian Mountains.

The *Minutes* showed that John Wesley and Thomas Coke were also superintendents, but Wesley did not visit the new Church and Dr. Coke came only at intervals. Even when Coke was here Asbury attended all the conferences, and since he alone knew the country and the preachers he necessarily discharged nearly the whole responsibility.

Immediately after the adjournment of the Christmas Conference he started on his first episcopal

round. It led him through Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and to Charleston. Then he turned northward and on April 20, 1785, he and Coke convened the first Conference of the new Church at the home of the Rev. Major Green Hill, a local preacher and Revolutionary soldier, whose house still stands near Louisburg, North Carolina.

The operations of the new Church were now in full swing. There were ordained elders and deacons, the sacraments were administered, the people were satisfied since they had the status of members in a recognized Church. Asbury and Coke, accompanied by the Rev. Major Thomas Morrell, another Revolutionary soldier among the preachers, and John Dickins, who became the first Publishing Agent, visited President George Washington immediately after his inauguration and presented him a congratulatory address on behalf of the Church.

In the meantime the Circuit Riders followed the pioneers as they streamed westward along the Wilderness Road and the other early routes. It was said that the first sound in the wilderness was the ring of the settler's axe as he cleared a space for his cabin, and the second was the "hello" of the Circuit Rider at the settler's door.

The Church spread ever westward as they rode. When Asbury died in 1816 it had reached the Father of Waters.

The Great Circuit Rider

Asbury was "The Prophet of the Long Road." From 1784 until 1800 he was alone in the episcopacy and visited each annual conference. Richard Whatcoat was elected in 1800 and travelled with him. Whatcoat died in 1806, and William McKendree was elected two years later, and the practice continued.

Year by year until his death Asbury rode his circuit from New England to Charleston and over the mountains. As long as he was able to do so he rode a horse, and in later years he used a chaise. In spite of almost superhuman sufferings at times, he rode on, though on his last journey he could not stand and had to be carried bodily from the chaise to his preaching places.

In forty-five years Francis Asbury travelled 275,000 miles over the pioneer trails of the continent. He preached more than 16,000 times, an average of a sermon a day. More than sixty times he crossed the uncharted Appalachians.

When he came there were only ten preachers of his faith in the land; when he died there were 700, and he had ordained 6,000 with his own hands. Under his supervision the members increased from under twelve

hundred to nearly a quarter of a million, a ratio of growth greater by far than that of the population.

Asbury never had a home. He did not even have a rented room. He lived literally on the road and slept wherever night overtook him. His only address was "America," and letters so addressed always reached him.

On his last journey in 1816 he was unable to reach the Conference at Charleston, although he was within thirty miles of the city where he was forced to stop. He turned back northward and went a few miles a day when he could travel at all, intent on reaching the General Conference at Baltimore. But he could not go on. His travelling companion, the Rev. John Wesley Bond, carried him into the cabin of George Arnold in Spottsylvania County, Virginia, where he died on March 31, 1816.

He was buried at Arnold's house, but a month later his body was taken to the General Conference and buried under the pulpit of the Eutaw Street Church in Baltimore. Forty years later it was moved again, and now rests in Mount Olivet Cemetery with many other notable men of his Church.

Asbury's Place in History

Asbury was the virtual creator of a great Church. His genius shaped its policy and his iron control guided it during the perilous formative days. He made it, by his insistence on itinerancy, into one of the most effectively functioning bodies in the world. Whatever it has meant to America is due in no small degree to the organizing and administrative genius of Francis Asbury.

As the bearer of a moral culture to the rude frontier settlement, he probably has no peer in our history. He and his Circuit Riders went into every new community and into nearly every log cabin in the wilderness. In their saddle bags they carried the Bible, the hymnal, books, and religious literature of every kind. They brought the news of the outside world. They fought intemperance and every form of wrong doing, and they made law-respecting citizens out of people who might have been ruffians.

Asbury was the educational pioneer of his day. He has long been credited with establishing the first Sunday school in America. His preachers, who had little formal education, were required to preach annually on education. Furthermore, they dotted their wide circuits with schools. As early as 1780 a plan was drawn and money was raised for a school in North Carolina, though it was not actually opened for several years. In Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky, and both the Carolinas they established schools, and they opened a degree-conferring college in Maryland.

Their successors established hundreds of schools and colleges in practically every state. Many of these were suspended as the progress of public education rendered them unnecessary, but more than 150 are in operation today, and some of them are among the greatest in the land.

In 1789 Asbury was instrumental in starting a Publishing House, which is now the largest of its kind in America or in the world. In the same year he started *The Arminian Magazine*, a monthly periodical which, under different names and with some lapses, has continued until this day. Books and periodicals poured from the presses in a stream which has been increasing in volume for more than 150 years and is now greater than it has ever been. Asbury may almost be said to deserve the title of American Publisher Number One.

It is small wonder that President Calvin Coolidge, in dedicating the Asbury monument, exclaimed, "Who shall say where his influence, written upon the immortal souls of men, shall end!"

★ ★ ★

REFERENCES

The following books are recommended for reading in connection with the Asbury Trail Award. One of them should be found in your public library, or they can be read in the Historical Library at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. They cannot be borrowed from the library but may be used in the reading room.

1. Asbury: *The Journal of Francis Asbury*, 3 volumes
2. Tipple: *The Prophet of the Long Road*
3. Tipple: *The Heart of Asbury's Journal*
4. Strickland: *The Pioneer Bishop—Life and Times of Francis Asbury*
5. Smith: *Life of Francis Asbury*
6. Briggs: *Bishop Asbury, a Biographical Study*
7. Du Bose: *Francis Asbury, a Biographical Study*
8. Duren: *Francis Asbury*
9. Mains: *Francis Asbury*

Volume XXXII
Part 4



December
1959

Proceedings
OF THE
Wesley Historical Society

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- (3) to provide a medium of intercourse on all related subjects.

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EDITORIAL

THIS issue of the *Proceedings* makes a late appearance, for which we tender apologies to our readers. We hope that the size and quality of its contents will compensate for the delay, which has been caused by various technical difficulties beyond our control. Members should be warned, however, that the exceptional bulk of this issue must not be regarded as a precedent. Our finances limit us to twenty-four pages, but those who are particularly observant will have noticed that so far in this volume we are eight pages short of our maximum. The current issue of thirty-two pages is merely a "catching up" on the arrears! Only a large increase in our membership would enable us to achieve the desired result of a "bumper" number every quarter.

The long-promised Index to the first thirty volumes of the *Proceedings* is now at the proof stage, and we hope that before long we shall be able to give details of its publication. This indispensable "tool for the job" is the work of Mr. John A. Vickers of Ipswich, who (with the voluntary assistance of many of our members in the work of checking the entries) has devoted untold leisure hours to its compilation as a labour of love. Students of Methodist history will discover by its use (as we already have ourselves) that the earlier volumes of the *Proceedings* are rich in suggestive material for research, as well as containing thousands of interesting details and out-of-the-way facts not to be found elsewhere. We regret that we can no longer supply complete sets of the thirty volumes (though many individual parts are still available); indeed, complete sets would be beyond the financial reach of most of us, for the current market price of cloth-bound sets is about £50. Members may be glad to be reminded, however, that any volume of the *Proceedings* may be borrowed from our Library at Wesley's Chapel, London, where we have two sets available for this purpose, as well as a third set for reference in the Library itself. We are glad to say that the Library is being increasingly used by members, both by post and on the spot. The Librarian will be glad to receive gifts of suitable books. Runs of the various denominational *Magazines* will be especially welcome.

RICHARD TREFFRY, SENIOR AND JUNIOR (1771-1842 AND 1804-38)

SOURCES:

- DOASE, G. C., and COURTNEY, W. P.: *Bibliotheca Cornubiensis*, 1874-81. For Treffy Family and Bibliography, see II, pp. 737-43; III, pp. 1346-7.
- TREFFRY, REV. RICHARD, SEN.: *Memoirs of the Rev. Richard Treffry, Jun.* (Mason, London, 1839). This includes essays on "On the Apostolical Succession" and "Ministerial Power".
- TREFFRY, REV. RICHARD, SEN.: Manuscript *Journal*, 1802-9, per F. L. HARRIS, M.A., Redruth. See *Proceedings*, xviii, pp. 30-2.
- TREFFRY CORRESPONDENCE, preserved in the Letter Book of the Rev. Henry Marchbank, per Mrs E. Jewell, Bude. This correspondence consists of (1) Treffry, jun to Miss Eliza Baron, of Hull, 1828; (2) Treffry, sen. to Mrs. Eliza Treffry (née Baron), of Penzance, 1831; (3) Treffry, jun. to his father, with essay on "Ministerial Power", 1835.

THE portraits of the two Richard Treffrys, father and son, may be seen in the 1834 volume of the *Methodist Magazine* and in the *Memoirs of the Rev. Richard Treffry, Jun.* respectively. The strong likeness is at once apparent—the large features, firm mouth and wavy hair, no longer combed straight down "in the manner of the ancients" as seen in the portraits of the *Arminian Magazine*. Sartorially, both wear a heavy high-backed coat, revealing a waistcoat and white cravat. The father's coat is obviously a riding-coat, well suited to the life of an itinerant; the son's coat is of a more fashionable cut, with a long lapel and two rows of decorative buttons.

Richard Treffry, sen. lived from 1771 to 1842, and his son from 1804 to 1838, and therefore the ministry of both men was exercised in that interesting transition period, the first three decades of the last century; interesting on account of (a) its nearness to Methodist beginnings, (b) the emergence of democratic Methodism, and (c) the changing relation of Methodism to the Church of England due to Methodism's increasing self-sufficiency and the rise of tractarianism. This period can be illustrated from the writings, published and unpublished, of both Treffrys.

The family came from Cuby, Cornwall, where Thomas Treffry (1739-1812) was a farmer. He joined the Methodists in 1778, and became a class-leader and local preacher. His son, Richard, joined the Methodists while in his teens, and entered the ministry in 1792. He was a typical itinerant of the period, and fortunately the outline of his ministry in *Hill's Arrangement* can be filled in by his early *Journal* (1802-9), his surviving letters, and the Conference obituary. He has a niche in Smith's and Stevens's histories, but none in Gregory's or in the *New History of Methodism*. Smith and Stevens both describe him as capable, and in some ways outstanding, but at the same time rough and unpolished. Even the writer of *Westleyan Takings* paid tribute to him: "With Richard Treffry every thing is noble and open;—nothing curtailed". His capabilities may be judged from the fact that he was called to the chair of the Conference in 1833 largely in appreciation of his wise handling of reform disputes

in the South London societies. In 1838 he was appointed Governor of the Theological Institution at Hoxton. He was firmly attached to the Conference during the disputes of the 1830s, but he was recognized by both sides as not being a party man. His writings include a *Reply* to the Rev. C. V. Le Grice, a critic of the Cornish Revival of 1814, and biographies of Benson, Truscott, Trewavas, and his own son.

Richard Treffry, jun. was born at the Camelford manse in 1804, and was baptized at the beginning of the following year by Dr. Coke, then in the course of one of his missionary deputation tours. After leaving Kingswood, young Treffry was apprenticed to a London printer, and for a time left the Methodists. This was in 1819, but within the next five years he returned to the fold and entered the ministry. After travelling for six years in London and Yorkshire circuits, and always battling against ill-health, he was forced to superannuate. From 1831 until his death in 1838 he lived mainly at Penzance. During these years of decreasing strength he laboured with his pen in the service of Methodism. He was instructed by Conference to write in defence of the Eternal Sonship of Christ—a doctrine which Adam Clarke (in his one theological aberration) had denied. During the Warrenite controversy he managed to get to the District Meeting at Truro, and there drew up an official statement defining the attitude of the assembled preachers. His other publications include biographies of the Rev. John Smith, Mr. J. E. Trezize, and of his mother—all useful source-books today. By his early death Methodism undoubtedly lost one who would have been one of her leading thinkers if not statesmen.

It now remains to show how the writings of the two Treffrys illustrate the three subjects:

(1) Methodism between 1800 and 1840

The itinerants were still largely horsemen at the beginning of the period. Between 1802-6 Treffry, sen. regularly rode round the societies on horseback (often on a borrowed horse). By 1830 Treffry, jun. journeyed mainly by horse-drawn carriage. Throughout the period there were many references to chapel-building. At Sithney, in 1802, a Methodist named (? Thomas) Gundy was brought before the justices for allowing his house to be used for preaching without having licensed it. He promised that the preaching would be discontinued, and the following week Treffry went to the parish to find a new place for preaching. Farmer Penaluna offered him a disused building. In the same year Treffry recorded a visit to the Quarter Sessions to obtain preaching licences for himself and six local preachers.

At the beginning of the century Sunday-schools were still few in number, and in his travels up and down the country the indefatigable Dr. Coke found time to press for their establishment, even offering monetary assistance to those who would undertake the work. On Good Friday 1805 Treffry, sen., who was then at Camelford, called the

society together and informed them of Coke's offer of two guineas to start a school. He reported, too, that the leaders' meeting favoured the scheme, but he evidently felt that the society would need some persuading, for he went on: "You may think that it is a new thing & like many other new things more specious than sound." He pointed out that the purpose of the school was to teach the children "to read, to teach them the principles of religion & pray with & for them & labour to train them up for heaven". The school sessions were to be from 8 a.m. to 10-30 a.m. and for "an hour or two" in the afternoon. The Methodists, he suggested, ought not to be behind the Church of England or the Calvinists in the founding of Sunday-schools.

The elder Treffry lived a busy life, continually preaching, meeting classes, exercising discipline, enjoying the hospitality of his many hosts ("Dined at Mr. Cock's. The first goosberry pye for the season"; "Dined on a fine roasted hare"), even spending a day working in the harvest fields. But he had his days off—his "vacant days", when he tilled his garden or took his wife out in a gig. Books were a problem, at least for those who needed them. The younger Treffry, in Penzance, writing to his father, at Bristol, asks him to forward certain books, Turretin's *Works*, Episcopius's *Works*, Burton's *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, and others. The parcel of books, like another parcel then on its way to him, would travel by sea from Bristol.

Treffry, sen.'s references to the Quarterly Meetings are not very detailed, but it is evident that "increased assessments" were then, as now, recurring items on the agenda. Extra quarterage was sometimes required to send the preachers to Conference. One custom prevalent at the time was for each Quarterly Meeting to be attended by one or more itinerants from the adjoining circuits. Thus we find the Launceston staff attending the Camelford meeting, and Camelford and Plymouth itinerants at the Launceston meeting. It would be interesting to know the origin of this custom and its duration, but it seems to have been a formal arrangement at this period. When the Bodmin circuit was formed, in 1804, representatives from the new circuit appeared at the Quarterly Meeting of the old circuit and claimed a fifth part of the furniture of the Camelford manse. It was agreed that the furniture be valued (by a Camelford man!), and thus the furnishing of the Bodmin manse began. The Quarterly Meetings were invariably accompanied by preaching services, lovefeasts, or sacramental celebrations.

Apart from occasional visits to neighbouring circuits, the itinerants only left their circuits to travel to the District Meeting or to Conference. The District Meeting sessions opened at 5 a.m. (1804), and were attended by travelling preachers and circuit stewards. The stewards had been admitted to District Meetings, with a certain limitation, by resolution of the Conference of 1801. Treffry comments (1802) that "the stewards were admitted after breakfast", and (1804) that "the stewards were with us all the time except for an hour during the morning".

Through the writings of the Treffrys we have glimpses of their contemporaries. "I understand that it is arranged for Mr. Bell to come with Mr. Bunting upon our deputation," writes Treffry, jun. to his father in 1835, "I do not know him, but I should fear it was a considerable falling off from Mr. Scott." In the same letter there is a reference to a financial arrangement with the Schools Committee, of which Treffry, sen. was chairman. The son writes:

Mr. Aver [the Rev. William Aver] begged me to look after some of his affairs after his decease and among others the one I am to state. Some years ago he lent the school at two several periods £100 and £80. For these he had no security but a mere memorandum of Mr. Smith [the Rev. John Smith, 3rd]. He wished me therefore to apply for a legal security for these. Will you be so good as to procure this for me. But if Mr. Smith or whoever else has to do with the thing will not give the security, Mr. A. wished the money to be repaid forthwith.

Then there are the contemporaries who make a brief but interesting appearance—"old Mr. Beard [a trustee at Plymouth] was as stiff as a post and as cross as a pig"; Ben Gregory was objected to at the Conference of 1804 "because he takes different texts in one sermon"; the Lincolnshire preachers were charged with "lying long in bed", even till 8 a.m., at Squire Brackenbury's (Mr. Moore said that the Pauline use of the word "chambering" literally signified lying long in bed). Among the Treffrys' unnamed contemporaries were the Methodists near the Lizard who missed the evening service because a cargo of uncustomed goods had just been landed on the beach; and the dispirited smugglers who had been relieved of their cargo in the Bristol Channel and were journeying back across Cornwall to their home base.

There are several references to William Carne, the wealthy banker of Penzance, who entertained Wesley in 1789 and who was still leading a class in the 1830s. He was steward of the East Cornwall circuit in 1786, and held the same office as late as 1834. He appears to have observed Wesley's rules on the use of money, for it is estimated that he gave away over £10,000. The old man liked to talk to the young Treffry about the early days of Methodism. He mentioned an itinerant in the days before manses were provided who was posted from Edinburgh to Penzance and had to leave his wife behind. After twelve months he wished to pay her a visit, and so rode his horse all the way to Edinburgh, spent a week with her, and then rode back again. The wives of the itinerants deserve more praise than has ever been bestowed upon them. The travelling preachers were sometimes themselves very particular in their choice of partners. The elder Treffry, writing from Garforth in 1831 to his daughter-in-law, describes the virtues of his second wife, to whom he had just been united. He says:

Her natural temper as far as my present observations go is tranquil, even, & serene; I have not seen anything yet that bears the most distant resemblance to turbulence of disposition. Her piety is unquestionable, the judgement of the church in permitting her to have had 3 classes of

about 70 people is sufficient proof that she possesses in no ordinary degree the confidence of the people of God. . . . She is thoroughly domestic, loves home, understands well how to make a pudding or a pie, or knit a stocking, or mend a garment. . . . She is also a rigid economist & knows how to make a little go a great way. Her mental powers, though not above the ordinary rank of mortals, are nevertheless not inferior to common minds. Of her defects I say nothing. . . .

The second Mrs. Treffry, however, was following a great exemplar whose saintliness and self-discipline have been described by Dr. L. F. Church in *The Early Methodist People*.

(2) Methodist Reform

The reform movement had a much earlier origin than the events of 1849, or even of 1797; it had its genesis in the time of Wesley (cf. *Wesley's Letters*, viii, p. 196). During the period covered by the Treffry writings the movement, taking various forms, was slowly gathering force. The signatories to the *Redruth Resolutions* of 1791, of whom one was William Carne, were all devoted Wesleyans, yet their resolutions went quite as far in intention as those of the later reformers.¹ These petitioners were not in favour of the division of the Connexion into Districts, but when this was done they seem to have co-operated loyally in the new order. There were those, however, who, not satisfied with the admission of stewards to the District Meeting, pressed for the admission of "delegates" from the societies. In 1802 the elder Treffry rode into St. Erth, where he met the Redruth District Chairman, William Shelmerdine. As they rode on to the meeting Shelmerdine explained that he was in a strait, not knowing whether to admit delegates from the people to attend the meeting throughout its sessions; he feared that whichever way he decided, he would be censured either by the Conference or by the people. His successor of thirty years later would have known how to act, but the constitution was still developing. Methodism was still coming "down from heaven as it was wanted, piece by piece".

If the composition of the church courts was still undecided, so was the legal settlement of the chapels. A Methodist in the Helston circuit built a chapel about 1824, and was willing to settle it on the model deed. He wished, however, to make certain restrictions, and the District Meeting forbade the preachers to occupy the pulpit until these were waived. It is not likely that this was an isolated case. Ten years later, when the Warrenite controversy spread through the Connexion, the younger Treffry, as already related, framed the declaration of loyalty on behalf of the West Cornwall preachers. Reporting to his father, he says that he "hopes that in general we have little to fear in this county". His hopes were not entirely realized, for there soon followed the disastrous secession in North Cornwall,² and the only less serious ones at Helston and St. Austell.

¹ The Resolutions are printed in Smith's *History of Wesleyan Methodism*,

ii, p. 702

² See *Proceedings*, xxviii, pp. 151 ff.

The issue underlying these disagreements within and secessions from Wesleyan Methodism was of course that of ministerial authority. It was not always the obvious issue, but it was the fundamental one: who should exercise "episcopé"—the itinerants, the stewards, or a democratic combination of both? In 1835 Richard Treffry, sen. asked his son to express his opinion on "Ministerial Power in the Excision of unworthy Members of the Church". It must have been evident to him when he raised the question that if the itinerants were possessed of the power to include and exclude members, then ministerial rule would follow as a consequence. The son's reply took the form of a lengthy, closely-reasoned essay, written on a large sheet of paper which also contained a short covering letter.

After examining the evidence, Treffry states that no one in the New Testament is represented as responsible for the spiritual prosperity of a church except its pastors, and argues that this can only be because they possessed the power to exclude unworthy members. His comment on 1 Peter v. 1-3 is: "If ministers possess no power the exhortation of St. Paul against the abuse of power is impertinent." Diotrephes is censured (3 John 9-10), not for exercising the right to excommunicate, but for misusing that power. Treffry has no difficulty in citing the early fathers as being in agreement with St. Chrysostom that "the power of the keys is possessed in the church by its pastors alone". He then points out that a ministry must exist before the formation of a church, and every missionary must, in the beginning, exercise the power of the keys. If this power belongs to the minister by the authority of God at the commencement of a religious community, it is clear that by that authority alone the power can be withdrawn from him. But God has never interposed His authority to that effect; the original grant and appointment of ministerial authority therefore remains in full force.

Treffry finally adds a few comments on the law and usage of Methodism up to that time. From Wesley's death until 1797, the power of expulsion had been, without check or control, in the hands of the preachers. In that year Conference agreed to one check on this system: "No person shall be expelled from the society for immorality till such immorality be proved at the Leaders' Meeting." Treffry argues that this does not mean that the leaders' meeting is to be the judge or jury. Pointing out that, at that date, a preacher has the power of withholding a ticket from one who has ceased to attend class, he says that it cannot be the law that a minister has the right to exclude a *negligent* member but no power to exclude an *immoral* one.

Whatever may be thought of this doctrine by modern Methodists, there is no doubt that father Treffry found it both agreeable and scriptural. Perhaps he called to mind his own exercise of the power of the keys at Prospednick in 1802, when he "excluded 2 from the society for being fruitfully intimate without a priestly sanction", and at Tintagel in 1804, when he expelled two members for quarrelling.

(3) Relations with the Church of England

It is a commonplace that there was never a formal act of separation between Methodism and the Church of England, but that was partly because there never was a formal unity. Throughout the period of the Treffrys large numbers of Methodists regarded themselves as being members of "the Church" as well as of "the Society", yet throughout the same period there was a growing sense of being a separate body. This separateness was hastened on the one side by a feeling of self-sufficiency and on the other by a lack of sympathy on the part of the clergy. It was the parson of Sithney who hauled (?Thomas) Gundry before the justices in 1802, and the rector of Lanteglos-by-Camelford who in that same year refused to bury a child who had been baptized by the itinerant, Joseph Robbins. It was in that same year also that the elder Treffry attended Conference and heard Dr. Coke criticized for making a private approach to the bishops with a view to uniting the societies to the Church by the ordination of selected itinerants.

While Richard Treffry, jun. was at Penzance the bishop of Exeter (Phillpotts) made an appeal to the Wesleyans in his famous Visitation Charge of 1833. Speaking to the clergy of the Wesleyans, he said: "They agree with us almost entirely in doctrine, certainly in all which the most rigidly orthodox amongst us would deem *essential* parts of the Christian Covenant. . . . Would to God that the narrow partition which divides them from us could be broken down." In spite of the eirenic note in this charge, the Methodists read it with some suspicion. Treffry thought that "these attentions from dignitaries of the Church are rather flattering, yet I fear they will be mischievous". He considered that the bishop's proposals were indefinite or impracticable, and in some instances ridiculous. He considered publishing a reply to the bishop, but did not do so. Yet Treffry had no objection to the Anglican Church as such, and during his retirement considered taking orders therein so that he could fulfil his ministry in a quieter sphere than was possible in Methodism. Dr. Bunting advised him against this course, on the ground that he might still become strong enough to resume the itinerancy.

In the year of Phillpotts's Visitation Charge already quoted, Newman issued his famous Tract No. 1, on the Ministerial Commission, which contained an exposition of the doctrine of the Apostolic Succession. This tract naturally provoked fresh thinking on the subject among the Methodist preachers. The fruits of this new thinking can be seen in Alfred Barrett's *Essay on the Pastoral Office* (1839) and in the slighter but hardly less important essay *On the Apostolical Succession*, published in the *Memoirs* of the younger Treffry.

The essay may be summarized by the following quotations:

The most appropriate exposition of the phrase would be a succession of ministers in one degree or another resembling the apostles: apostolic men, & therefore pious, zealous, and faithful. In the existence of such a succession there is strong reason to believe.

There is an obvious incongruity in terming a series of individuals apostolical, who are yet destitute of that which was essential to the character of the apostles. In other words, an unapostolical man cannot form one of an apostolical succession.

But this is not the sense affixed to the phrase by those who are most zealous in its maintenance. They employ it to signify . . . a series of ministers ordained by diocesan bishops, and extending uninterruptedly from the time of the apostles . . . unto the present period.

The ordainers must have been diocesan bishops—if they were only parochial bishops (of the same order as the presbyters) . . . their ordinations were presbyterian.

Treffry concludes the matter by reference to New Testament and patristic texts supporting the view that bishops and presbyters are of the same order. Thus the apostolic succession, in the form defined by the tractarians, "is a mere figment". Yet Treffry certainly believed in an apostolic succession which was more than a mere figment, as can be seen when the above quotations are placed alongside those on "ministerial authority" already quoted. Against the Methodist reformers he asserted that they were emptying the ministerial office of the authority which belonged to it by reason of the true apostolic succession; against the Anglican reformers he asserted that they were substituting a mechanical succession for a spiritual one. Nevertheless he himself was quite certain both of the succession and of its accompanying authority.

THOMAS SHAW.

The 1959 edition of *Bathafarn*, the Journal of the Historical Society of the Methodist Church in Wales, contains only one brief article in English, on "Edward Phillips, Maesmynys", by Griffith T. Roberts. The rest of its contents is in Welsh, and therefore completely unintelligible to most of us. An article on Welsh hymns looks as though it might be particularly interesting! We are glad that our sister Society continues to make good headway, and note with interest that its treasurer bears the admirable name of "Proffitt".

The Epworth Press has republished as a "paper-back" in its Wyvern series Leslie F. Church's *Knight of the Burning Heart* (pp. 127, 2s. 6d.). No better book than this can be found to introduce John Wesley to children and young people. Our only criticism is that it takes the author 68 pages to arrive at the 1738 Aldersgate Street experience, leaving him only another 60 pages in which to crowd the remaining fifty romantic years of Wesley's life. There are some minor errors of fact, such as the confusion between Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire and Stanton in Gloucestershire as the home of Vaughan.

A new church has just been opened at Kirkham, in the Lytham St. Annes circuit, Lancashire. This is the third Methodist church in the village, the first being built in 1844. But the cause goes back to 1811. These and other well-illustrated facts are briefly given in a souvenir brochure obtainable (1s. post paid) from the Rev. Clifford W. Chesworth, 15, Derbe Road, Lytham St. Annes.

A JOURNEY TO CONFERENCE IN 1794

"THERE is nothing new under the sun"—a saying to which this letter supplies abundant proof: the solicitude of a preacher for his wife during his long absence at Conference, ministerial friendships—and gossip, and the traditional Methodist hospitality. The letter was written by Charles Atmore to his wife after a week's journey to Bristol for the 1794 Conference.

Charles Atmore was stationed at Halifax, which had recently been the scene of a great revival¹ in which 700 members had been added to the circuit. He was one of the outstanding preachers of his day, had been ordained by Wesley for Scotland in 1786, and became President in 1811. His biography was published in serial form in the *Methodist Magazine* in 1845, and some of the letters he received from his great friend John P'awson were printed in volumes x-xii of the *Proceedings*.

When Atmore left home for Conference his wife was seriously ill. He wrote in his diary:

Wednesday, July 16. About half-past ten a.m. I took a sorrowful leave of my dear Betsy, and set off for the Conference. I never left her with such reluctance before. I would gladly have stayed at home and sent Mr. Lomas [the second preacher] in my place; but she would not consent. She said, it was the Lord's work, who would not only preserve me, but keep her in my absence.²

When he arrived home on 13th August, after a month's absence, he found his wife critically ill, and she died a week later, after only seven years of married life. The letter, printed below, contains many terms of endearment and expressions of concern about her health which we have deemed it unnecessary to reproduce.

CHARLES ATMORE TO HIS WIFE

Bristol, July 24, 1794.

My dearest.

By the good providence of God we arrived safe in this city last night. Surely the Lord is good—is good to us. I do feel it in some measure. May I feel it more.

Wednesday we got safe to Manchester. I called upon Mrs. Barker, who rejoiced to see me and she says she will come to see us when she comes to Huddersfield, were it 12 miles out of the way. Thursday we reached Burslem. I cannot tell you how glad poor James was to see us. He is an excellent lad indeed in every respect—longs to see you and will rejoice to be near us. As Friday was so very hot and we were much fatigued, we accepted the kind invitation of our friends and stayed another night. I preached to the people, I hope not in vain.

Saturday morning we set off early, and reached Dudley, where we were kindly received by Mr. & Mrs. Lessey. There we spent the Sunday. I read prayers & Mr. Q preached in the forenoon, and then I preached at 2 and 6. Monday we came to Worcester. Mr. Joseph Taylor was just gone that morning, but Mrs. Taylor received us gladly. In the evening

¹ Walker, *History of Wesleyan Methodism in Halifax*, pp. 188-90.

² *Methodist Magazine*, 1845, p. 318.

I was much persuaded to preach, but as William Collins was in town before us both Mr. Q and I thought he would expect to preach, and would be highly displeased if he did not. Such a preaching I never heard before either in Church or Chapel in all my life. So much consummate nonsense I do believe was never heard in an hour before. My very soul was pained, and had I not been in the pulpit I certainly should have gone out. Some of the people supposed him beside himself. After he had done I told him I wished to say a few words, which he submitted to, and I endeavoured to do as well as I could to make matters up by informing them of the glorious work of God in Yorkshire. Mr. Walton from Wakefield was there and desired his kind love to you.

Tuesday we came to Stroud. Mr. & Mrs. Cousins were glad to see us and I preached in the evening to a tolerable company, but religion in this country, indeed all the way after we left Manchester, seems to be at a very low ebb. Mr. Cousins wished me to stay another day at Stroud, but Mr. Q wished to get to Bristol, and I did not think well to let him go by himself as he was a perfect stranger. We therefore came here yesterday. My mare performed her journey remarkably well, and they both seemed as hearty when we reached Bristol as when we left Halifax.

Mr. Q and I found it very profitable to pray together, and indeed the whole journey has been the most profitable and agreeable of any I almost ever travelled, for we have had no company all the way, so that we could converse and pray without interruption from any one.

If you are no better I certainly will return again as soon as possible. Mr. P'awson and Mr. Q join me in kindest love to you all.

I am, my dearest, your own

C. ATMORE.

The Delegates did not meet yesterday, several were not come in, so that I can say nothing yet. I quite forgot to mention to Mr. Emmet & Mr. Hance the cleaning of the chapel in the time of Conference. It certainly ought to be whitewashed and painted before winter, and this will be the best time to do it if they think proper. Mr. Lomas may speak to them about it.

THEOPHILUS LESSEY was the Assistant of the Wolverhampton circuit, and became President in 1839. JOSEPH TAYLOR was the Assistant of the Worcestershire circuit, and JONATHAN COUSINS of the Gloucestershire circuit. The identity of "MR. Q" remains obscure. The only itinerant preacher with that initial on the stations at that time was John de Queteville. His ministry was spent in the Channel Islands, where he was an heroic Methodist pioneer. What could he be doing in Halifax? But Atmore's travelling companion was obviously a preacher. MR. EMMETT was presumably either Robert or Richard of that ilk, both of whom were trustees of the Halifax chapel. WILLIAM COLLINS was the second preacher at Epworth.

The 1794 Conference followed hard upon the famous (or infamous!) Lichfield Meeting, and was largely occupied with the sacramental controversy which led to the Plan of Pacification the next year. Wrote Atmore: "I was greatly tried by the spirit which was manifested by several of the brethren in the disputes respecting the sacraments, and separation from the Church. It was to me the most painful Conference I had ever attended." WESLEY F. SWIFT.

BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY (1745-1816)

[The boyhood home of Francis Asbury at Great Barr, West Bromwich, has long been a place of Methodist pilgrimage. It has become the property of the Corporation of West Bromwich, and after restoration is now open to visitors as a Methodist shrine. The official opening ceremony was performed on 27th November 1959 by Sir Roger Makins, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., a former British Ambassador to the United States of America, in the presence of a distinguished company, which included the President of the World Methodist Council (the Rev. Dr. Harold Roberts), the Secretary (the Rev. Dr. E. Benson Perkins), and Bishops Ivan Lee Holt and Fred P. Corson, of the American Methodist Church. A full report appeared in the *Methodist Recorder* on 3rd December 1959.

The following article by Dr. E. Benson Perkins, and a later one on pages 83-5 by the Town Clerk of West Bromwich (J. M. Day, Esq., LL.B.) are reprinted with their kind permission from the official brochure issued in connexion with the opening. These articles, and the accompanying photographs, will serve as a permanent record of an historic occasion which gives equal pleasure to both British and American Methodists.—EDITOR.]

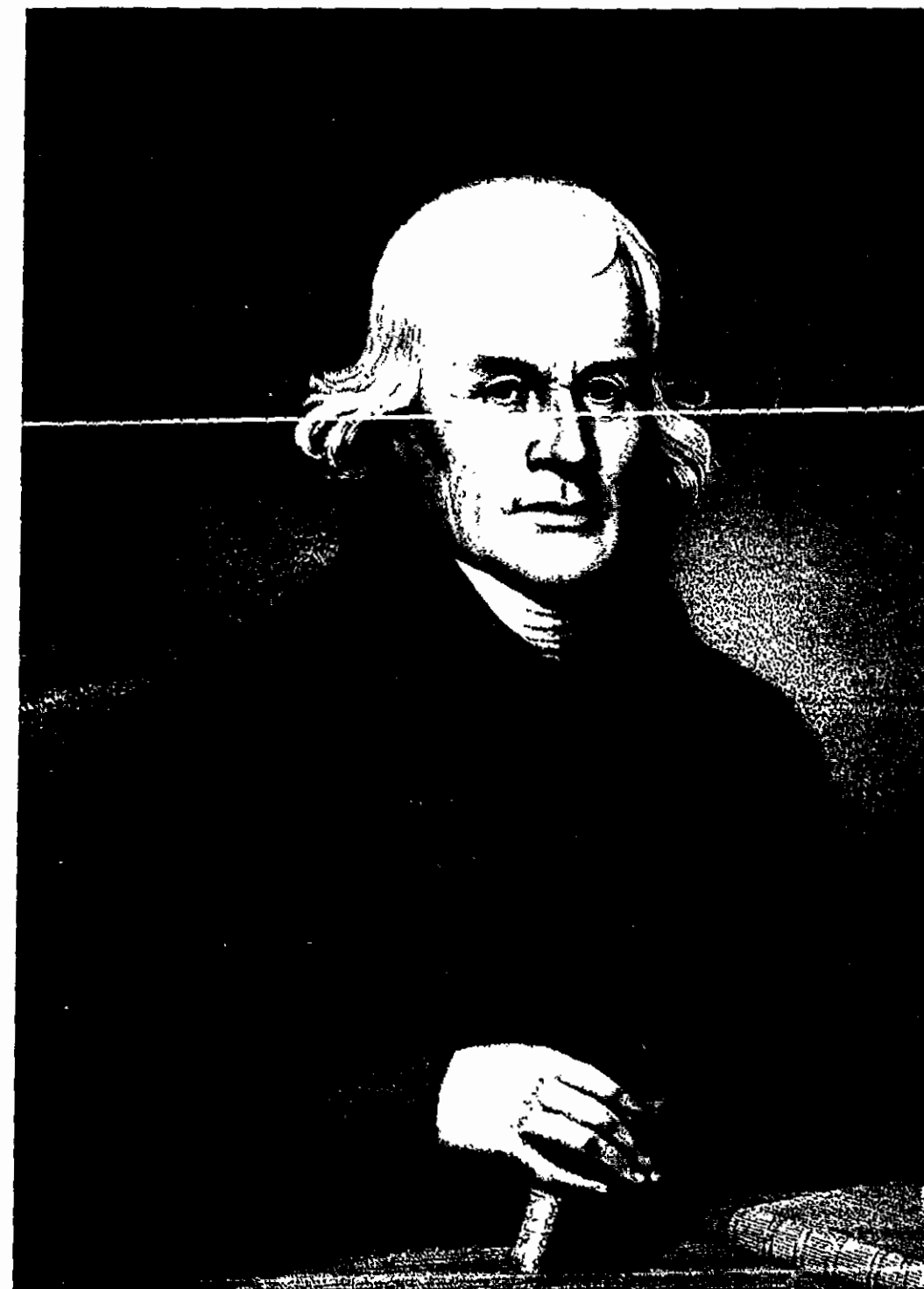
A builder of the Nation

WASHINGTON, D.C. was the scene of a particularly interesting ceremony on 16th October 1924. The occasion was the unveiling of an equestrian statue of Francis Asbury, and the principal speaker was the President of the United States. The statue is on Mount Pleasant, at the junction of Sixteenth Street N.W. and Columbia Road, and on the plinth of the statue Francis Asbury is described as "The Prophet of the Long Road". President Calvin Coolidge paid a great tribute to a great man. He said: "This Circuit Rider spent his life making stronger the foundation on which our Government rests, and seeking to implant in the hearts of all men, however poor and unworthy they may have seemed, an increased ability to discharge the high duties of their citizenship. His outposts marched with the pioneers, his missionaries visited the hovels of the poor that all might be brought to a knowledge of the truth . . . Who shall say where his influence written on the immortal souls of men shall end? . . . How many temples of worship dot our landscape! How many Institutions of learning, some of them rejoicing in the name of Wesleyan, all trace the inspiration of their existence to the sacrifice and service of the lone Circuit Rider! He is entitled to rank as one of the Builders of our Nation."

So a permanent memorial to this pioneer churchman who did so much to strengthen the foundations of the great American people stands in Washington, and there are words addressed to the observer which say: "If you seek for the results of his labours you will find them in our Christian civilisation."

His citizenship

President Coolidge spoke of Asbury's "citizenship", though curiously enough he never became an American citizen in the legal sense



FRANCIS ASBURY
Portrait by John Paradise at New York, 1812. From the
steel engraving by B. Lanier, 1814.

(Block kindly loaned by The Upworth Press.)

of that word. He left England in 1771 at the age of twenty-six, and never returned. For forty-five years he lived and toiled for the American people, "serving his God with a heart ever young", as might be said of him in words used of his leader, John Wesley. Why he never took up American citizenship none can say, but his love for America and his loyalty through the War of Independence and to the Republic are unquestioned. He said: "If I were to leave America I should break my heart," but he went on to say also, "If I stay I shall perhaps break my constitution, but here I must die."

He was, first of all, a preacher of the gospel, but he was thereby concerned with the true well-being of the community. He was indeed a social reformer, recognizing the degrading effects of poverty, the fundamental wrong of slavery, and the evils that arise from the traffic in alcoholic liquors. On two occasions Francis Asbury, with Dr. Coke, visited George Washington. The first was to offer felicitations to the victorious General and to invoke his aid in dealing with slavery. The second occasion, in 1789, was to visit the first President of the United States. Asbury took with him a message of congratulations, loyalty and prayer on behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as it was then known. This was the first religious community to present such a greeting to the new President of the United States, and it evoked from George Washington a gracious reply in which he spoke of seeking "the assistance of Divine Providence" in the great task which was laid upon him.

His churchmanship

The Methodist Church had its beginning some ten years before Asbury went to America. Emigrants from Ireland, principally, had brought together Methodist societies in New York and in Maryland. Thus he went out to join a little band of Methodist preachers who were already at work. Seven years later the Revolution began, and ultimately all the Methodist preachers from England returned home but Asbury. He remained, and through those years greatly did he serve. In 1784 he was elected the first Bishop of what was known for many years thereafter as the Methodist Episcopal Church. The story of his travels almost entirely by horseback and over country where there were no roads is the story of an endurance of constant hardship and intense loneliness. Time after time he crossed the Allegheny Mountains, penetrating much further west from the coast-line than most, if any, of his contemporaries in such work. During the forty-five years of his ministry he is said to have travelled 275,000 miles, an almost unbelievable figure when the conditions are remembered. When he arrived in America there were but ten authorized Methodist ministers and some five hundred members. When he died he left a Church with over six hundred ministers and nearly a quarter of a million enrolled members.

His greatest work was that of a preacher of the gospel, and to that end he schooled himself. With nothing more than an elementary

education, he had studied Greek, Hebrew and Latin before he left England, and carried through those studies amid his arduous labours in America. His saddlebags were occupied mostly by books, and in founding a Book Concern and in the establishment of the Cokesbury College he sought to provide for preachers and people that education without which the best work could not possibly be done.

His home

Through the greater part of his life Asbury never had a real home. He never married, but he retained vividly the memory of the home he had in his early years spent within the area of the County Borough of West Bromwich. Soon after he was born, his parents moved into the little cottage with its four tiny rooms which was the home of Asbury throughout his boyhood and youth. His actual birthplace was about a mile away, near Great Barr, but that dwelling was destroyed many years ago in the development of new roads. He went to a school at Snails Green, and at thirteen was apprenticed to a blacksmith at Forge Mill. His parents were associated with the parish church at Great Barr, but young Asbury came under the influence of the Rev. Edward Stillingfleet, who was the incumbent of the parish church of West Bromwich, and himself greatly influenced by the Methodist movement. Francis Asbury became a local preacher in connexion with the extending Methodist societies before he was quite out of his teens, and when he was but twenty-one was an accepted preacher in "Full Connexion", as the Methodists phrase it. He travelled to various parts of the country as directed, and then in 1771 when the appeal came from America he offered himself and was chosen by John Wesley for the great service to which his life was given.

As we dedicate to perpetual remembrance this tiny home of so great a man, we should remember his parents, who made a great sacrifice and made it willingly that their son should go to the New World. His father lived on for another twenty-seven years; his mother a little longer, for she died in 1802. When he was leaving for America, Asbury thrust into his mother's hand the only thing of value he possessed—his silver watch—and through succeeding years, out of his very small resources, he did not fail to send money home to help his parents, particularly his beloved mother in her later years. We do well to remember too that his parents carried on Methodist services in that tiny cottage, which is therefore associated not only with the home of Asbury but with the very work in the Methodist Church to which he gave his life.

St. Vincent de Paul said once: "God as a rule uses people of little consequence to effect great things." There could be no better illustration of this than the story of Francis Asbury; but the "people of little consequence" become great in the work to which God calls them and the achievement that He makes possible. So it was in the case of Francis Asbury.

E. BENSON PERKINS.

STORMY SCENES IN ABERDEEN IN 1816

THE following statement occurs on page 23 of Mr. C. Diack's *Sketch of Methodism in Aberdeen, 1747-1900*, published in 1901:

M'Allum's successor, in 1815, was Rev. Joshua Bryan, who quarrelled with his members over certain matters of church government which were then in agitation, and did his best, though without success, to dissolve the Society. He collected all the class papers, which were then used instead of class books and had to be renewed every quarter; and, on a Sunday evening, in the chapel in Queen Street, after denouncing in a sermon of fierce invective the doings of the members and their treatment of him, he tore the class papers to shreds and tatters, exclaiming, "There is no more a Methodist Society in Aberdeen, and I shall start one on Connexional principles". A minor District Meeting was held in Aberdeen, when members of the church gave evidence, and Mr. Bryan stated his view that the Society was not based on Methodist principles. Mr. M'Allum was one of the meeting, and, in replying to Mr. Bryan, clinched his arguments by saying, "I have been travelling up and down the country for forty-one years, but never was accused of being anti-Methodistic till the great Joshua Bryan arose". The result was Mr. Bryan's suspension as a minister.

I do not know the source of Mr. Diack's information. He may have gathered it from contemporary local press reports, for it would certainly make what journalists call "good copy".

JOSHUA BRYAN was received "on trial" in 1808. After a year in the Whittlesea Mission, he spent eight years in Scotland, where he formed a close friendship with Robert Nelson.¹ In 1815 he was appointed to Aberdeen and re-appointed the following year, becoming at the same time the Chairman of the Aberdeen District. Then occurred the events recorded by Diack.

The Sheffield Conference heard "with the highest displeasure" of Bryan's conduct, and ratified, in part, the findings and disciplinary action of the District Meeting. It declared, however, that "the District Meeting has pronounced (although from the best motives) a sentence more severe than the facts of the case could altogether justify". It was pointed out how seriously a suspension of nine months (during which period the Connexion was responsible for the offender's maintenance) affects both the individual and the funds of the Connexion, and therefore should only be resorted to in extreme cases. One can understand the concern for Connexional funds in the light of the following figures, taken from the *Minutes* of 1817:

Joshua Bryan's journey to the Conference	...	£3	0	0
Bro. Bryan's board, lodging, etc.	...	£51	12	7
Additional board, postage etc. to Bro. Bryan	...	£12	9	4

—a total of £67 15. 11d.

¹ See *Proceedings*, xxvii, p. 122

There were also the travelling expenses of those who attended the special District Meeting, amounting to £19 17s. od. Up to date, therefore, the case of Joshua Bryan had cost the Connexion £86 18s. 11d.—a very considerable sum for those days.

From this financial statement we learn the names of some of the ministers who attended the District Meeting:

WILLIAM WEST (1779-1822). In 1815 he had been stationed at Arbroath, where he had preceded J. Bryan in the chair of the Aberdeen District. The following year (1816) he moved to Perth, in the Edinburgh District. In 1817 he retired to London, and about 1821 removed to Aberdeen, where he died in September 1822.²

WILLIAM CLEGG (1808-48). He was at Dundee, where he remained for three years.

THOMAS YATES. In 1816 he followed William West at Arbroath. His inclusion among the "judges" of Joshua Bryan is of special interest because he himself was a "difficult" brother. Finally, in the records of the Conference of 1826, we read of his having "exposed his wife and the cause of religion to great reproach by publishing, without just cause, in a Liverpool newspaper, an advertisement warning the public against trusting her". It was therefore decided that his name should not in future be printed in the *Minutes*, and at the same time arrangements were made for assisting him and his family financially.

JOSEPH KITCHEN (1799-1818). He was appointed to Brechin in 1816. He died in July 1818, at the age of 48.

JAMES SUGDEN (1809-44). He was at Banff in 1816. His colleague was James Miller (1812-53), for whom see below.

Five of the eleven ministers stationed in the Aberdeen District were therefore present, apart from Bryan himself.

So far, we have been presented with the case for the prosecution and nothing more. Now, after a silence of 140 years, as a voice from the grave, we hear Joshua Bryan in his own defence. This is set forth in a letter written by him to his friend Robert Melson, then at Malton, which I found recently among the papers left by the latter.

JOSHUA BRYAN TO ROBERT MELSON

Edinburgh. 9th Feb. 1817.

My dear Melson,

If you have not been informed, you will not be a little surprised when I tell you that your old friend Bryan is suspended from his ministerial office till the ensuing Conference, and from what I know of the friendship you have shewn me, together with your constitutional warmth, that your indignation will arise when I inform you of the particulars of my distressing case—but remember we are commanded to be "angry and sin not".

I need not occupy this paper or detain you by commenting on the base letter which the Leaders of Aberdeen sent to the Conference.

² See *Methodist Magazine*, 1822, p. 686.

though the circumstances connected with it would give you to understand more of the iniquitous conduct of my enemies. Let it suffice to say that I went to Aberdeen determined to take no notice of it and accordingly, when at the first Leaders' Meeting after Conference, when they mentioned it to me, I said I would not defile my lips by speaking on so dirty a subject. The following week Mr. Miller came through Aberdeen on his way to Banff. He preached and met the Society, took his leave of his friends and said that they who wrote the letter to Conference, which was the cause of his remove, had acted a '*Judas and hypocritical part*'. At the next Leaders' Meeting they all began to censure me for suffering Mr. Miller to preach, and asked me if I approved of what he said in the Society Meeting. I considered this a very artful question, and that I could not disapprove of what he said without justifying their conduct, which I considered repugnant both to reason and conscience. I therefore said I approved of all that he said, for it was true. They all therefore, except one, threw down their class papers; said that the Society were all against me; that I did not preach the Gospel and that they would have no more to do with me. John Thomson ordered me to have ready the money that was in the chapel, for he and A. Singer would from that moment give up their trust. And to prove what they asserted they went to a lawyer next day to try to demand the money immediately.

I had long been concerned for the state of the leading men in the Aberdeen Society; and believed that no good could be done without a reformation. I therefore thought it a good opportunity to make the attempt; and therefore, in the fear of the Lord and a pure desire to promote the prosperity of His cause, I publicly dissolved the Society, and the two following weeks lectured upon our Rules, explaining the nature of Methodism in its Doctrines and Discipline, and endeavoured to form the Society anew. The classes were filling up fast and prosperity was seemingly before us. But while I was doing good, others were doing evil. The trustees and leaders who had long domineered over the Preachers felt themselves mortified because I did not court their favour. They therefore wrote to the President and stated circumstances in such a light that Mr. Yates was authorised by him to call a District Meeting; he, as if glad of the opportunity, summoned the Meeting before I got either charges or accusers, and invited Ward, West and McAllum to the Meeting, who all, as if determined to [cut?] me, boarded at the houses of my enemies and never spoke to me upon the subject.

Without detaining you any further, I was sentenced to suspension and to leave Aberdeen. I remonstrated against leaving the town, both to the Meeting and to the President, but all in vain.

I left it by the advice of my friends, who thought it would be the best. I had entered a student in the College, as I had done the year before, and this was one reason of my unwillingness to leave, but I have entered in this University and am studying as hard as possible.

I am tied down to half a guinea a week, which in this very dear place makes it very trying to us, as it took all the money I had to pay the fees of the College. The friendship of the Edinburgh Methodists is very small. None of them has been to see me! I am forced to receive my paltry support through the hands of Ward, which mortifies me not a little, seeing that he said to the brethren, I understand, when they

were considering in my absence what was to be done, that—He had not an atom of respect for me!!! What think ye of that, Robert?

Mrs. Bryan, poor thing, laid it so much to heart, insomuch that I thought it would have proved her death, but we have both got thus far over it pretty well, only, sometimes, we have been pushed for want of money. I hope you will write some time and tell me if my case is known in your quarter and what are the sentiments of the people upon it.

I hope your dear Betsy and children are well and that you are prospering in your soul, in your family and in your circuit. I would have written to you much sooner but I have had so much writing concerning this business that I have scarcely been able to attend to anything.

When the decision of the District was known the friends in Aberdeen who considered me all along in the right made an offer of buying me a Church which is soon to be disposed of, and proposed giving me a salary if I would consent to settle, but I declined accepting of their offer. As I am unjustly treated by the District I intend to see what the Conference will say on the business, and if I die, *I will die like a man.*

I hope to see you at Sheffield and from the few hints I have given you and from what you know of me, I hope you will be able to deliver a long and pointed speech on the occasion.

Ward and West will not be so great in the Conference as they were in the District, for their presence overawes the others, so that they could say nothing.

I need not apologize for writing so much, for I know you would not be weary reading it much longer.

I therefore, with love to you and Mrs. Nelson, remain

Yours affectionately,

JOSHUA BRYAN.

So, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, what is your verdict?

Bryan was appointed to Norwich, but seems never thereafter to have settled down to the normal life of a Methodist minister. At the Conference of 1822 he was censured for the publication of pamphlets which were said to contain "gross libels on several excellent characters"—probably members of the Conference—and was suspended for a year. A somewhat unsatisfactory report was presented to the following Conference, but he remained quite obdurate, and was excluded from the Connexion.

JAMES MILLER (1812-53) moved from Aberdeen to Banff in 1816, having had one year as Bryan's colleague.

VALENTINE WARD (1801-35) was then at Edinburgh, where he was Chairman of the District. For an account of this minister, who figured so prominently in Scottish Methodism, see W. F. Swift's Wesley Historical Society Lecture, *Methodism in Scotland*, pp. 72 ff.

DUNCAN MCALLUM (1775-1834). Probably no minister has had more intimate associations with Scottish Methodism.¹

W. L. DOUGHTY.

¹ See W. F. Swift, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

THE FRANCIS ASBURY COTTAGE

THE West Bromwich Council have for a long time appreciated the importance of this building, and have been concerned as to its preservation. Special statutory significance was given to buildings of architectural or historic interest with the passing of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, by Section 30 of which the Minister was empowered to designate buildings which appeared to him to fall within these categories. When the first provisional list of buildings for West Bromwich was prepared and submitted for the observations of the Council early in 1949, representations were made to the then Minister of Town and Country Planning for the inclusion of the Asbury Cottage. In June of that year the Ministry replied to the effect that the cottage appeared to be of sufficient interest to justify inclusion in the statutory list, and the Ministry stated that in due course the listing of the building would be considered. The building was "listed" on 23rd September 1955.

While the matter was very fresh in the memory of the Town Planning Committee, a letter was received, dated 10th January 1950, from the Secretary of the International Methodist Historical Society, drawing the attention of the Council to the fact that the cottage is without doubt the most important Methodist site in the Black Country area, and that it could be made one of the most attractive in England, particularly for American Methodist visitors. The letter suggested to the Council that if the cottage were to be for sale at any time it might be bought and restored and furnished.

The Town Planning Committee were able to pursue the matter very rapidly, and by February 1950 the Mayor at the time (Alderman Mrs. Grace Wilkes, J.P.) and the Town Clerk had interviewed the Joint Managing Directors of Darby's Brewery Limited, the owners of the building. They too had appreciated the importance of Asbury Cottage, and largely due to the efforts of their father, the late George Darby, the premises had been kept in useful repair although not conforming to modern housing standards.

As a result of that first meeting, the Council decided to pursue negotiations for the acquisition of the Asbury Cottage and also the adjoining premises known as Malt Shovel Cottage, both cottages having been attached at one time to the adjoining Malt House (now demolished). Happily the Council had a number of points to pursue with the owners, and as a result of the outcome of discussions the transfer of the two cottages to the Council was effected on 6th April 1955.

The Asbury Cottage was at that time occupied, and it was realized that no useful scheme of restoration could be undertaken until possession of the premises had been obtained. Naturally this took time, and it was not until towards the end of 1957 that arrangements had been concluded for the existing occupiers to move to a house in the near vicinity. Mrs. Randles and her family deserve the highest

praise for the understanding way in which, over many years, they had been prepared to receive visitors into their home, often at times when it must have been quite inconvenient for viewing. Many tributes have been received by Mrs. Randles from American visitors who had had the opportunity of seeing this historic place.

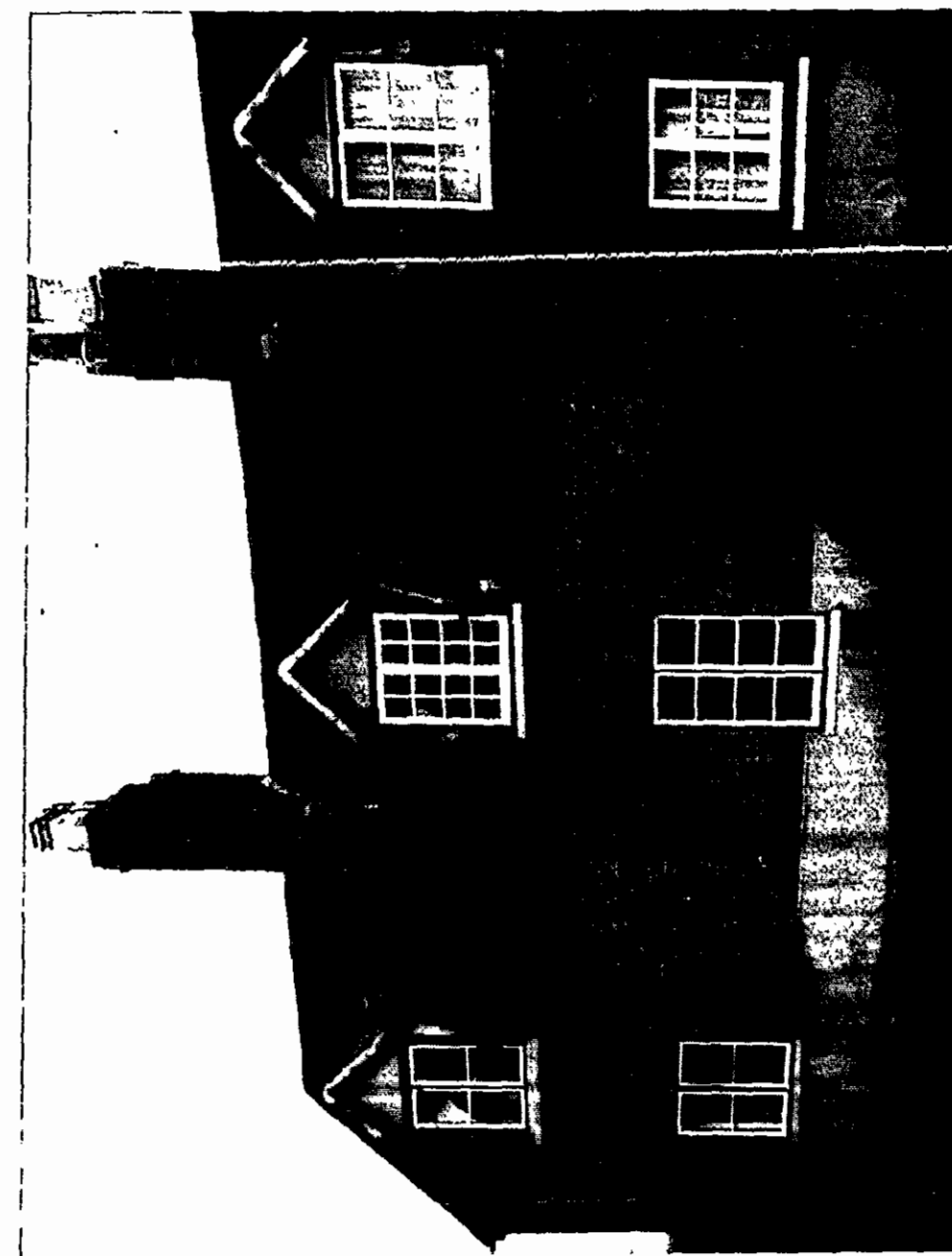
Since the acquisition of the premises, the closest liaison has been maintained between the Council, through the Town Planning Committee, and the World Methodist Council, through the Secretary, the Rev. Dr. E. Benson Perkins, at Birmingham. The Town Planning Committee were grateful to have the opportunity to study a report made upon the cottage by Mr. Thomas Rayson, an architect who had been specially chosen by the World Methodist Council to deal with the restoration of Epworth Old Rectory in Lincolnshire. The report was very valuable and made far-reaching suggestions, but it was felt that in the long run a simpler scheme of restoration would be suitable in the circumstances, having regard to the numerous architectural changes which had taken place in more recent times. The Council were pleased to receive an intimation that financial assistance towards the restoration might be available from the World Methodist Council. A scheme was ultimately devised and agreed, to restore the basic features of the living-room in the cottage, and particularly the original ingle-nook fireplace which was known to exist behind a more modern kitchen range. Happily the complete restoration of this feature has been possible, and the whole scheme achieved as a result of the most sympathetic treatment by the Council's Architect coupled with the competence of the Public Works Department of the Council.

At the same time, the Council have been able to effect alterations to the Malt Shovel Cottage adjoining, to bring it more nearly up to present-day housing standards, and it is hoped that a satisfactory arrangement will be made whereby the caretaking and cleaning duties can be undertaken by the tenant of Malt Shovel Cottage. The Council have commenced a scheme for the tidying-up of the gardens surrounding the buildings, and it is hoped that suitable joint arrangements will be made between the Parks Department and the occupier of Malt Shovel Cottage for the future upkeep of the gardens to give a setting in keeping with the importance of the premises.

The re-opening of the Cottage for public viewing marks a further milestone in the Asbury story, and it is to be hoped that the fullest possible opportunity will be taken, especially by American friends, to visit West Bromwich to recapture for a brief spell the atmosphere surrounding this great man.

West Bromwich is proud to number amongst its past citizens several local historians, and of these Mr. Joseph Reeves deserves a special mention. Fortunately for posterity, Mr. Reeves prepared notes on local families, and a manuscript dated 1834 reveals some details concerning Francis Asbury believed not to have been published previously.

He writes that after leaving school "he was bound an apprentice



THE FRANCIS ASBURY COTTAGE, GREAT BARR, WEST BROMWICH (EXTERIOR).
(The property to the right of the picture is part of the adjoining cottage.)



THE FRANCIS ASBURY COTTAGE, GREAT BARR, WEST BROMWICH, ENGLAND. INTERIOR, SHOWING FURNITURE. The sideboard, date 1780, was presented by the Foundery Church, Washington, D.C., which was dedicated by Bishop Asbury in 1814.

to John Giffin his trade was chape filing". This trade had to do with the making of portions of the scabbard (sword-holder) and also the fitting for attaching the scabbard to the belt. This information ties in with that previously available that Asbury worked as a blacksmith. Reeves refers to Asbury's house as being about forty yards from the house where he was apprenticed, and, although no description is given, this house may well be the one now used in conjunction with an adjoining nursery garden. It is known that this house dates back a long way. Reeves also records an interesting detail concerning the departure for America. He writes: "Before going to America he (Asbury) preached his farewell sermon at his Father's house which is about 40 yards from the house he was apprenticed, the house was crowded and old T. Blocksidge now living was a lad and cried because his parents would not let him go." (Mr. Blocksidge was then aged 78, and the date of writing 1835.) Reeves refers to letters which came from Bishop Asbury, and states: "I remember one expression. He enquires how the Church goes on at Barr and says 'I should like to subscribe something annually to keep the lamp burning'!"

It is appropriate to link the restoration of this historic building with other examples of this nature which have been undertaken by the Council, and when visitors come to the Borough for the purpose of seeing the Asbury Cottage, the opportunity should also be taken to visit two other examples of restoration and preservation of old buildings. These are the Manor House, a thirteenth-century medieval Hall of the greatest possible significance, being perhaps one of the most complete examples existing in the whole of Great Britain, and the Oak House, a sixteenth-century yeoman's dwelling.

It is fitting to end this short note on the Asbury Cottage by a reproduction of the wording which appears on the commemorative plaque provided by the World Methodist Council. J. M. DAY.

THIS COTTAGE

IS NOW THE PROPERTY OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH —
 WAS THE BOYHOOD HOME OF

FRANCIS ASBURY

(1745 - 1816)

"THE PROPHET OF THE LONG ROAD"

WHO WAS SENT TO AMERICA BY JOHN WESLEY IN 1771
 AND BECAME THE FIRST BISHOP OF THE
 AMERICAN METHODIST CHURCH

DEDICATED TO PERPETUAL REMEMBRANCE

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE
 WORLD METHODIST COUNCIL

AFTER RESTORATION
 27th NOVEMBER, 1959

DID LORD PETER KING RECANT?

IN "Notes and Queries" (*Proceedings*, xxxi, p. 22) the Rev. Robert Haire raises the question of a reply by a non-juring clergyman called Selater to Lord Peter King's *Enquiry* (which so influenced Wesley), and recalls the assertion (by Hockin on the basis of certain lectures by a Dr. Oldknow in 1864) that King read this reply and was convinced by it. The passage in Dr. Oldknow's book reads (page 24):

The book by which Wesley professed to have been led to a change of principle was so effectually replied to by a clergyman named Selater, in a modest publication called *An Original Draught of the Primitive Church*, that Lord King himself was not only convinced by its arguments but is said to have offered its author a living, which he was unable to accept because he could not conscientiously take the oath of allegiance to a Sovereign of the House of Hanover.

Oldknow gives no authority for his statement, but it is also found in the article on Selater in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, which refers to the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1792, where "W.C.", writing to the editor, says:

There is a circumstance, relating to that book of Lord King's and Mr. Slaughter's [sic] answer to it, very little known, but which to me comes vouched with unquestionable authenticity. Before Mr. Slaughter's book was published it was read in MS. by Lord King himself, having been seized, among other papers, in the house of Mr. Nathaniel Spinkes, a Nonjuring bishop and carried to Lord King then Chancellor, who very politely returned it, confessing that it was a very sufficient confutation of those parts of his book which it undertook to answer; that it was written with equal Christian temper and moderation and unanswerable strength in argument; and desiring or consenting that it might be published.

But, notwithstanding his Lordship thus candidly renounced the fallacious arguments of his own book on this particular topic, such was the modesty of the Dissenters of those days that they several times re-printed it without his Lordship's privity or consent and that without the least attempt to reply to Mr. Slaughter or any notice taken that such a book existed, as far as I could learn.

I who write this, knew Mr. W. well . . . But love of dominion was so prominent a feature in his character, that he would submit to no human authority *in sacris*.

A little later "Scrutator" made the necessary correction: "The answer to Lord King on the primitive church is noticed by Zachary Grey in p. 67 of his *Review of Neal's History of the Puritans* and its author is called Selater not Slaughter. By this answer Dr. Grey says 'I am informed the Lord Chancellor King was himself fully convinced.'" Zachary Grey's *Review* was published in 1744, and makes the above statement in passing with no attempt to indicate the nature of Selater's reply.

The story is also repeated by Charles Daubeny in his *Eight Discourses* (1804), p. 91, where he merely remarks that Selater's work was such "as to bring over the Enquirer [King] to that author's [Selater's] opinion". In his book *On Schism* (1818), p. 236, he elaborates this to:

This book [Selater's] the author did not live to publish. It happened however that the author's manuscript, after his death, came into the hands of the Lord Chancellor; who was so perfectly satisfied by its

contents that the ground which he himself had previously taken was untenable, that he published Selater's manuscript at his own expense, as the strongest proof that could be given to the world, of the alteration of his own sentiments.

Lathbury, *History of the Nonjurors* (1845), says King was "convinced and offered Selater a living".

Overton, *The Nonjurors* (1902), also records the story of the offer of a living, and adds: "One fondly hopes that it may be true, but it must be owned that the evidence is not strong".

Lord Campbell, *Lives of the Chancellors*, iv, p. 369, goes further and rejects the story, which he describes as "without authority".

Conclusions

It is significant that in all this the story is weakest and plainly inaccurate when any details are given. Selater died about 1717. King became Chancellor in 1725. The first edition of Selater's work was in 1717. Hence the story (or stories) suggesting that King received the book in manuscript when Chancellor, offered Selater a living, or published the work at his own expense (though without a note that he was convinced by it) are simply unhistorical. The strongest piece of evidence that King changed his mind is Zachary Grey's *Review* (1744), which merely says in passing and with no attempt at substantiation "I am informed the Lord Chancellor King was himself fully convinced". The subsequent elaborations of this are mere fables, and this original statement in a controversial work on the word of an unnamed informant is hardly a fit basis for historical conclusions.

VICTOR E. VINE.

Our Irish brethren have recently celebrated one hundred years of continuous Methodist publishing in Ireland. In October 1859 the first issue of the *Irish Evangelist* was edited and produced in Ballymoney by the Rev. William Crook, proclaiming itself "A Journal of the Present and Herald of the Future". It was a monthly publication which continued without competition until January 1883, when a new weekly paper appeared, the *Irish Christian Advocate*. A year later the two journals amalgamated, and the *Irish Christian Advocate* has continued its weekly publication ever since. The *Advocate* is a most readable little paper: its news, of course, is of interest mainly to Irish Methodists, but its general articles, its book reviews, and its column for preachers are of the highest quality, and will stand comparison with those appearing in any denominational newspaper. The pages of the *Advocate* are frequently enlivened by articles from one of our Irish members, the Rev. R. Lee Cole (who is the President of our Irish Branch), under the general heading "Fragments of Methodist History". These "fragments" deserve to be collected into permanent book form.

Irish Methodism has also celebrated the centenary of the 1859 Revival, which has been chronicled by the Rev. Robert Haire in *The Story of the '59 Revival, with some Methodist sidelights* (pp. 36, 1s. 4d. post paid from the author at 54, Princetown Road, Bangor, Co. Down). This evangelistic revival left a permanent mark on both Irish Methodism and Presbyterianism, and we heartily commend Mr. Haire's booklet, whose narrative is not only history but a spiritual inspiration, even to those who do not know Ireland.

NON - WESLEYAN CLASS TICKETS

(Continued from page 51)

United Methodist Free Churches

September 1857 (A) to September 1862 (V)—The first ticket is approximately 3 by 2½ ins., bearing within a symbolic border of plaited ribbons the wording "United Methodist Free Churches. Formed by the Amalgamation of the Wesleyan Association and Wesleyan Reformers, in 1857. September Quarter 1857. Text and reference. A". The index letter is close to the bottom border, and the member's name is often written either side of the letter. The first ticket aroused some criticism among the non-amalgamating Reformers, cf. my *United Methodist Free Churches*, pp. 46-7; for the Annual Assembly had yet to confirm the name of the new denomination, and the reformers still held that they were true Wesleyan Methodists. As with the earliest tickets of most branches, the letter J was omitted in the series of index letters. The date is printed in a different fount from December 1860.

December 1862 (W) to September 1866 (L)—As last, but index letter printed below date and above text; dotted line for member's name at bottom. J is now used. (Fig. 11 on the plate facing page 36 of the June 1959 *Proceedings*.)

December 1866 (M) to September 1869 (X)—As last, but a new border of beads and minute scrolls. From December 1867 the dotted line gives way to a plain rule. Up to this date few tickets are initialled.

December 1869 (Y) to September 1871 (F)—As last, but reverts to the earlier border. Date in a new fount. From December 1870 the historical note is omitted.

December 1871 (G) to September 1874 (R)—As last, but a new border—a conventionalized chain, again symbolic of the "churches" held together by the connexional tie.

December 1874 to September 1877—Larger, 4 by 2½ ins., perforated (sheets of six?—certainly only two tickets wide). A new border of entwined flowers and leaves. Wording as before, but no index letter.

December 1877 to September 1883—As last, but no longer perforated. From December 1879 onwards, a thin card rather than paper. Approximately 3½ by 3 ins.

December 1883 to September 1886—Wording as last, but new founts for all parts; more decorative border.

December 1886 to September 1891—Same wording, but again new founts; simpler, geometrical border. There is, either side of the date, a small decoration which varies from time to time; date between wavy lines.

December 1891 to September 1894—As last, but very slightly different border.

December 1894 to September 1901—Wording as last, but new, simpler, fleur-de-lys border and new founts. A different wavy line, which changes again in December 1895. The corner ornament changes in December 1900. (Fig. 14.)

December 1901 to September 1907—Again new founts throughout and new border of conventionalized leaves.

Band Tickets. I have seen none.

On Trial Tickets. Issued at least as early as September 1867. Identical with the current class ticket, save that the index letter is missing and is replaced by "Probationer's Ticket". For that quarter at least, the date appears in two distinct founts.

By June 1890, it is again identical with the current class ticket, with the addition of "Probationer" in capitals below the line for the member's name.

I have two makeshifts: an ordinary June 1866 class ticket with, written on the back, "Admit the Bearer, Susanna Taylor. J. Nield, Secy. 1866 June Quarter". This covered admission to the class meeting rather than the Sacrament, I suspect, the Sacrament being available to "All who love the Lord Jesus"; the other is a June 1871 class ticket issued as usual, but with the word "Probation" written on the face.

Junior Tickets. I have seen none; and from the fact that I have two Probationer's tickets issued to my father when a boy of ten, I suspect that those whom we should now class as junior members were then listed as "On Trial".

United Methodist

December 1907 to September 1910—Thin card, 3½ by 3 ins. approximately, bearing within a border of conventionalized leaves: "The United Methodist Church. Founded 1907. December Quarter 1907. Name. Text and reference. . . . [for preacher]". This first ticket bears the appropriate text "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! Psalm cxxxiii. 1". (Illustrated in *New History of Methodism*, i, p. 506.)

December 1910 to September 1915—As last, but historical note omitted.

December 1915 to September 1925—Historical note restored. From December 1918 to September 1920 the thin card is replaced by an inferior grey stiffish paper.

December 1925 to June 1932—The historical note again disappears.

No Band or Junior Tickets.

On Trial Tickets. These were printed, in the early years at least. I have two—for June and September 1911. They are identical with the contemporary class ticket, save that "Probationer" is printed in the left-hand bottom corner outside the border. Did they continue until 1932?

Annual Tickets. These also were issued, presumably to circuits of the MNC tradition. A glossy card, 5½ by 4 ins., is very similar to the second MNC Annual Certificate (*vide supra*), with the same colours and similar border, but the heading is now "The United Methodist Church", and the text at the foot is Peter i. 17. Was this ticket uniform for the whole of the period 1907-32, or were there others?

Independent Methodist

Whilst this branch dates from 1806, the only tickets I have seen are the recent ones. They have serial numbers instead of letters, that for June 1955 being 614. The tickets are large, the four quarters being printed in one sheet and serialled.

Various

There are extant a number of tickets of local interest. In Leeds—also occasionally elsewhere—there was a union of Wesleyan Reformers and Wesleyan Methodist Association some time before 1857, and they issued their own tickets. Inside the usual decorative border, which apparently

changed frequently, there is printed "United Methodist Societies of the Wesleyan Association and Wesleyan Reformers. Quarterly Ticket for March 1857. Text and reference. G". Clearly the first ticket was issued in September 1855. (Fig. 8.)

When union took place in September 1857, they continued for a time to issue their own tickets; and their ticket for September 1857 reads: "United Methodist Free Churches. Quarterly Ticket for September 1857. Text and reference. I", in sequence with their preceding index letters.

Much earlier on in Leeds, at the time of the Warrenite controversy, a small group seceded and ceased to use the name "Methodist" as part of their title. I have what is their first or second ticket. On a borderless, stiff card is printed "The Christian Society. Established 25th Decr. 1835. Quarterly Ticket for March, 1836. Text and reference (1 Chron. iv. 10)", with the name Jane Sanderson and the initials "R.A." (Fig. 6.) Any further information about this offshoot would be welcome.

The Louth Free Methodist cause started in 1852 and perhaps issued their own tickets from that date, as they were so independent that they did not join the rest of the Reformers. Certain it is that they continued to issue their own tickets after their amalgamation with the UMFC in 1859.¹ I have two of their tickets; they read: "Free Methodist Church. Louth Circuit. Established A.D. 1852. Date. Index. Text and reference", with a space for name, all in an ornamental border. These two are for March 1871 (D) and December 1873 (O).

Wesleyan Refugee Society

I have one ticket with this heading. The type and border in every respect are similar to those of the contemporary Wesleyan ticket, though the shape is square. After the title, appears "Established June, 1834. Quarterly ticket for June, 1869. Text and reference (1 Thess. iii. 12—in italics). U. Name". Even if tickets were not issued from 1834, the index letter shows that they were issued from at least 1864. Is anything else known of this branch? It will be noted that it stemmed from the time of the Warrenite controversy.

In conclusion, may I repeat what I said at the beginning—that I should be glad to hear of, and see, any other early tickets, and tickets of small local dissident bodies. May I add my appreciation of the help given me by the Book Steward and by the Rev. J. H. Verney.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.

¹ See my *United Methodist Free Churches*, p. 71 and (for an illustration) p. 65.

The latest Bulletin of the Society of Circumlogists is full of interest. A helpful article by Dr. Beckerlegge gives practical advice on the best way to restore and preserve old circuit plans, whilst K. F. Bowden gives some interesting information on "distinctive plan fronts", which seem to present as varied an appearance to the world as do those persons whose names are printed on them. The Society's census of old plans has already located nearly a thousand dated pre 1861, most of them in four private collections, and two-thirds of them Wesleyan. Only one Methodist New Connexion plan has been discovered, and very few from the West country. This is a most valuable piece of work, for old plans are very useful when local histories come to be written.

THE WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL LECTURES

THE eleventh and last item in the minutes of the Wesley Historical Society's annual meeting on 15th July 1933 reads thus:

Resolved to ask Dr. T. Ferrier Hulme to give a lecture to the Wesley Historical Society at the next Conference.

In the event Dr. Ferrier Hulme's lecture was postponed for a year, and the first Wesley Historical Society lecture was delivered by Dr. Henry Bett—an important study of the character and learning of Wesley's lay preachers. This lecture, revised and enlarged, was published the following year by the Epworth Press. At the Conference of 1935 it was found "not practicable to follow the precedent exactly", but instead a series of brief luncheon-interval talks was arranged at the New Room, Bristol, in conjunction with the Warden, Dr. Frederic Platt. These talks were given by Dr. A. W. Harrison ("The Historical Setting of Methodism"), Dr. Platt ("The Wonder of the New Room"), the Rev. F. Luke Wiseman ("Charles Wesley's Home and Hymns"), Dr. T. Ferrier Hulme ("Bristol influences on American Methodism"), and the Rev. John Telford ("John Wesley, the Evangelist, as Letter-Writer"). These talks were not published singly or collectively by the Society, but the material therein found its way into other publications of the lecturers. For the 1936 Conference Dr. Leslie F. Church was invited to lecture on "The Rank and File of the Early Methodists", a memorable lecture which was in later years greatly expanded to form the Fernley-Hartley lecture for 1948, published as *The Early Methodist People* (1948) and *More about the Early Methodist People* (1949).

From 1936 onwards the Society has arranged for an official lecture in connexion with each Methodist Conference, and (with one exception) these lectures have all been published by the Epworth Press. The subject-matter has varied greatly, but the officers have tried to ensure as far as possible both that a genuine contribution was made to Methodist scholarship, and that the work was attractive to the general reader. It is quite obvious that these aims are not always easy to reconcile, and just as obvious that our published lectures cannot by any means be regarded as all on an equal level of historical excellence or popular appeal, no more than they are all equal in length. We may claim, however, that through the last quarter of a century we have provided a medium whereby many facets of Methodist history have been illuminated. Nor is there any lack of suitable scholars and themes for the years ahead.

There follows a list of the first twenty-five lectures:

- *1. Henry Bett: *The Early Methodist Preachers*. (Leicester, 1934; published 1935)
12. (Bristol, 1935, a series of brief talks, unpublished)
2. Leslie F. Church: "The Rank and File of the Early Methodists" (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1936; expanded for the Fernley-Hartley Lecture, 1948, published as *The Early Methodist People* and *More about the Early Methodist People*)
- *3. G. Elsie Harrison: *Harworth Parsonage: A Study of Wesley and the Brontës*. (Bradford, 1937)
- *4. R. Lee Cole: *John Wesley's Journal: an Appreciation*. (Hull, 1938)

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- *5. J. H. Whiteley: *Wesley's Anglican Contemporaries: their trials and triumphs*. (Liverpool, 1939)
- *6. F. F. Brotherton: *The Countess of Huntingdon*. (Sheffield, 1940)
7. Richard Pyke: *The Early Bible Christians*. (Leeds, 1941)
- *8. Maldwyn L. Edwards: *Adam Clarke*. (Manchester, 1942)
9. Wilbert F. Howard: "John Wesley in his Letters". (Birmingham, 1943) (This lecture was never published, though Dr. Howard was working on an expanded manuscript for publication. The first chapter was printed in *Proceedings*, xxix, pp. 3-11.)
- *10. W. L. Doughty: *John Wesley: His Conferences and his Preachers*. (London, 1944)
11. A. W. Harrison: *The Separation of Methodism from the Church of England*. (Nottingham, 1945)
- *12. J. Henry Martin: *John Wesley's London Chapels*. (London, 1946)
13. Wesley F. Switt: *Methodism in Scotland: The first hundred years*. (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1947)
14. Frank Baker: *Charles Wesley as revealed by his letters*. (Bristol, 1948)
15. E. C. Urwin: *The Significance of 1849: Methodism's Greatest Upheaval*. (Liverpool, 1949)
16. W. E. Farndale: *The Secret of Mow Cop: a new appraisal of Primitive Methodist Origins*. (Bradford, 1950)
17. Griffith T. Roberts: *Howell Harris*. (Sheffield, 1951)
18. E. Benson Perkins: *Methodist Preaching Houses and the Law: the story of the Model Deed*. (Preston, 1952)
19. R. Newton Flew: *The Hymns of Charles Wesley: a study of their structure*. (Birmingham, 1953)
20. E. Gordon Rupp: *Thomas Jackson, Methodist Patriarch*. (London, 1954)
21. John H. S. Kent: *Jabez Bunting: The Last Wesleyan*. (Manchester, 1955)
22. Frank H. Cumbers: *The Book Room: The Story of the Methodist Publishing House and Epworth Press*. (Leeds, 1956)
23. Oliver A. Beckenlegge: *The United Methodist Free Churches: a study in freedom*. (Nottingham, 1957)
24. A. Wesley Hill: *John Wesley among the Physicians: a study of 18th-century medicine*. (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1958)
25. Robert F. Wearmouth: *Methodism and the Trade Unions*. (Bristol, 1959)

FRANK BAKER.

The Lectures marked * are now out of print.

Our sister Society, the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales (the "Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church") has completed the 44th volume of its *Journal* with an issue which contains two articles in English—"Lady Huntingdon's request for Daniel Rowland's portrait", by K. Monica Davies, and "Articles of Agreement between Dorothy and William Williams, Pantycelyn", by D. Emrys Williams. The Society is in a healthy condition; its finances are sound, and it still has a balance of over £635 on its "Pilgrim Trust Fund" for the publication of the Trevecka Records Series, the third volume of which is due to appear in 1960. We congratulate our Welsh friends on their excellent work.

BOOK NOTICES

Charles Simeon (1759-1836): Essays written in Commemoration of his Bi-Centenary, ed. Arthur Pollard and Michael Hennell. (S.P.C.K., pp. vi, 190, 215.)

Simeon is emerging as one of the pivotal figures of the nineteenth-century Church. His formative influence during his fifty-four years as vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge, is seen to have been much greater than was previously realized. Indeed, in the Foreword to this collection of commemorative essays by members of the Evangelical Fellowship for Theological Literature, Canon M. A. C. Warren claims that the nineteenth-century contribution to the Church of today "enshrines the workmanship of Simeon" (page 2). Successive chapters relate Simeon to the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century and consider his doctrine of God, of Scripture, of the Church and Ministry, and of the pastoral office. A fitting tribute to an outstanding Christian leader is presented in this well-produced volume.

Methodists will be especially interested in Simeon's strictures with respect to "the grand depositum" of Christian Perfection. "I love and honour Wesley," said Simeon, "yet the Wesleyans are under a delusion as to perfection. The Scripture word *perfect* (teleios) is the idea of full growth, and not their view. I once heard a man say in the presence of Wesley and others, 'I have known God for about thirty-six years: for twenty-eight years I have never known an evil thought, and have loved the Lord with all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength.' Another man acknowledged himself (like me) a sinner; but Wesley and all the rest praised the former man. I said it was delusion; but it was not my place to argue there and then" (page 97). However, much of what Simeon urged regarding the possible abuses of this teaching had already been anticipated by Wesley himself. But so greatly did our founder rejoice in the testimony of God's people that he was sometimes ready to accept in the class-meeting what he would question in the study.

Simeon wisely refused to be drawn into the Arminian-Calvinist dispute. He believed that each party was right in what it affirmed but wrong in what it denied. He passed the interesting comment "that whilst Calvinists complain of Arminians as unfair and unscriptural, in denying *personal*, though they admit *national* election, they themselves are equally unfair and unscriptural in denying the danger of *personal* apostasy, whilst they admit it in reference to churches and nations. It is lamentable to see the plain statements of Scripture so unwarrantably set aside for the maintaining of human systems" (page 80). It is surely in this broad evangelical catholicity that Simeon's real greatness lies, and because of it he will continue to hold the attention of Christian historians. A. SKEVINGTON WOOD.

The Rev. Gomer M. Roberts draws attention to *Select Sermons of George Whitefield* (Banner of Truth Trust, pp. 120, 6s.), which in addition to six of Whitefield's sermons contains a foreword by Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Bishop Ryle's account of Whitefield and his ministry, and R. Elliot's summary of Whitefield's doctrine. Dr. Ryle incorrectly states that Whitefield's marriage "does not seem to have contributed much to his happiness". The dust-cover is illustrated with a copy of the well-known painting of the Watford Association of 1743.

NOTES AND QUERIES

1027. GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION WANTED.

George Osborn, father of Dr. George Osborn (President of the Wesleyan Conference in 1863 and 1881), was born in 1764. His father (James) and mother (Sarah Hodges) were married on 28th November 1762; the place is not known, though it may well have been Rochester. James Osborn was born 3rd February 1729, his parents being Francis Osborn and Dorothea Atterbury. It is understood that he, and probably she also, came from Northampton, but little further is definitely known about them, except that Dorothea was not (as had been surmised until recently) the daughter of Bishop Francis Atterbury of Rochester.

If any members can throw further light on the life of George Osborn's grandfather, or his, or his wife's, antecedents, I should be very grateful if they would let me know, at 14, Divert Road, Gourrock, Renfrewshire.

(MRS.) MARGARET F. OSBORN.

1028. EAST ANGLIAN BRANCH.

The branch held its second public meeting on Saturday, 17th October, at Museum Street church, Ipswich. Attendance was disappointing, but the two dozen present were keenly appreciative of the detailed and lively account of Methodism in Ipswich given by Mr. W. D. Warren. An interesting conversation on the origins of Methodism in Suffolk followed, and tea was served at the close of the meeting.

It was announced that membership had grown steadily to forty, and that the second issue of the Bulletin would appear shortly. We shall be pleased to send a copy to anyone interested, whether living in East Anglia or not, on receipt of the shilling membership fee by me at 71, Beecheroff Road, Ipswich.

We are glad to announce that at our next meeting, at Great Yarmouth on 21st May 1960, the Rev. Wesley F. Swift will speak on Wesley's *Journal*.

JOHN A. VICKERS.

1029. DR. THOMAS COKE.

I am engaged in collecting material for a study of Thomas Coke, and would be glad to hear from members who either possess or know of the whereabouts of MS. material such as letters. For bibliographical purposes, I would also like full details of the title-pages of any of Coke's numerous publications. Any material loaned will be carefully and promptly returned, by registered post if desired.

JOHN A. VICKERS.

1030. DUPLICATE WESLEY LETTERS (1).

Mr. Doughty's conclusion (*Proceedings*, xxxii, p. 40) that the letter to Adam Clarke (*Letters*, viii, p. 188) is the correct one is fully confirmed by the fact that the Rev. A. Raymond George checked on the original at Headingley College, Leeds (see *Proceedings*, xxxii, p. 159), and noted the superscription: "To Mr. Adam Clarke at the New Room in Bristol".

THOMAS SHAW.

1031. DUPLICATE WESLEY LETTERS (2).

May I offer a possible solution to the problem of the duplicate Wesley letters dated 26th March 1785 (from Birmingham to Mrs. Wren) and 26th November 1785 (from London to the same lady, now Mrs. Pawson). (See *Proceedings*, xxxii, p. 40.)

I think the clue to the mystery is to be found in the note to the *Journal* under the March date: "He wrote from Birmingham to Mrs. Pawson

thanking her for a circumstantial account of her justification and sanctification. This was the second Mrs. Pawson, formerly Mrs. Wren, of York. (New Ed. Wesley Letters.)"

The "New Ed. Wesley Letters" must be the Standard Edition, for which material was accumulating but which of course had not been published when volume seven of the *Journal* came out. This *Journal* note suggests that Curnock knew of a copy of a letter addressed to Mrs. Pawson under the March date. But, as Telford appreciated, that was impossible because she only became Mrs. Pawson in August. Telford therefore (I suggest) "corrected" the name and added the note at the head of the "March" letter explaining his correction. This reconstruction suggests that (a) the November date is the original; (b) Telford subsequently saw the original letter and published it under its correct name and date; (c) the error substituting "March" for "November" occurred in copying for the projected "New Ed." (Perhaps the copy had badly-formed Roman numerals for the month, i.e. XI looking like III.)

There remains the mystery of the divergent place-names. Perhaps the copy omitted the place and it was assumed by Curnock from Wesley's location at the date in question. Telford then followed Curnock without realizing that both of them were using the same defective copy.

VICTOR E. VINE.

1032. ROBERT HOPKINS'S GRAVE IN ROTHERHAM PARISH CHURCH.

Robert Hopkins was born at Devizes in 1758, and twenty-three years later, when Wesley was in the town, he was invited to join the ranks of the travelling preachers. For forty-five years he served Methodism in circuits ranging from Cornwall East to Whitby, and in the earlier years he received several letters from Wesley—letters which he must have opened in some trepidation, for the writer was in the habit of dealing plainly with his correspondents. At Whitby in 1784 he suffered much from ill-health and was inclined to blame the local climate. Wesley wrote to him from London (*Letters*, vii, p. 207):

... You cannot infer that the air of this or that place does not agree with you because you have a fever there. But if there be a necessity, Christopher Peacock will change places with you.

When Hopkins came to Rotherham in 1826 he found a virile circuit, at the hub of which was the large square-fronted Talbot Lane. Many members of the society there remembered the original Octagon in which Wesley had preached, and which pleased him so much. Many would remember the occasion when Robert Newton set a new fashion in the pulpit there: he came wearing trousers instead of the usual riding-breeches!

Hopkins was delighted to find that the newly-inducted Vicar of Rotherham, the Rev. Thomas Blackley, was an old friend of his. Blackley was a former Methodist preacher, and had been admitted on to the plan some years previously by Robert Hopkins, then his superintendent minister.

Hopkins died at Rotherham six months later, and the vicar offered the honoured place in the church for his burial. S. J. Russell's *Historical Notes on Wesleyan Methodism in the Rotherham Circuit* (1915) states the grave to be "in the choir at the entrance to the Chancel", but the present location of the gravestone is at the north-east corner of the chancel, in front of the altar rails. It bears the inscription: "Beneath this stone / Lie interred The Remains / Of the Rev'd Robert Hopkins. / He was born April 24th, 1758, / And died February 24th, 1827."

The Talbot Lane society stewards, F. Slack and R. Rhodes, made a record in their minute book of their appreciation of the vicar's kindness.

Blackley's gravestone may be seen at the south-east corner of the chancel. Thus two of Wesley's preachers were in death not divided.

THOMAS SHAW.

1033. A WESLEY LETTER COMPLETED.

Volume viii, pp. 182-3, of the Standard Edition of Wesley's *Letters* records a fragment of a letter "To Mr. —", dated 31st October 1789. The complete letter may be found in a rare volume in the Library of Congress: Gurey, *History of the Episcopacy in Four Parts*, written in support of the O'Kelley schism.¹ The Wesley letter in question is addressed to Beverly Allen, one of the elders elected at the Christmas Conference. Allen was expelled from the Connexion in 1792 for "a flagrant crime". He was later arrested for murder, but escaped to end his days as an independent preacher in Kentucky. Asbury noted in his Journal concerning him, 20th January 1794:

Poor Beverly Allen, who has been going from bad to worse these seven or eight years—speaking against me to preachers and people, and writing to Mr. Wesley and Dr. Coke, and thereby being the source of most of the mischief that has followed.

The letter as given by Gurey reads:

JOHN WESLEY TO BEVERLY ALLEN

London, October 31, 1789.

Dear Brother,

The point on which you desire my thoughts upon is doubtless of no common importance; and I will give you my settled thoughts concerning it, without the least disguise or reserve: and indeed this has always been my manner of speaking, when I spoke of the things of God; it should be so now in particular, as these may probably be the last words you will receive from me. It pleased God, sixty years ago, by me to awaken and join together, a little company of people at Oxford. And a few years after a small company in London, whence they spread through the land. Sometime after, I was much importuned to send some of my children to America; to which I cheerfully consented. God prospered their labours. But they and their children still esteemed themselves as one family, no otherwise divided than as the Methodists on one side of the Thames, are divided from the other. I was therefore a little surprised when I received some letters from Mr. Asbury, affirming that no person in Europe knew how to direct those in America. Some time after he flatly refused to receive Mr. Whatcoat in the character I sent him. He told George Shadford, Mr. Wesley and I are like Caesar and Pompey, he will have no equal, and I will bear no superior, and accordingly he quietly set by until his friends by common consent, voted my name out of the American minutes.—This compleats the matter; and shews he has no connection with me.

JOHN WESLEY.²

This serves to throw more light on the unhappy relationship of Wesley to Asbury from 1787 on. One notes a change of tense in Telford's fragment from the present to the past—a change which has softened the force of Wesley's words.

J. HAMBY BARTON.

¹ William Gurey, *The History of the Episcopacy in Four Parts, From its Rise to the Present Day* (n.d.), pp. 317-50.

² Francis Asbury, *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury* (London: Epworth Press, 1958), II, p. 4.

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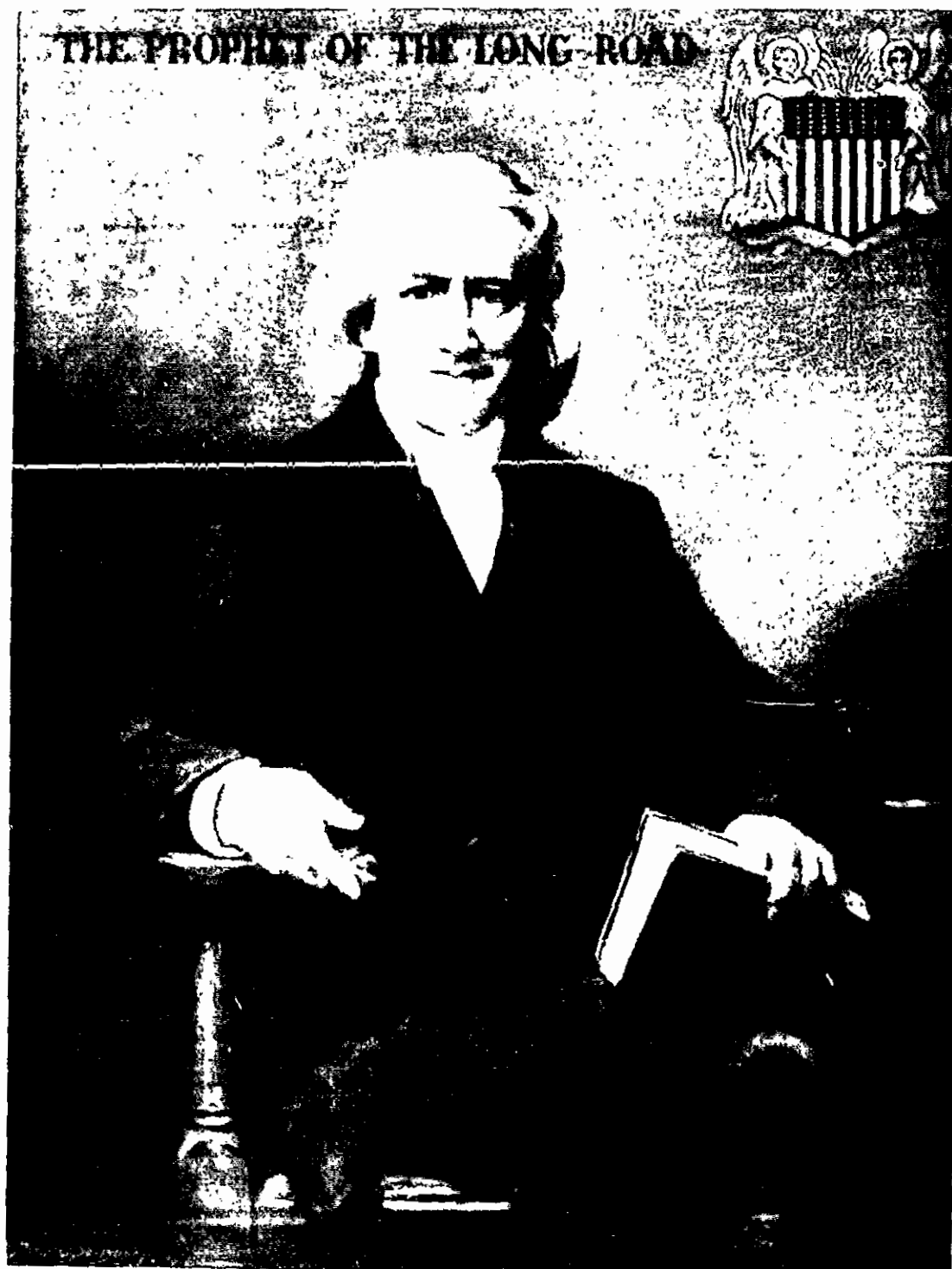
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Report of the
ASSOCIATION OF METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETIES
January, 1955

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BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY, "THE PROPHET OF THE LONG ROAD"
Painting by Frank O. Salisbury, C.V.O., R.P.S., LL.D.
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THE JOURNAL AND LETTERS OF BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY

ASBURY'S *JOURNAL* was edited by Francis Hollingsworth and first published in 1821. It was later reprinted, the last printing being in 1852. There were no notes and no attempt was made to identify the hundreds of persons who were mentioned by initials or to locate the places visited by Asbury, and there were chronological and other errors. The manuscript, along with that of Jesse Lee, was destroyed by the fire which consumed the publishing house in New York in 1836.

For more than a hundred years the *Journal* has been entirely neglected and the Letters were never collected. These basic documents of American Methodism are now unknown to practically all Methodists.

In May, 1951, the National Historical Publications Commission included Asbury in its list of sixty-six great Americans whose works the Commission recommended for publication. This recommendation was accepted by President Truman on behalf of the American Government.

In September, 1951, the World Methodist Council at Oxford, acting unanimously on a report of its affiliated International Methodist Historical Society, recommended the publication of a *Standard Annotated Edition of the Journal and Letters of Bishop Asbury*. The work was turned over to the Association of Methodist Historical Societies in the United States.

The editorial work on the Asbury documents is directed by Dr. Elmer T. Clark as Editor-in-Chief and Editor for the Southern States; Dr. Jacob S. Payton, Editor for the States between Virginia and New England, and Dr. J. Manning Potts, Editor for Virginia and West Virginia and collector of the Letters. These are assisted by Historical Consultants.

General Consultants are Dr. William Warren Sweet, American Methodist historian and author, Dr. Philip M. Hamer of Washington, Executive Director of the National Historical Publications Commission, and Dr. Frank Baker, British Methodist historian and Executive Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society.

The following local Methodist historians are Consultants for various states and areas: Rev. A. B. Moss (New York), Dr. Vernon B. Hampton (New Jersey), Dr. W. G. Smeltzer (Pennsylvania), Rev. William O. Hackett (Delaware), Dr. Lester A. Welliver (Maryland), Rev. Wallace H. Harris (Pennsylvania), Rev. Louis D. Palmer (Pennsylvania), Rev. Lawrence Sher-

wood (West Virginia), Rev. Albert D. Betts (South Carolina), Dr. Isaac P. Martin (Holston), Rev. Cullen T. Carter (Tennessee), Dr. John O. Gross (Kentucky), Bishop Lewis O. Hartman (New England), and Mr. E. Farley Sharp (Vermont). Many other persons have provided data as requested and other Consultants may be appointed.

This is the major Methodist historical research project of the generation. Approximately one-third of the *Journal* has been edited and around 270 Letters have been collected. Many hitherto unknown facts of history have been discovered. A cartographer has been selected to prepare state maps showing all the places visited by the great circuit rider.

Specimen pages of Asbury's *Journal* through his first New York journey are herewith submitted as a preliminary report to World Methodism and to illustrate procedure. These are subject to revision, and it is hoped that they will evoke the criticism of numerous persons for the further information and guidance of the Editors.

ELMER T. CLARK, *Executive Secretary*
Association of Methodist Historical Societies

Journal of the Rev. Francis Asbury

PART I

August 7, 1771—February 27, 1772

On the 7th of August, 1771, the Conference began at Bristol, in England.¹ Before this, I had felt for half a year strong intimations in my mind that I should visit America; which I laid before the Lord, being unwilling to do my own will, or to run before I was sent. During this time my trials were very great, which the Lord, I believe, permitted to prove and try me, in order to prepare me for future usefulness. At the Conference it was proposed that some preachers should go over to the American continent. I spoke my mind, and made an offer of myself. It was accepted by Mr. Wesley and others, who judged I had a call.

From Bristol I went home to acquaint my parents with my great undertaking, which I opened in as gentle a manner as possible.² Though it was grievous to flesh and blood, they consented to let me go. My mother is one of the tenderest parents in the world; but, I believe, she was blessed in the present instance with Divine assistance to part with me. I visited most of my friends in Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Gloucestershire, and felt much life and power among them. Several of our meetings were indeed held in the spirit and life of God. Many of my friends were struck with wonder, when they heard of my going; but none opened their mouths against it, hoping it was of God. Some wished that their situation would allow them to go with me.

¹ This was the first conference attended by Asbury. The Minutes contain the following: "Q.7: Our brethren in America call aloud for help. Who are willing to go over and help them? A. Five were willing. The two appointed were Francis Asbury and Richard Wright." Robert Strawbridge in Maryland and Philip Embury in New York had begun preaching several years previously. Robert Williams came to America in 1768 and John King followed in 1769, and in the latter year the British Conference sent Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor.

² Asbury's boyhood home still stands in Newton Road, West Bromwich, about 4 miles from Birmingham, and is preserved by the Corporation as an historic site. His birthplace "near the foot of Hamstead Bridge in the Parish of Handsworth" has disappeared. It stood a little north of the Hamstead and Great Barre railway station. His parents were Joseph Asbury (1715?-1798) and Elizabeth Rogers Asbury (1715?-1801). Their only other child was a daughter who died in infancy. No support has been found for Herbert Asbury's statement in *A Methodist Saint*, 5-7, to the effect that Joseph Asbury had a son by a previous marriage to Susan Whipple and that Daniel Asbury was a descendant of that marriage. (Journal entries for July 24, 1774; July 16, 1792; February 22, 1795; April 5, 1802; Wakeley, art. "Mother of Bishop Asbury," *The Ladies Repository*, August 1867, 449ff.; various biographies of Asbury.)

PHILADELPHIA—November, 1771

can retire and pour out my soul to God, and feel some meltings of heart. My spirit mourns, and hungers, and thirsts, after entire devotion.

October 13. Though it was very windy, I fixed my back against the mizen-mast, and preached freely on those well-known words, 2 Cor. v. 20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." I felt the power of truth on my own soul, but still, alas! saw no visible fruit: but my witness is in heaven, that I have not shunned to declare to them all the counsel of God. Many have been my trials in the course of this voyage; from the want of a proper bed, and proper provisions, from sickness, and from being surrounded with men and women ignorant of God, and very wicked. But all this is nothing. If I cannot bear this, what have I learned? O, I have reason to be much ashamed of many things, which I speak and do before God and man. Lord, pardon my manifold defects and failures in duty.

PHILADELPHIA

October 27. This day we landed in Philadelphia,⁷ where we were directed to the house of one Mr. Francis Harris,⁸ who kindly entertained us in the evening, and brought us to a large church,⁹ where we met with a considerable congregation. Brother Pilmore (Pilmoor)¹⁰ preached. The people looked on us with pleasure, hardly knowing how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection, and receiving us as angels of God. O that we may always walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called! When I came near the American shore, my very heart melted within me, to think from whence I came, where I was going, and what I was going about. But I felt my mind open to the people, and my tongue loosed to speak. I feel that God is here; and find plenty of all we need.

November 3. I find my mind drawn heavenward. The Lord hath

⁷ Philadelphia at this time was the largest American city, having a population of 28,000. It was the Proprietary Capital of the Province until 1776. Carpenter's Hall, then nearing completion, was to house the Continental Congress three years later.

⁸ Francis Harris was a prominent Philadelphia Methodist who frequently accompanied the preachers to their nearby appointments. (See Pilmoor's *Journal*, Ms.)

⁹ This was St. George's Church, now the oldest Methodist place of worship in America and the first to be called a church. It was purchased from a German Reformed congregation on November 23, 1769. Its congregation was comprised mostly of members of the society organized by Captain Thomas Webb in 1767. Webb preached in a sail loft and later in a house at 8 Loxley Place, which is still standing. Whitefield preached in Philadelphia in 1769, and one of his converts, Edward Evans, was preaching in the region before the arrival of Wesley's missionaries. (Pilmoor's *Journal*; Tees: *The Beginnings of Methodism in England and America*, 92, 93; Tees: *The Ancient Landmark of American Methodism*, 23-27; Atkinson, *op.cit.*, 145, 146.)

¹⁰ Joseph Pilmoor (1739-1825) was one of the first two preachers sent by Wesley to America, arriving on October 24, 1769. He returned to England in 1774 and resumed his work in the British Conference. In 1784 he returned to America as an ordained clergyman of the Anglican Church and served nearly 17 years as the Rector at St. Paul's Church in Philadelphia.

STATEN ISLAND—November, 1771

helped me by his power, and my soul is in a paradise. May God Almighty keep me as the apple of his eye, till all the storms of life are past! Whatever I do, wherever I go, may I never sin against God, but always do those things that please him!

Philadelphia, November 4. We held a watch-night. It began at eight o'clock. Brother P[ilmoor] preached, and the people attended with great seriousness. Very few left the solemn place till the conclusion. Towards the end, a plain man spoke, who came out of the country, and his words went with great power to the souls of the people; so that we may say, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Not the Lord our God: then why should self-important man?

November 5. I was sent for to visit two persons who were under conviction for sin. I spoke a word of consolation to them, and have hopes that God will set their souls at liberty. My own mind is fixed on God: he hath helped me. Glory be to him that liveth and abideth forever!

Tuesday, November 6. I preached at Philadelphia my last sermon, before I set out for New-York, on Romans viii, 32: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" This also was a night of power to my own and many other souls.

NEW JERSEY AND STATEN ISLAND

November 7.¹¹ I went to Burlington on my way to (New) York, and preached in the court-house to a large, serious congregation.¹² Here also I felt my heart much opened. In the way from thence to (New) York I met with one P[eter] Van Pelt,¹³ who had heard me preach at Philadelphia. After some conversation, he invited me to his house on Staten Island; and as I was not engaged to be at (New) York on any particular day, I went with him and preached in his house.¹⁴ Still I believe God hath sent me to this country. All I seek is to be more spiritual, and given up entirely to God—to be all devoted to him whom I love.

On the *Lord's day*, in the morning, November 11, I preached again to a large company of people, with some enlargement of mind, at the

¹¹ Asbury actually left Philadelphia on November 6th. (Pilmoor's *Journal*; Atkinson, *op. cit.*, 284.)

¹² Asbury went by stage to Burlington to assist Richard Boardman. (Pilmoor's *Journal*.) Captain Webb had formed a Methodist society in Burlington in December, 1770, with Joseph Toy as leader.

¹³ Peter van Pelt lived on Staten Island, where his Dutch forebears settled in 1687. He was a prominent citizen, a soldier in the French and Indian War, and one of the leading early Methodists in the region. Pilmoor, Williams, and probably Boardman and Webb, preached on Staten Island and Van Pelt doubtless became a Methodist under the influence of one of these preachers. He is believed to have died in 1781.

¹⁴ Van Pelt's house was a Dutch dwelling with low sloping roof, wide fireplaces and small windows, located near the present St. John's Methodist Church in Rossville. (Leng and Davis: *Staten Island and Its People*, I, 466; Hampton: *Asbury on Staten Island*, 4.)

NEW YORK—November, 1771

house of my worthy friend Mr. P. (Van Pelt); in the afternoon preached to a still larger congregation; and was invited to preach in the evening at the house of Justice (Hezekiah) Wright,¹⁵ where I had a large company to hear me. Still, evidence grows upon me, and I trust I am in the order of God, and that there will be a willing people here. My soul has been much affected with them. My heart and mouth are open; only I am still sensible of my deep insufficiency, and that mostly with regard to holiness. It is true, God has given me some gifts; but what are they to holiness? It is for holiness my spirit mourns. I want to walk constantly before God without reproof.

NEW YORK

On *Monday* I set out for New-York,¹⁶ and found Richard Boardman¹⁷ there in peace, but weak in body. Now I must apply myself to my old work—to watch, and fight, and pray. Lord, help!

Tuesday, 13. I preached at (New) York to a large congregation¹⁸ on 1 Cor. 11. 2: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," with some degree of freedom in my own

¹⁵ Hezekiah Wright was a Justice of the Court of Common Pleas of the Province of New York, and a prominent citizen who operated a fleet of vessels engaged in coastal trade. His home was on Woodrow Road in Rossville near the Blazing Star Ferry. The first Methodist meeting house on Staten Island was Woodrow Church, built near Wright's home in the late 1780s. (See Journal entry for May 22, 1802; Hampton: *op. cit.*, 5.)

¹⁶ Asbury took a ferry from the foot of William Street at Stapleton to the Bowling Green at the lower end of Manhattan Island.

¹⁷ Richard Boardman (1732–1782) came to America with Pilmoor in 1796. He was designated by Wesley as "assistant" with authority to station the preachers. He brought 25 Pounds in cash and some books which were sold for 22 Pounds as a contribution from the British Conference to the New York Society. Boardman and Pilmoor returned to England together in 1774. The former resumed his itinerant status and preached in Ireland and London. He died with apoplexy in Cork and was buried in St. Barry's Churchyard there.

¹⁸ This was Asbury's first sermon in Wesley Chapel, dedicated October 30, 1768. It was the house referred to by Wesley when he asked for volunteers for America in 1769. (Wesley's *Journal*, August 3, 1769.) It was the third Methodist preaching place in New York. The first was the home of Philip Embury in Augustus Street, where Embury preached the first sermon in New York in 1766. The society moved to the famous Rigging Loft, 120 Williams Street, in 1767, where Captain Thomas Webb joined Embury. On March 30, 1768, lots 44 and 46 on John Street, between Nassau and Williams, were purchased from Mrs. Mary Barclay, widow of a former rector of Trinity Church, the first property owned by Methodists in America. The price, 600 Pounds, was loaned by Captain Webb and William Lupton, who with Thomas Taylor were trustees. Phraseology for the deed was secured from Wesley and used also in the deed to St. George's Church in Philadelphia. This meeting house was 40 x 60 feet in size, built of stone, faced with plaster, and painted blue. Subscriptions for more than 418 Pounds were received from 250 persons, including prominent vestrymen of Trinity Church. A Methodist church has stood on the site since that date. In 1807 a larger building was erected, and in 1840 the present John Street Church was built. It is still active and is one of the official shrines of American Methodism. Its society is the oldest in America, though the present building is not as old as St. George's in Philadelphia. (Seaman: *Annals of New York Methodism*, 416–422, 448–453; *John Street Church Records*, I.)

NEW YORK—November, 1771

mind. I approved much of the spirit of the people: they were loving and serious; there appeared also, in some, a love of discipline. Though I was unwilling to go to (New) York so soon, I believe it is all well, and I still hope I am in the order of God. My friend B[oardman] is a kind, loving, worthy man, truly amiable and entertaining, and of a child-like temper. I purpose to be given up to God more and more, day by day. But O! I come short.

Wednesday, 14. I preached again at (New) York. My heart is truly enlarged, and I know the life and power of religion is here. O how I wish to spend all my time and talents for him who spilt his blood for me!

The *Lord's day*, 18, I found a day of rest to my soul. In the morning I was much led out with a sacred desire. Lord, help me against the mighty! I feel a regard for the people: and I think the Americans are more ready to receive the word than the English; and to see the poor negroes so affected is pleasing;¹⁹ to see their sable countenances in our solemn assemblies, and to hear them sing with cheerful melody their dear Redeemer's praise, affected me much, and made me ready to say, "Of a truth I perceive God is no respecter of persons."

Tuesday, 20. I remain in (New) York, though unsatisfied with our being both in town together. I have not yet the thing which I seek—a circulation of preachers, to avoid partiality and popularity. However, I am fixed to the Methodist plan, and do what I do faithfully as to God. I expect trouble is at hand. This I expected when I left England, and I am willing to suffer, yea, to die, sooner than betray so good a cause by any means. It will be a hard matter to stand against all opposition, as an iron pillar strong, and steadfast as a wall of brass: but through Christ strengthening me I can do all things.

Thursday, 22. At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality.²⁰ I have nothing to seek but the glory of God; nothing to fear, but his displeasure. I am come over with an upright intention, and

¹⁹ There were Negroes in the New York Society from the beginning. Barbara Heck's servant, Betty, was present at Asbury's first sermon, and a charter member. Others were subscribers to the building fund. Peter, slave of a tobacconist, James Aymore, was converted by Captain Webb in the Rigging Loft and was for many years the sexton of Wesley's Chapel. He was purchased by the Trustees for 40 Pounds in 1783 when his owner returned to England and allowed to work out the sum for his emancipation. Peter was one of the founders of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and laid the cornerstone of its first meeting house at Leonard and Church Streets in 1800. (Wakeley, *op. cit.*, 439; Seaman, *op. cit.*, 485ff; Barclay: *Early American Methodism*, I, 291; *John Street Church Records*, I.)

²⁰ Asbury's entries for November 20th and 22nd refer to his disagreement with Boardman and Pilmoor concerning the principle of itinerancy. Asbury insisted on frequent changes in appointments or "a circulation of preachers" while the other two believed in longer tenures. Pilmoor wrote in his *Journal*, page 197, "frequent change . . . is never likely to promote the spirit of the Gospel nor increase true religion." This caused a conflict between the men which was reflected in numerous

NEW YORK December, 1771

O[akle]y.³⁰ After supper I asked the family if they would go to prayer. They looked at one another and said, there was need enough. The next morning, when I asked a blessing before breakfast, they seemed amazed. I told them, they wanted nothing but religion. The old father said it was not well to be too religious. The son said he thought we could not be too good. I soon afterwards took my leave of them, and preached in the evening at Eastchester³¹ to a few who seemed willing to hear, on those words, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." I found myself straitened and shut up; but the Lord knoweth what he hath to do with me.

Tuesday, December 10. I rode to New-Rochelle,³² and was received with great kindness by Mr. Devoue (Deveau)³³ and his family, and preached there to a few. The next day also I preached to a large company, and found liberty, and believe the power of God was among us. From thence I rode to Rye,³⁴ where a few people were collected together to hear the word: and the next day preached to them again. On Saturday, 14, I rode back to Eastchester, and preached to a large company, and found some satisfaction in speaking on "The one thing needful." On the

³⁰ Lednum, *Rise of Methodism in America*, 76.

³¹ The village of Eastchester was a mile or more inland from Eastchester Bay at the lower part of Mount Vernon. Asbury perhaps preached in the home of Theodosius Bartow, where Pilmoor also preached and where Asbury was to be cared for when ill six weeks later. (See *Journal* entry for January 23-February 5, 1772; Scharf, *op. cit.*, I, 727, and maps.)

³² New Rochelle was settled in 1687 by Huguenot refugees from La Rochelle, France. Here the Rev. Theodosius Bartow, son of the man who befriended the first Methodist itinerants, was Anglican rector. As the town grew a considerable area was absorbed from the holdings of John Pell, who gave his name to nearby Pelham Manor. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, I.)

³³ Frederick Deveau (variant spellings) was of French Protestant descent, who opened his home to Pilmoor and Robert Williams as well as to Asbury for preaching. (See Lednum, *op. cit.*, 70, and Pilmoor's *Journal*.) Asbury later preached the funeral of his daughter, Sarah Hutchinson, wife of Rev. Sylvester Hutchinson, in the Bowery Church in New York. (*Journal* entry for May 30, 1802.) Another daughter, Hester, married Rev. John Wilson, who became prominent in the Book Concern. Deveau was a Tory and after the Revolution much of his estate was seized under the Confiscation Act of New York and it is believed that he went to Nova Scotia. His 300-acre farm called "Beechmont" gave its name to a part of present New Rochelle. This farm after its confiscation was presented to Thomas Paine, who lived there until hostile public opinion forced him to return to New York City. He was buried on the Deveau property, but his remains were later disinterred. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, I, 689, 690; *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIV, 163.)

³⁴ Rye was established in the early 1660s and named for an English town. In 1676 a stone fort was built there. This was converted into a tavern by a Mr. Van Sicklin in 1728. Later it was acquired by John Doughty and operated under the name of "Sign of the Sun." When Asbury visited the place it was operated by John Doughty, Jr., who was Justice of the Peace, and Asbury was doubtless entertained and preached there. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, II, 643ff.) In 1868 the fort-tavern was purchased by the Methodist Episcopal Church and a parsonage erected on the property, which adjoined the church built years before. In 1950 the old well of the tavern was found between the church and the parsonage and a bronze plaque was erected. (See article by the Rev. J. Lane Miller, "The Church Well at Rye Fort," in *Christian Advocate*, October 29, 1953. Also see Baird, *History of Rye*.)

NEW YORK—December, 1771

Lord's day I preached at New-Rochelle in the church.³⁵ My text was, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." I felt an opening, and was satisfied. I published myself to preach again in the afternoon, and those who had most opposed me before, came to hear and behaved well.³⁶ In the evening I preached in the house of my friend Mr. D[eveau]. The next day I preached again at Mr. D[eveau]'s, and on Tuesday went to Rye, where I had many to hear, and felt some freedom of spirit. The next day I preached at Mairnock (Mamaroneck),³⁷ to a company of people who at first took but little notice of the worship of God; but I trust some of them felt the power of truth in their hearts. On Thursday I returned to (New) York, and found my friends in peace.

Lord's day, December 22, I preached to a large company in the evening, and felt much power. I know that God was with us indeed, yea, was nigh to bless the people. On Christmas day, we had a very comfortable time. On Friday the 27th, I set off with two of my friends³⁸ for Staten Island. On the 28th we arrived at Justice W[right]'s, where we were entertained with the best his house afforded. From thence I went to my old friend V[an] P[elt]'s, who received me with his former kindness, and collected a congregation for the evening, to whom I preached, but had a violent pain in my head. After service I went to bed, and was very ill. However, the next day, being the Lord's day, I preached in the morning and also in the afternoon, with some freedom of mind. In the evening I returned and preached at Justice W[right]'s. Having received an invitation to preach at the house of one Mr. W[ar]d³⁹ at the east end of the Island, I visited that place on my return to New-York, where I had a comfortable time.

On Tuesday we arrived in New York. We have been favoured here with a very solemn watch-night. Many felt the power of God.

³⁵ The Anglican Church at New Rochelle was a plain structure, 40 x 30 feet in size, built in 1710 on the Post Road near the center of the community. It had been continuously served by ministers of French descent ordained by the Bishop of London. The Rev. Michael Houdon was minister at this time. After his death in 1776 there was no resident minister during the Revolution. The Rev. Theodosius Bartow took the parish in 1790.

³⁶ Pilmoor visited New Rochelle in 1771, and the Rev. Ichabod Lewis, Presbyterian minister at White Plains, objected to the Methodists preaching in the home of Frederick Deveau. Pilmoor preached, however, and Mrs. Deveau was converted. (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 70.)

³⁷ Mamaroneck had been founded on the Post Road half way between Rye and New Rochelle in 1661 by John Richbell, an Englishman who secured the land from the Indians. Asbury had passed through the village three times but had not previously preached there. William Sutton was supervisor (1771-1775) and Gilbert Budd was clerk (1771-1806). The descendants of the colonial Governor James de Lancy lived there. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, I, 846.)

³⁸ These friends were probably not Sause and White, who were involved with Pilmoor in the tense situation relative to the appointment of preachers at Wesley's Chapel. One of them may have been Samuel Selby, who later cared for Asbury in illness and accompanied him to Staten Island in February. Perhaps Asbury absented himself from New York in order to leave Pilmoor free to adjust the situation there.

³⁹ Lednum, *op. cit.*, 76.

NEW YORK—January, 1772

January 1, 1772. I find that the preachers have their friends in the cities, and care not to leave them. There is a strange party-spirit. For my part I desire to be faithful to God and man. On Thursday evening, I preached my last sermon for a time, on 1 Thess. v. 6: "Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober."

On Friday, brother S[ause] and myself set out for West-Farms, and I preached in the evening. On the Lord's day I preached at brother M[ollo]'s at half-past nine, in Westchester at three,¹⁰ and at West-Farms at six in the evening. A person showed me much kindness at West-Farms, favouring me with a man and horse all the time I was there,¹¹ acknowledging the word came home to his heart, and that he was wicked. My friend Hunt,¹² who was a Quaker, said he never was so affected. The next day I went to Westchester, but had only a few to hear me. On Wednesday I preached at H[un]'s, and felt much Divine power in my soul, and an opening among the people. I have found many trials in my own mind, but feel determined to resist. I see traps set for my feet.

Thursday, I preached at D[eveau]'s, and had an attentive people to hear, and felt myself warm and zealous. On Friday I went to Mairnock (Mamaroneck) had a large congregation, and felt the divine presence. Many of the people also felt the power of truth, and sunk under the word—it was laid home to the hearts of the people; but some contradicted and blasphemed. I believe God has a work to do among the people in this place. Lord, keep me faithful, watchful, humble, holy, and diligent to the end. Let me sooner choose to die than sin against thee, in thought, word, or deed.

Saturday 13 (11) I preached at one friend B[urlin]'s,¹³ where many attended to the truth, and showed a willingness to hear. On the Lord's day I preached at D[eveau]'s at ten in the morning, at three in the afternoon, and at six in the evening. Many attended, but I fear few felt such deep concern as will induce them to leave their sins, and flee from the wrath to come. At brother H[un]'s on Monday evening, the house would not hold the congregation: there I felt liberty and power. I hope God will visit them. I have had many trials from Satan, but hitherto the Lord hath helped me against them all. I stand a miracle of mercy! O that I may always be found faithful in doing his will!

On Tuesday the 14th I went to Rye: but the people here are insensible. They cry, "The Church! the Church!" There are a few Presbyte-

¹⁰ Asbury probably preached at the home of Dr. Ebenezer White or in the tavern at Westchester. See note under December 8, 1771.

¹¹ This man was probably Mr. Oakley. See note under December 8, 1771.

¹² The Quaker family named Hunt was prominent in the county. A promontory in East River is called Hunt's point. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, numerous references.)

¹³ Probably Thomas Burling of New Rochelle, whose house is reported to have been an early Methodist preaching place. (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 77; Records of First Methodist Church, New Rochelle.)

NEW YORK—January, 1772

rians; but they have suffered their meeting-house to go to ruin,¹⁴ and have lost the power of religion, if they ever had it. I was not a welcome messenger to this people. On Wednesday the 15th I preached at two in the afternoon at Mairnock (Mamaroneck) with some power, and in the evening returned, preached at Rye, to a large company, and felt my Master near.

Thursday 16, I was taken ill with a cold and chill. The next morning I rode to New-City,¹⁵ but the cold pinched me much. On New-City island a congregation was assembled to receive me. I spoke to them with some liberty, and they wished me to come again. A wise old Calvinist said, he might experience all I mentioned, and go to hell. I said, Satan experienced more than I mentioned, and yet is gone to hell. After preaching I rode to Mr. B[artow]'s,¹⁶ though in much pain. When I had preached there I went to bed. During the whole night I was very ill. My friends behaved very kindly, and endeavoured to prevail upon me to stay there till I was restored: but my appointment required me to set off for Eastchester,¹⁷ where I preached, and rode near eight miles in the evening to New-Rochelle. On the 19th, the Lord's day, I preached three times, though very ill.¹⁸ Many attended, and I could not think of disappointing them.

Monday the 20th, I rode to P[elham]'s Manor,¹⁹ and preached there at noon, and at six in the evening at P[eter] B[onnette]'s²⁰ in (New) Rochelle. The next day I rode to D[eveau]'s, but the day was extremely cold. In the night I had a sore throat, but through the help of God I got on, and cannot think of sparing myself:

"No cross, no suffering I decline,
Only let all my heart be thine!"

¹⁴ The Rye Presbyterian Church had been erected on the north side of the Post Road about 1730 and was served infrequently by the Rev. Ichabod Lewis of White Plains. The building was destroyed by fire during the Revolution.

¹⁵ New City was a village on an island of the same name near the east shore of Eastchester Bay. It was connected with the mainland by a wooden toll bridge and was a part of Pelham Manor. It is now a part of the Borough of the Bronx and called City Island.

¹⁶ Theodosius Bartow was a descendant of a Huguenot family prominent in Westchester County. (See note under December 10, 1771; Scharf, *op. cit.*)

¹⁷ There is a typographical error in the text at this point. It should read "my appointment required me to set off from Eastchester."

¹⁸ Asbury was probably at the home of Frederick Deveau.

¹⁹ In the early 1660's Thomas Pell purchased from the Indians a tract of about ten thousand acres east of the Hutchison River. This was called Pelham and the Pell holding became a Manor in the development of the county. About 6000 acres were conveyed to Huguenot settlers and became New Rochelle. The southern half of the remainder is now in the Bronx and called Pelham Bay Park, and the northern half is in Westchester County between Mount Vernon and New Rochelle and is known as Pelham Manor and North Pelham. Lednum and Tipple identified this place as Phillips Manor, but Phillips was near the present Yonkers and beyond the territory which Asbury was now cultivating. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, I, 701 ff.)

²⁰ Peter Bonnette (1736-1823), of Huguenot descent, was a close friend of Frederick Deveau. After the Revolution he became a local preacher in the society at New Rochelle. (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 77, 102-103.)

Tuesday the 21st I preached at my friend D[evenau]'s for the last time, "Those things that ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me do." The people seemed deeply affected under the word. In the morning of the 22d, I set out for the New-City, and preached there in much weakness and pain of body, and in the evening went to my friend P[ell]'s.⁵¹ That night I had no rest: and when I arose in the morning, the pain in my throat was worse. On the 23d I came in a covered sleigh to my friend B[artow]'s, where I took up my lodging, being unable to go any farther. I then applied to a physician,⁵² who made applications to my ears, throat, and palate, which were all swelled and inflamed exceedingly. For six or seven days I could neither eat nor drink without great pain. The physician feared I should be strangled, before a discharge took place: but my God ordered all things well. I am raised up again; and cannot help remarking the kindness with which my friends treated me, as if I had been their own brother. The parents and children attended me day and night with the greatest attention. Thus, though a stranger in a strange land, God has taken care of me. May the Lord remember them that have remembered me, and grant to this family life forever more!

February 5. Still I feel myself weak. It is near a fortnight since I came to my friend B[artow]'s. Dr. W[hite] has attended me in all my illness, and did all he could for me gratis. Yesterday was the first day of my going out. I went to Westchester to hear a friend preach. My kind friends S[ause] and W[hite] brought up a sleigh from (New) York on Monday last, but my friends at this place would not suffer me to go with them. In the course of my recovery, I have read much in my Bible, and Hammond's *Notes on the New-Testament*. I have also met with a spirited piece against predestination. I did not expect to find such an advocate for general redemption in America. This day I ventured to preach at Mr. A. B[urling?]'s to his family and a few other people. In the evening returned home, and found Mr. D. L. [De Lancy],⁵³ the former governor's son, there; who lives in the woods near Salein, and invited me to his house. We spent the evening comfortably together.

On *Thursday, February 7 (6)*,⁵⁴ I preached as I had appointed, the man of the house being in a consumption. Though I had not many people to hear me, yet I have reason to hope that my sermon did good to the poor invalid. I felt affected for my friends in this place, who had been in

⁵¹ "Friend P." was probably Thomas Pell, who had married Margaret Bartow and lived at the Pell homestead in Pelham. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, I.)

⁵² Dr. Ebenezer White of Westchester.

⁵³ Stephen DeLancy (1736?–1795), second son of the former Governor James DeLancy, inherited a tract of land in the town of Salem in the northern part of Westchester County, where he developed a community and erected a fine residence. He married Hannah, daughter of Rev. Joseph Sackett. (Scharf, *op. cit.*, I, 865–66; II, 505.)

⁵⁴ There are several chronological inaccuracies in the printed *Journal*. In such cases the correct dates are inserted in parentheses.

some measure moved by the word on my former visits, but are now returned to their old ways and company. I found myself weak and unfit to preach, but believe there were some who felt the word come close to their hearts. May God help them to profit by it! On *Friday*, the 8th (7th) I set out for (New) York in a sleigh,⁵⁵ and my friends seemed glad to see me. I want to be less concerned about anything except my own work—the salvation of souls. At present I seem determined to consecrate my all to God—body, soul, time, and talents.

On the *Lord's day* found myself weak, but brother P[ilmoor] being ill, I preached in the morning, and found life. Stayed at home on *Monday*, and read in Mr. Wesley's *Notes on the Old Testament*. On *Monday*, the 11th (10th) I went to the jail, and visited a condemned criminal, and preached to him⁵⁶ and others with some tender feelings of mind, on those words, "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

Tuesday, the 12th (11th). This day I have visited many of my friends from house to house, and did not find much evil or much good stirring among them. Now I retire to hold communion with God, and to feel his power. In the evening my strength increased, and I preached with some freedom.

On *Wednesday* I walked out, but caught cold, and returned home chilled and very ill. In the evening when I went into the pulpit, my every limb shook; and afterward went to bed with violent pains in my bones. The sickness continued for three days, and kept me at home for above a week. On *Thursday*, the 20th, I gave an exhortation in public.

STATEN ISLAND

Having a desire to visit my friends on Staten Island, I set off in the afternoon of the 21st, contrary to the persuasion of my friends in (New) York. S[amuel] S[elby]⁵⁷ who was tender towards me in my illness, and took care of me as if I had been his father, accompanied me.

Justice W[right]⁵⁸ received us and entertained us kindly; and though weak and weary, I preached at P[eter] V[an] P[elt]'s⁵⁹ to a few persons, with much satisfaction. Mr. D[isosway]⁶⁰ invited me to preach in his house, to which I consented; and Justice W[right] sent us there on

⁵⁵ Asbury's route from Bartow's in Eastchester was through West Farms, across the Bronx River at Williamsbridge to Kingsbridge and through Manhattan Island to Wesley's Chapel on John Street.

⁵⁶ Pilmoor had preached to this man ten days previously and on the 21st walked with him to the gallows and read the 51st Psalm. (Atkinson, *op. cit.*, 304–306.)

⁵⁷ Samuel Selby was a prominent member and trustee of Wesley's Chapel and conducted a saddlery business. He was a Patriot and was forced to leave New York when the city was occupied by British troops during the Revolution. (Seaman, *op. cit.*, 68, 431–432; *John Street Records*, Book I.)

⁵⁸ For Justice Hezekiah Wright see note under November 11, 1771.

⁵⁹ See Note under November 7, 1771.

⁶⁰ The prominent Disosway family lived near the present Tottenville, having removed from Brooklyn in 1684. Captain Cornelius Disosway operated Disosway's Mill on Staten Island opposite Perth Amboy, New Jersey, before the Revolution. His

STATEN ISLAND—February, 1772

the Lord's day, with several of his family. I preached twice at that gentleman's house to a large company. Some, it appeared, had not heard a sermon for half a year; such a famine there is of the word in these parts, and a still greater one of the pure word. I returned in the evening to Justice W[right]'s, and preached to a numerous congregation with comfort. Surely God sent me to these people at the first, and I trust he will continue to bless them, and pour out his Spirit upon them, and receive them at last to himself!

February 23 (24). I preached again at Justice W[right]'s to many people, and the Lord was with me. My labours increase, and my strength is renewed. Though I came here weak, yet after preaching three times I felt myself strong. Thanks be to God, who hath raised me up from so low a state! On the 24th (25th) I preached at A[braham] W[oglom]'s,⁶¹ at two in the afternoon, to a large company, and had an invitation to go to the south part of the Island:⁶² in the evening also I preached at the same place. On the 26th, I preached at the ferry,⁶³ on my way to New-York, to a few people, though some came two miles on foot. After preach-

brother, Israel Disosway (d. 1815), seems to have heard Asbury preach at Van Pelt's and he became the leader of the first Methodist class on the island; the first quarterly meeting was held in his barn and the first meeting house was built of lumber cut from his trees. Woodrow Methodist Church is the descendant of that chapel. Little or nothing is known of the father, but because of age considerations it has been conjectured that it was "father Disosway" and not Israel who invited Asbury to preach in his house in 1772. Israel was not known to be married at the time and his bride-to-be, Ann Doty (or Doughty 1766-1838), attended his first class at the age of eight years. Israel and Ann Disosway had four sons and later moved to New York to educate them in Columbia College. All were prominent in Wesley's Chapel. One of these sons, Gabriel Poillon Disosway, became a wealthy merchant and one of the managers of the Methodist Missionary Society. He pledged the support of Melville Cox, the first missionary to Liberia in 1833, and was one of the supporters of the Oregon Mission to the Indians. (Long and Davis: *op. cit.*, I, 166; Wakeley: *op. cit.*, 554, 555; Lednum: *op. cit.*, 421, 422; Hubbell: *History of Methodism on Staten Island*, 27-33; Barclay: *op. cit.*, I, 291; North: "Reminiscences" in *Christian Advocate*, March 2, 1933, p. 204; Hampton: *op. cit.*, 5-7; Moss: "Francis Asbury's First Circuit" in *World Outlook*, November, 1954, p. 17.)

⁶¹ The house of Abraham Woglom was in the Rossville waterfront area about a mile from the Blazing Star Ferry to Perth Amboy, New Jersey. Several members of the Woglom family aided in establishing the Woodrow Church in 1787. (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 75, 77; Hampton: *Historical Address, 150th Anniversary of Asbury Church, Staten Island*, 1952; Hubbard: *Methodism on Staten Island*, Ch. III.)

⁶² The invitation probably came from Gilbert Totten an extensive landowner whose family were active Methodists. Joseph Totten, his brother, became a prominent preacher and John C. Totten was a printer whose name appeared on numerous early Methodist hymn books and tracts. The Tottens were among the founders of the Woodrow Church on Staten Island in 1787 and some of them are buried in its cemetery along with fifteen Methodist preachers, including Henry Boehm, one of Asbury's travelling companions and executors.

⁶³ His preaching place was either Van Duger's or Cole's Ferry on the east shore of Staten Island. Asbury made the vicinity a regular preaching place and the Quarantine Station church (Kingsley) eventually developed there. (Morris: *Memorial History of Staten Island*; Hubbard: *History of Methodist Episcopal Churches of Staten Island*; Taylor and Skinner: *Revolutionary Map of Staten Island*, 1781.)

NEW YORK—March, 1772

ing, I visited a young man who seemed to be at the point of death: he was full of unbelief, and I fear it was through his Calvinistic notions.

Thursday, the 27th, we arrived in (New) York. I found brother P[illmoor] had set off for Philadelphia in the morning. In the evening I met the society, and felt myself assisted and enlarged. At night I slept with holy thoughts of God, and awoke with the same: thanks be to God!

(Tuesday, March 3, 1772.)⁶⁴—Tuesday proved to be a day of peace to my soul; part of which I spent in visiting the people. The next day I was employed in writing to England; and after preaching in the evening with power, I went to rest in sweet peace, and awoke in the morning in the same frame of spirit. May this day be spent to the glory of God! and may my soul yet praise him more and more!

On Wednesday, after spending a part of the day in visiting, I preached in the evening from these words: "So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief:" and humbly hope it was not labour in vain, while unbelief, that destructive root of all other sin, was exposed to the people.

On Thursday there was an appointment for me to preach at Newtown.⁶⁵ Brother S[ause] and myself crossed the East River; but it was with difficulty that we obtained horses.⁶⁶ We then attempted to proceed on our way; but it was a severe morning, with much snow and wind. The snow came full in our faces, so that, after riding a few miles, we were lost in the storm, and imperceptibly turned our course back towards New-York; which we never discovered till we overtook some people on the road. We then crossed the river back to the city, where I continued till Monday.

Friday, I preached at [New] York on these words: "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble;" and felt life and power in dispensing the word. On Saturday I visited the sick, and gave an exhortation to the people.

⁶⁴ This section of the *Journal* through Tuesday, March 17, 1772, has been transposed to this position from a point immediately following April 14, 1773. In all previous editions and printings there has been a hiatus of approximately a month, February 27-March 26, 1772, with no statement as to Asbury's travels or activities during the period. Similarly there has been a brief entry dated at Philadelphia April 14, 1773, which was an interpolation caused by the insertion of a section of the *Journal* at the wrong point. This was doubtless due to an error on the part of the transcriber or printer, and the confusion has been noted by historians and biographers. Study of this material and cognate documents, especially the manuscript *Journal* of Joseph Pilmoor and the *Records of John Street Church*, shows that the interpolation of April 14-15, 1773, is in reality the record of the hiatus period, February 27-March 26, 1772. The section has therefore been placed in proper sequence.

⁶⁵ Newtown was located about ten miles east of colonial Brooklyn. A creek on Long Island opposite the present 23rd Street in New York is still known as Newtown Creek, and the village was two or three miles beyond the head of this stream. Captain Thomas Webb preached the first Methodist sermon there in 1767, and Williams, Pilmoor and Boardman also preached there. The location is now a section of Queen's Borough, and the Middle Village Church is the descendant of the Newtown class.

⁶⁶ Liveries hesitated to let horses in unfavorable weather. On August 5, 1771, Pilmoor was denied a horse in the heat of mid-summer. (Atkinson: *op. cit.*, 274.)

NEW YORK—March, 1772

Sunday, March 8. After preaching in the morning on Heb. xii, 15, I went in the afternoon to church, and heard Mr. E[nglish] preach a useful sermon: "in the evening I preached with much freedom on Eccles. xi, 9, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth," &c. The young people appeared deeply serious. May the blessing of the Lord attend it, and great fruit appear in time to come! The next day I rode to Bloomingdale, and preached with satisfaction; and then returned home, and found it a blessing to labour in the vineyard of the Lord, both in season and out of season.

On *Tuesday* morning my mind was clear, my heart was fixed on God, and Christ was precious. Bless the Lord, O my soul! New-York is a large city, and well situated for trade; but the streets and buildings are very irregular. The inhabitants are of various denominations, but nevertheless of a courteous and sociable disposition. There are several places of Divine worship: the Episcopalians have three; the High Dutch, one; the Low Dutch, three: the Lutherans, two, the French Protestants, one; the Presbyterians, two; the Seceders, one; the Baptists, one; the Moravians, one; the Methodists, one; and the Jews one.⁶⁷ The city abounds with inhabitants; but the exact number I could not ascertain.

Wednesday, 11. My soul enjoyed great peace, and the day was partly spent in religious visits. The next day my mind was in the same comfortable frame; and holy thoughts of God, with strong desires to do all things with a single eye to his glory, as well as to follow his Divine precepts, possessed my peaceful heart.

⁶⁷ The church attended by Asbury was Trinity Church, at present Broadway and Wall Street, or St. Paul's Chapel, at Broadway and Fulton Street; if the latter, as seems probable, the same building remains to this day. Mr. E. was the Rev. Charles Inglis, assistant rector, whose name frequently appears as *English*. He was among the subscribers to the erection of Wesley's Chapel in 1768. He was a Tory and after the Revolution went to Nova Scotia where he was consecrated bishop in 1787. (Seaman, *op. cit.*, 438; *John Street Church Records*, Book I, Tipple, *op. cit.*, 43, identifies "Mr. E." as "probably the Rev. William Eldred of the Protestant Episcopal Church" but gives no substantiating data; the records of the church show that no person named Eldred or whose name begins with E was ever there.)

⁶⁸ Asbury's list of churches is complete. The locations in present day terms were as follows:

- Episcopalians (Anglican or Church of England)
 1. Trinity—west side of Broadway at Wall Street
 2. St. Paul's—west side of Broadway at Fulton Street
 3. St. George's—Beekman Street, several streets east of Broadway, close to East River.
- Dutch (Reformed and Collegiate)
 1. Garden Street—south of Wall, east of Broadway
 2. Nassau and Cedar Streets
 3. Nassau Street, near John Street
 4. Fulton and William Streets
- Lutheran (German)
 1. Broadway, just south of Wall Street
 2. North of Beekman Street, close to Swamp and Tan Yard
- French Protestant—King Street east of Nassau, a short distance north of Wall Street

STATEN ISLAND—March, 1772

Friday, 13. This day was, as yesterday, a day of peace; and it was with great satisfaction I preached in the evening, though cold, to a considerable number of people, on the much-neglected duty of self-denial.

Lord's day, 15. I went through my morning exercises in church as usual, and in the afternoon heard Mr. C. preach a good sermon; but a more gay and undevout congregation I have seldom seen—they were talking, laughing, bowing, and trifling both with God and their minister, as well as with their own unawakened souls.

On *Tuesday* I took my leave of New-York, after preaching from Philippians i, 9,⁶⁹ with an intention to spend some time on Staten Island, on my way to Philadelphia. During my stay on the island I preached several times, with power and satisfaction; but was sometimes greatly assailed by Satan. Hitherto the Lord hath helped me. Glory to his name! He preserves and blesses my soul; he supplies me with all things necessary for the preservation and health of my body. May I be ever careful to please him, and devote all the powers of body and soul to his service.

Presbyterian

1. Wall and New Streets
2. East of the Commons, north of Beekman Street

Seceders (Quakers)—east of Nassau Street on a lane just south of Maiden Lane
 Baptist—Golden Hill (John Street) at Cliff Street, close to Wesley Chapel
 Moravian—Fulton and Dutch Streets
 Methodist—Wesley Chapel, John Street between Nassau and William Streets
 Jews—Synagogue on Mill Street east of Broad Street

⁶⁹ Asbury preached his farewell sermon on this visit at 5 A.M., an hour frequently observed on Tuesdays at Wesley Chapel.

My very dear son
 I have been under an alarm withing
 foot, the doctor had pronounced a second
 and severe operation necessary; this
 morning he doubts, and hath applied
 a blister, to lay it open to any
 thing improper should remain under
 reach. The thoughts of going to
 York and the East sink in your
 and old father also, but the same
 and blessing will take the prey. I am
 much afraid that what could well loose
 his sight in part or whole, he will
 ride and preach them self blind.
 We have had a great time in conference
 this day the conference does with
 the rebellion of the malcontents, I
 highly disapprove of any thing
 com'g before the conference, fit
 in a bps president; I plead not guilty.
 I have the leave of absence for operation
 upon my foot. I beg leave to request
 if I am to have a suit of clothes
 that they may be my own colour light
 blue, the excessive heat of this
 country, and we being so exposed
 particularly to the sun it is not the
 best for my health. I am the infirm
 worth to the East. I hope to be
 able to go. I am ever your
 affectionate father
 June 6 1801

LETTER TO THOMAS HASKIN

Thomas Haskin was a travelling preacher from 1782 through 1785 and a member of the Christmas Conference in 1785. His manuscript *Journal* is in the Library of Congress. He was one of the editors of *Asbury's Journal*, with Ezekiel Cooper and Francis Hollingsworth. This letter was written at Philadelphia, where Haskin had a book and stationery business, and referred to Haskin's work on Asbury's manuscript. Asbury was in the city for two months suffering with an infected foot. The original of this letter is at St. George's Church, Philadelphia.

MY VERY DEAR SON,

The probability is that I shall be in town another week to gain some strength and part of a new foot, and as I am through the selection and file of letters I have sent through the numbers of my *Journal*, back in haste, not expecting that I could attend an examination of them upon your first correction. I am now inclined upon second thought, more attentively to review them upon your first going through them; and to judge more perfectly which I shall choose, whether to have them transcribed as you have begun, or take them upon your first correction, or lay them by altogether, or let them be till some way may open in my future life or after my death. I am at present under some doubt and difficulty what to do. By reading them carefully I shall judge according to my imperfect judgment, whether I can submit them to the press in the present dress or not. Please to send the numbers by the Phila—. I am with great respect to you and yours.

FRANCIS ASBURY

Saturday morning

July 11th, 1801.

FACSIMILE OF ASBURY LETTER

This letter, from the collection of the Baltimore Conference Historical Society, was written from Philadelphia on June 6, 1801, to George Roberts, pastor of Light Street Church in Baltimore. Asbury was suffering from a foot infection. "Old Father" refers to Bishop Whatcoat. "The Malcontents" were members of the General Conference of 1800 who had presented several resolutions to restrict the power of appointment. Note the fact, hitherto undisclosed, that Asbury wore light blue clothing.

LIVING SELECTIONS FROM
THE GREAT DEVOTIONAL CLASSICS

*Selections from
the Journal of
Francis Asbury*

ARRANGED AND EDITED
by
J. MANNING POTTS

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INTRODUCTION

Francis Asbury (1745-1816), the prophet of the long road, more nearly than any other person can be called the founder of The Methodist Church in America even though there were other Methodist preachers who preceded him to the New World. He took the experimental religion, the "rational scriptural, and preachable theology," and most of the polity of John Wesley and made them practical in the wilderness of America. His was a dynamic faith, and he preached a personal gospel with all its implications. He denounced slavery, drinking, gambling, war, and other social evils. He taught the three R's and did much to stamp out illiteracy. He built schools and colleges. He founded Sunday schools. He preached to the people in jails, and had an interest in men wherever he found them.

Asbury went up and down the land for 45 years in an ever-widening circle of travels, often on horseback, frequently in a chaise, a fly cart, a sulky, or, in his old age, sometimes in a closed carriage, winning converts and emphasizing that his purpose was to "reform the continent and spread scriptural holiness" over this land.

It has been said that the early circuit riders made as great a contribution to the development of America as did the great statesmen. There were many of these in several denominations, but Francis Asbury stands out in

front of these early pioneers. He rode further than any, preached more sermons, visited more homes, touched more people, organized more churches, and lived longer. When he died, he left churches and the impress of his personality from Ontario to Georgia, from Virginia to Ohio, and upon all the states within that circuit. He sent out other preachers. They carried the Gospel in new states and territories, and the preachers soon established a reputation for following the pioneers wherever they went. Asbury was truly the prophet of the long road, though often beset with sickness. In spite of his ills he traveled.

In this booklet the material, arranged in chronological order, has been taken from Asbury's *Journal*, Hollingsworth's 1821 edition. The prayers are from the pen of the editor of the booklet.

To Dr. J. Minton Batten, Professor of Church History, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, the editor is deeply indebted. He is also indebted to staff members for their help in the compilation, especially to the Reverend Brooks B. Little, Miss Clarice Winstead, Mr. Russell Q. Chilcote, and Mr. Harold L. Hermann.

—J. MANNING POTTS
Editor, *The Upper Room*
Nashville, Tennessee

HIS CONVERSION EXPERIENCE

[*New York, July, 1774.*] *Lord's day, 24.*
I remember when I was a small boy and went to school, I had serious thoughts, and a particular sense of the being of a God; and greatly feared both an oath and a lie. At twelve years of age the Spirit of God strove frequently and powerfully with me: but being deprived of proper means and exposed to bad company, no effectual impressions were left on my mind. And, though fond of what some call innocent diversions, I abhorred fighting and quarrelling: when anything of this sort happened, I always went home displeased. But I have been much grieved to think that so many Sabbaths were idly spent, which might have been better improved. However, wicked as my companions were, and fond as I was of play, I never imbibed their vices. When between thirteen and fourteen years of age, the Lord graciously visited my soul again. I then found myself more inclined to obey; and carefully attended preaching in West-Bromwick; so that I heard Stillingfleet, Bagnel, Ryland, Anderson, Mansfield, and Talbott, men who preached the truth. I then began to watch over my inward and outward conduct; and having a desire to hear the Methodists, I went to Wednesbury, and heard Mr. Fletcher and Mr. Ingham, but did not understand them, though one of their subjects is fresh in my memory to this day. This was the first of my hearing the Methodists. After that, another person went with me to hear

them again: the text was, "The time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine." My companion was cut to the heart, but I was unmoved. The next year Mr. M[athe]r came into those parts. I was then about fifteen; and, young as I was, the word of God soon made deep impressions on my heart, which brought me to Jesus Christ, who graciously justified my guilty soul through faith in his precious blood; and soon showed me the excellency and necessity of holiness. About sixteen I experienced a marvellous display of the grace of God, which some might think was full sanctification, and was indeed very happy, though in an ungodly family. At about seventeen I began to hold some public meetings; and between seventeen and eighteen began to exhort and preach. When about twenty-one I went through Staffordshire and Gloucestershire, in the place of a travelling preacher; and the next year through Bedfordshire, Sussex, &c. In 1769 I was appointed assistant in Northamptonshire; and the next year travelled in Wiltshire. September 3, 1771, I embarked for America, and for my own private satisfaction, began to keep an imperfect journal.*

I. EARLY YEARS

[September, 1771 (At Sea).] Thursday, 12th. I will set down a few things that lie

*This excerpt from Ashbury's *Journal*, Vol. I, p. 120, is taken out of sequence to provide background of Francis Ashbury's early life.

on my mind. Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No, I am going to live to God, and to bring others so to do

[September, 1771 (At Sea).] On the Lord's day, September 22, I preached to the ship's company on John iii, 23: but alas! they were insensible creatures. My heart has been much pained on their account. I spent my time chiefly in retirement, in prayer, and in reading the Appeals, Mr. De Renty's life, part of Mr. Norris's Works, Mr. Edwards on the Work of God in New-England, the Pilgrim's Progress, the Bible, and Mr. Wesley's Sermons. I feel a strong desire to be given up to God—body, soul, time, and talents; far more than heretofore.

[Philadelphia, 1771.] October 27. This day we landed in Philadelphia, where we were directed to the house of one Mr. Francis Harris, who kindly entertained us in the evening, and brought us to a large church, where we met with a considerable congregation. Brother Pilmore preached. The people looked on us with pleasure, hardly knowing how to show their love sufficiently, bidding us welcome with fervent affection, and receiving us as angels of God. O that we may always walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called! When I came near the American shore, my very heart melted within me, to think from whence I came, where I was going, and what I was going about. But I felt my

mind open to the people, and my tongue loosed to speak. I feel that God is here; and find plenty of all we need.

[*New York, November, 1771.*] *Thursday, 22.* At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I shall show them the way. I am in trouble, and more trouble is at hand, for I am determined to make a stand against all partiality. I have nothing to seek but the glory of God; nothing to fear, but his displeasure.

[*Pennsylvania, 1772.*] *April 11.* Found an inattention to study, an unsettled frame of mind, much insensibility of soul, and a backwardness to prayer. Lord, help me with an active warmth to move, and with a vigorous soul to rise!

[*New York, September, 1772.*] *Wednesday, 23.* In the morning I preached, and felt a measure of peace, and stronger confidence in my soul towards God.

I am now twenty-seven years of age, and have had a religious concern on my heart about fourteen years; though I felt something of God as early as the age of seven.

[*Maryland, November, 1772.*] *Tuesday, 24.* Preached at Winchester [now Westminster], in an unfinished house; and while the rain beat in upon me, many people looked and wondered at the stranger. However, I delivered my message with some energy, and then rode three miles to Richard Owing's,

where the Lord enabled me to preach with much feeling to a great number of people.

Wednesday, 25. We rode about twenty miles to my old friend Joshua Owing's, the first-home for the Methodists at that time, and found a very agreeable house and family. The old man is "an Israelite indeed." He was once a serious Church-man, who sought for the truth; and now God has revealed it to him. The Lord has also begun to bless his family. He has one son a preacher, and the rest of his children are very thoughtful.

[*Maryland, 1773.*] *Lord's day, January 10.* Many people attended at J. P.'s to whom I preached twice, with some life, and then went three miles into the Neck; and felt much power while preaching on perfect love. The more I speak on this subject, the more my soul is filled and drawn out in love. This doctrine has a great tendency to prevent people from settling on their lees.

[*Pennsylvania, April, 1773.*] *Friday, 23.* This morning my mind was in a calm and even frame—sweetly fixed on God as its prime object. But I greatly long for more grace—to receive esteem or disesteem with equal cheerfulness—to be something or nothing, as God would have me to be. My heart was at liberty, while employed in speaking for God this evening.

[*Maryland, December, 1773.*] *Tuesday, 7.* Yesterday I was very ill all the day with a fever; but feel something better to-day. God

is the portion of my soul. He favours me with sweet peace, and sanctifies all my afflictions. Lord, evermore keep me, and conduct me in safety to thy blessed presence above!

[*Maryland, February, 1774.*] *Friday*, 18. While preaching at the house of Mr. Moore, his father and mother were moved by the word of God. But after lying down at night to rest, my heart was oppressed with inexpressible feelings for the inhabitants of Baltimore. I am pressed under them as a cart full of sheaves; and would rather be employed in the most servile offices, than preach to them, if it were not from a sense of duty to God, and a desire to be instrumental in saving their souls. If honour and worldly gain were held out as motives to this painful work, they would to me appear lighter than vanity. But, Lord, thou knowest my motives and my ends!

[*Maryland, March, 1774.*] . . . much indisposed on *Friday*. . . . Though I continued very unwell the next day, I went to church, and heard Mr. Chase deliver a good discourse on retirement and private devotion; and afterward I attempted to preach at the Point, but found myself much worse at my return to town. My indisposition and weakness of body have so pressed me down for some time past, that I do not expect to abide long in this world of danger and trouble; neither do I desire it. But, come life or come death, let the will of the Lord be done! After the physicians had given over I. I. and thought they could do him no more service, we had recourse to that

old-fashioned remedy, *prayer*; and had reason to believe the Lord in mercy heard us.

[*New York, May, 1774.*] *Lord's day*, 29. I visited Mr. W[right], who is going to England; but found he had no taste for spiritual subjects. Lord, keep me from all superfluity of dress, and from preaching empty stuff to please the ear, instead of changing the heart! Thus has he fulfilled as a hireling his day.

[*New York, July, 1774.*] *Thursday*, 14. My mind is in peace. I have now been sick near ten months, and many days closely confined; yet I have preached about three hundred times, and rode near two thousand miles in that time; though very frequently in a high fever. Here is no ease, worldly profit, or honour. What, then, but the desire of pleasing God and serving souls, could stimulate to such laborious and painful duties?

[*New York, August, 1774.*] *August* 1. I have great discoveries of my defects and weaknesses. My soul is not so steadily and warmly devoted to the Lord as it might be. Lord, help me, and supply me with grace always! In preaching from Ephesians ii, 12, 13, I had great freedom. It seems strange, that sometimes, after much premeditation and devotion, I cannot express my thoughts with readiness and perspicuity; whereas at other times, proper sentences of Scripture and apt expressions occur without care or much thought. Surely this is of the Lord, to convince us that it is not by power or might, but by his Spirit

the work must be done. Nevertheless, it is doubtless our duty to give ourselves to prayer and meditation, at the same time depending entirely on the grace of God, as if we had made no preparation.

[*New York, September, 1774.*] *Lord's day, 18.* Losing some of my ideas in preaching, I was ashamed of myself, and pained to see the people waiting to hear what the blunderer had to say. May these things humble me, and show me where my great strength lieth! In meeting the society I urged the necessity of more private devotion, and of properly digesting what they hear. Set off the next morning for New Rochelle, and found E. D. in distress of soul. This is an agreeable family, and the children are both affectionate and obedient to their parents. I hope she and the rest of them will become true Christians, and be finally bound up in the bundle of life.

[*Virginia, May, 1775.*] *Monday, 29.* With a thankful heart I landed at Norfolk, after having been much tossed about by contrary winds in the bay. My accommodations on board the vessel were also very indifferent, so that it was a disagreeable and fatiguing passage. . . .

Here I found about thirty persons in society after their manner; but they had no regular class-meetings. However, here are a few who are willing to observe all the rules of our society. Their present preaching-house is an old, shattered building, which has formerly

been a play-house. Surely the Lord will not always suffer his honour to be trampled in the dust. No; I entertain a hope that we shall have a house and a people in this town. My heart is filled with holy thoughts, and deeply engaged in the work of God. On *Tuesday* evening about one hundred and fifty souls attended to hear the word, and about fifty at five o'clock on *Wednesday* morning, which, by the presence of the Lord, was found to be a good time. I then went over to Portsmouth, and found my spirit at liberty in preaching to a number of souls there.

[*Virginia, 1775.*] *Friday, June 2.* The Lord is pleased to show me the danger which a preacher is in of being lifted up by pride, and falling into the condemnation of the devil. How great is the danger of this! A considerable degree of ballast is highly necessary to bear frequent and sudden puffs of applause. Lord, fill me with genuine humility, that the strongest gusts from Satan or the world may never move me!

[*New Jersey, April, 1776.*] *Monday, 22.* I found Christ in me the hope of glory: but felt a pleasing, painful sensation of spiritual hunger and thirst for more of God. On *Tuesday* I rode to Burlington, and on the way my soul was filled with holy peace, and employed in heavenly contemplations: but found, to my grief, that many had so imbibed a martial spirit that they had lost the spirit of pure and undefiled religion. I preached from

Rom. xiii, 11, but found it was a dry and barren time. And some who once ran well now walk disorderly. On *Wednesday* I rode to Trenton; and found very little liberty in preaching among them; thus has the Lord humbled me amongst my people. But I hope, through grace, to save myself, and, at least, some that hear me.

[*Maryland, June, 1776.*] *Thursday, 27.* This was a day of trials. Satan drew my thoughts into a train of reasoning on subjects which were out of my reach; for secret things belong to God, but things which are revealed belong to us and our children. Thus, while I was soaring out of the region of my duty, I became inattentive to what immediately concerned me, and oversetting my chaise, broke it very much. Though, blessed be God, my body was preserved.

[*Virginia, June, 1776.*] * *Sunday, 30.* I was comforted by the sight of my dear brother S[hadford]. But I was weak in body, through riding so far in extreme heat, and much exercised in mind; and did not know how I should be able to go through the labour of the day. We went to the chapel at ten, where I had liberty of mind, and strength of body beyond my expectation. After preaching I met the society, and was more relieved, both in body and mind. At four in the afternoon I preached again, from "I set before thee an

*Events which took place on this date were written into the *Journal* in December, 1776.

open door, and none can shut it." I had gone through about two-thirds of my discourse, and was bringing the words home to the present— Now, when such power descended, that hundreds fell to the ground, and the house seemed to shake with the presence of God. The chapel was full of white and black, and many were without that could not get in. Look wherever we would, we saw nothing but streaming eyes, and faces bathed in tears; and heard nothing but groans and strong cries after God and the Lord Jesus Christ. My voice was drowned amidst the groans and prayers of the congregation. I then sat down in the pulpit; and both Mr. S[hadford] and I were so filled with the divine presence, that we could only say, This is none other than the house of God! This is the gate of heaven! Husbands were inviting their wives to go to heaven, wives their husbands: parents their children, and children their parents: brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. In short, those who were happy in God themselves were for bringing all their friends to him in their arms. This mighty effusion of the Spirit continued for above an hour in which time many were awakened, some found peace with God, and others, his pure love. We attempted to speak or sing again and again: but no sooner we began than our voices were drowned. It was with much difficulty that we at last persuaded the people, as night drew on, to retire to their own homes.

[*Maryland, July, 1776.*] *Monday, 15.* We set off for the springs. Mr. D[allam] overtook us in the evening; and that no opportunity might be lost, I lectured at night in the tavern where we lodged. And both the tavern-keeper and his wife appeared to have some thought about their souls. On *Tuesday*, we reached Frederick, and collecting as many people as we could by a short notice, I preached from 2 Corinthians vi, 2, and found my spirit at liberty. My body complains of so much travelling, for which it is almost incompetent; but the Spirit of the Lord is the support and comfort of my soul. I was thrown out of my chaise the next day, but was providentially kept from being much hurt.

[*Maryland, July, 1776.*] *Monday, 29.* My present mode of conduct is as follows—to read about a hundred pages a day; usually to pray in public five times a day; to preach in the open air every other day; and to lecture in prayer-meeting every evening. And if it were in my power, I would do a thousand times as much for such a gracious and blessed Master. But in the midst of all my little employments, I feel myself as nothing, and Christ to me is all in all.

[*Maryland, December, 1776.*] *Lord's day, 8.* My present practice is, to set apart about three hours out of every twenty-four for private prayer; but Satan labours much to interrupt me; nevertheless, my soul enjoys a sweet and peaceful nearness to God, for the most part, in these duties.

[*Maryland, March, 1778.*] *Monday, 16.* I applied myself to the Greek and Latin Testament; but this is not to me like preaching the Gospel. However, when a man cannot do what he would, he must do what he can.

[*Maryland, April, 1778.*] *Tuesday, 7.* My soul was kept in peace; and I spent much of my time in reading the Bible and the Greek Testament. Surely God will stand by and deliver me! I have none other on whom I can depend. And he knows with what intention and for what purposes I came into this distant and strange land, and what little I have suffered for his cause.

[*Delaware, March, 1779.*] *Lord's day, 28.* My mind was much drawn out in prayer, and I believe I have not spent more time in this exercise for many years past, if ever, than I do now. But my mind has been much perplexed about wandering thoughts in prayer, though Mr. Wesley's deep and judicious discourse on that subject has afforded me no small satisfaction. He hath both shown the causes of those thoughts, which are not sinful, and incontestably proves that they contract no guilt. Yet a devout and tender mind must be grieved, to find any kind of temptation in that sublime exercise wherein the whole soul desires to be employed.

[*Delaware, July, 1779.*] *Friday, 23.* Arose, as I commonly do, before five o'clock in the morning, to study the Bible. I find none like

it; and find it of more consequence to a preacher to know his Bible well, than all the languages or books in the world—for he is not to preach these, but the word of God.

[*Delaware, November, 1779.*] *Wednesday, 17.* I have read through the Book of Genesis; and again have read the Confession of Faith, the Assembly's Catechism, Directory of Church Government, and Form for the Public Worship: now I understand it better than I like it. I purposed to rise at four o'clock, as often as I can, and spend two hours in prayer and meditation; two hours in reading, and one in recreating and conversation; and in the evening, to take my room at eight, pray and meditate an hour, and go to bed at nine o'clock: all this I purpose to do, when not travelling; but to rise at four o'clock every morning.

[*Delaware, January, 1780.*] *Friday, 28.* A fine day for travelling: yesterday was so cold, it was hardly possible to travel without getting one's limbs frozen. I rose soon after five o'clock, prayed four times before I left my room, and twice in the family. I then set out for Isaac Moore's below Broad-creek, met with some difficulty in the way from the ice, but came there safe. Was variously exercised with thoughts, and had hard fightings. After riding twenty-five miles I took a little food, this being a day of abstinence and prayer with me.

[*North Carolina, September, 1780.*] *Sunday, 3.* This day nine years past I sailed from Bristol, Old England. Ah! what troubles have

I passed through! Wha. sickness! What temptations! But I think, though I am grown more aged, I have a better constitution, and more gifts; and I think much more grace. I can bear disappointments and contradiction with greater ease.

[*Delaware, November, 1780.*] *Tuesday, 7.* I was closely engaged in reading a volume of Mr. Wesley's Journal of above three hundred pages; ended it on Wednesday morning. I felt dejection of spirits for want of public exercise; I have had so much of this, that within this six months, I have travelled, according to my computation, two thousand six hundred and seventy-one miles; yet am uneasy when still. I proposed meeting the children when I came again: I appointed a place for them to sit, and desired the parents to send a note with each, letting me know the temper, and those vices to which the child might be most subject.

[*New York, September, 1786.*] I was taken ill, and was confined about eight days, during which time I was variously tried and exercised in mind. I spent some time in looking over my journals, which I have kept for fifteen years back. Some things I corrected, and some I expunged. Perhaps, if they are not published before, they will be after my death, to let my friends and the world see how I have employed my time in America. I feel the worth of souls, and the weight of the pastoral charge, and that the conscientious discharge of its important duties requires some-

thing more than human learning, unwieldly salaries, or clerical titles of D.D., or even *bishop*. The eyes of all—both preachers and people, will be opened in time.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, we thank Thee for Francis Asbury and others like him, that great body of circuit riders who helped to make American history, both secular and religious. They had their part in founding a nation. Their works do follow them. Help me today to be true to the Christ who challenged them to chart paths through the wilderness in order that men and women and boys and girls might know Christ as their Saviour. Give me this kind of love and this kind of passion to bring others to Thee. In His name. Amen.

II. MIDDLE LIFE

[*New York, May, 1787.*] *Saturday, 26.* Rode to ———: our friends had procured the Presbyterian church for me. I felt a spirit of life on these words, "Be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." I called to see my old friend and assistant, James Glaisbrook, who was the first preacher I travelled with upon a regular appointment in England. He is now a Presbyterian minister; much changed in his outward man, but I believe his sentiments are much the same as when I first knew him. The Lord be with and bless him!

[*West Virginia, July, 1788.*] *Thursday, 10.* We had to cross the Alleghany Mountain again at a bad passage. Our course lay over mountains and through valleys, and the mud and mire was such as might scarcely be expected in December. We came to an old, forsaken habitation in Tyger's Valley. Here our horses grazed about, while we boiled our mear. Midnight brought us up at Jones's, after riding forty or perhaps fifty miles. The old man, our host, was kind enough to wake us up at four o'clock in the morning. We journeyed on through devious lonely wilds, where no food might be found, except what grew in the woods, or was carried with us. We met with two women who were going to see their friends, and to attend the quarterly meeting at Clarksburg. Near midnight we stopped at A———'s, who hissed his dogs at us: but the women were determined to get to quarterly meeting, so we went in. Our supper was tea. Brothers Phoebus and Cook took to the woods; old ——— gave up his bed to the women. I lay along the floor on a few deer-skins with the fleas. That night our poor horses got no corn; and the next morning they had to swim across the Monongahela. After a twenty miles' ride we came to Clarksburg, and man and beast were so outdone that it took us ten hours to accomplish it.

[*Tennessee, April, 1790.*] *Tuesday, 6.* We were compelled to ride through rain, and crossed the Stone Mountain: those who wish

to know how rough it is may tread in our path. What made it worse to me was, that while I was looking to see what was become of our guide, I was carried off with full force against a tree that hung across the road some distance from the ground, and my head received a very great jar, which, however, was lessened by my having on a hat that was strong in the crown. We came on to the dismal place called Roan's Creek, which was pretty full. Here we took a good breakfast on our tea, bacon, and bread.

[*Kentucky, May, 1790.*] *Tuesday, 11.* Crossed Kentucky River. I was strangely undone for want of sleep, having been greatly deprived of it in my journey through the wilderness; which is like being at sea, in some respects, and in others worse. Our way is over mountains, steep hills, deep rivers, and muddy creeks; a thick growth of reeds for miles together; and no inhabitant but wild beasts and savage men. Sometimes, before I am aware, my ideas would be leading me to be looking out ahead for a fence; and I would, without reflection, try to recollect the houses we should have lodged at in the wilderness. I slept about an hour the first night, and about two the last: we ate no regular meal; our bread grew short, and I was much spent.

I saw the graves of the slain—twenty-four in one camp. I learn that they had set no guard, and that they were up late, playing at cards. A poor woman of the company had dreamed three times that the Indians had sur-

prised them all; she urged her husband to entreat the people to set a guard, but they only abused him, and cursed him for his pains. As the poor woman was relating her last dream the Indians came upon the camp; she and her husband sprung away, one east, the other west, and escaped. She afterward came back and witnessed the carnage. . . .

[*South Carolina, March, 1791.*] *Saturday, 26.* We had white and red Indians at Catawba; the Doctor [Coke] and myself both preached. I had some conversation with the chiefs of the Indians about keeping up the school we have been endeavoring to establish amongst them.

[*Virginia, April, 1791.*] *Friday, 29.* The solemn news reached our ears that the public papers had announced the death of that dear man of God, John Wesley. He died in his own house in London, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, after preaching the Gospel sixty-four years. When we consider his plain and nervous writings; his uncommon talent for sermonizing and journalizing; that he had such a steady flow of animal spirits; so much of the spirit of government in him; his knowledge as an observer; his attainments as a scholar; his experience as a Christian; I conclude, his equal is not to be found among all the sons he hath brought up, nor his superior among all the sons of Adam he may have left behind.

[*Connecticut, June, 1791.*] *Saturday, 4.* In the evening I went on to Reading. Surely

God will work powerfully amongst these people, and save thousands of them. We have travelled about twenty-four miles this day over very rough roads; the weather is cold for the season; my horse is very small, and my carriage is inconvenient in such rocky, uneven, jolting ways. This country is very hilly and open—not unlike that about the Peak of Derbyshire. I feel faith to believe that this visit to New-England will be blessed to my own soul, and the souls of others.

[*Rhode Island, June, 1791.*] *Sunday, 19.* Came to Providence. I attended the ministry of Mr. M——, a Baptist, in the forenoon; and Mr. S——, a New Light, in the afternoon. In the evening I preached with some life, on Isai. lxi, 1-3. There are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Independents or Congregationalists, here: but the Baptists appear to be the leading people. I found a few gracious souls, and some seeking. . . .

[*Rhode Island, June, 1791.*] *Monday, 20.* I visited some serious families that truly love and fear God. The afternoon I spent very agreeably with the old prophet Mr. Snow, aged about seventy years: he was awakened by the instrumentality of Gilbert Tennant, whose memory I revere. He told me much about Mr. Whitefield, and old times, and of the ministers of old times—of himself, his awakening, and conversion to God—of his riding thirty miles to Newport, in exceeding cold weather, to bring Mr. Tennant to Providence.

[*Maryland, 1791.*] *Monday, December 5.* I went from house to house through the snow and cold, begging money for the support of the poor orphans at Cokesbury [College].

[*Virginia, 1791.*] *Wednesday, December 7.* A day to be remembered. We stopped once in forty-three miles: when we reached Oxen Hill Ferry, opposite to Alexandria, I was nearly frozen, being hardly able to walk or talk. We crossed the Potomac in an open boat, on whose icy bottom the horses with difficulty kept their feet; and still worse it would have been, had I not thoughtfully called for some straw to strew beneath them; we had five of them on board and the waves were high.

[*Virginia, January, 1792.*] *Thursday, 5.* Rode to W. B.——'s: there were but few people. On our way thither brother M—— would stop to feed: I believe the Lord sent me to speak a word to a broken-hearted, forsaken, distressed woman. My soul enjoys peace; but excessive labour, and bodily suffering from the cold, prevent that deep communion with God I wish for: I do little except reading a few chapters in my Hebrew Bible.

[*South Carolina, February, 1792.*] *Monday, 27.* We rode thirty miles to White Oak meetinghouse—a painful journey; the weather was cold, and the house open; the people, however, were attentive. It is not pleasing to the flesh to take only a little tea at seven o'clock in the morning and then go until six

at night before we have a table spread; and ah! how few Christian houses! I had my trials in the evening.

[*Kentucky, April, 1792.*] *Monday, 23.* I rode to Bethel. I found it necessary to change the plan of the house, to make it more comfortable to the scholars in cold weather. I am too much in company, and hear so much about Indians, convention, treaty, killing, and scalping, that my attention is drawn more to these things than I could wish. I found it good to get alone in the woods and converse with God.

[*Pennsylvania, June, 1792.*] *Sunday, 10.* We have founded a seminary of learning called Union School; brother C. Conway is manager, who also has charge of the district: this establishment is designed for instruction in grammar, languages, and the sciences.

I have had some awful thoughts lest my lameness should grow upon me, and render me useless. I sometimes have fears that I am too slack in speaking in public, at conferences; I also feel that want of time and places to pursue my practice of solitary prayer, being frequently obliged to ride all the day and late at night, that I may in time reach the appointed places to preach.

[*Kentucky, May, 1793.*] *Tuesday, 7.* We rode down to the Crab Orchard, where we found company enough, some of whom were very wild: we had a company of our own, and refused to go with them. Some of them gave us very abusive language; and one man went

upon a hill above us, and fired a pistol towards our company. We resolved to travel in our order, and bound ourselves by honor and conscience to support and defend each other, and to see every man through the wilderness. But we could not depend upon wicked and unprincipled men, who would leave and neglect us, and even curse us to our faces. Nor were we at liberty to mix with swearers, liars, drunkards; and, for aught we know, this may not be the worst with some. We were about fourteen or fifteen in company; and had twelve guns and pistols. We rode on near the defeated camp, and resred till three o'clock under great suspicion of Indians: we pushed forward; and by riding forty-five miles on *Wednesday*, and about the same distance on *Thursday*, we came safe to Robinson's station, about eight o'clock.

[*Massachusetts, July, 1794.*] *Monday, 21.* I came to Boston unwell in body, and with a heavy heart. I passed the road and bridge from the University to Boston. A noble road and grand bridge. We have very agreeable lodging in this town: but have to preach, as did our Lord, in an upper room. We had a prayer-meeting, and the Lord was present to bless us.

[*South Carolina, February, 1796.*] *Friday, 5.* I spent in reading and writing, and observed it as a day of fasting and prayer. I felt myself under dejection of spirit. Ah! what a dreary world is this! my mind is under solemn impressions—the result of my re-

flections on God and souls. I will endeavour not to distress myself above measure. If sinners are lost, I cannot save them, neither shall I be damned for them. I was happy last evening with the poor slaves in brother Wells's kitchen, whilst our white brother held a sacramental love feast in the front parlour up stairs. . . .

[Maryland, June, 1797.] June 25. I met the male members of the society *Sabbath morning*, as I had met the sisters and the official members in the preceding week. I obtained the liberty of the managers of the African academy to congregate the fathers as well as to teach the children. We had nearly five hundred coloured people. Brother Willis preached on Acts vii, 7, and I added a few words. In the afternoon I gave a short exhortation at Mr. Otterbine's church, on Howard's Hill. I am now waiting for the making of a sully. Thomas Barber, from Birmingham, (England,) took a second likeness of me, at the desire of my mother, to send to England. I am trying to organize the African church.

[Virginia, March, 1798.] March 4. I can only make a few weak observations. What little pen-work I dare do, has been in writing a letter to York. I shall only journalize a little, and never enter deeply into my other subjects. I scorn to be idle; the past week hath been spent in the cotton work with my fingers, and in hearing the children read, and instructing them in the English grammar.

[Delaware, June, 1799.] *Sabbath day*, 2. After meeting, I rode to Duck Creek Cross Roads, and called at Dr. Cook's to see Thomas White's children. Doctor Anderson, Dr. Ridgely, and Dr. Neatham considered my case; they advised a total suspension from preaching, fearing a consumption or a dropsy in the breast.

[Delaware, June, 1799.] *Monday*, 3. I ordained one person at the Cross Roads, and another at Dickinson's meeting-house. I dined with Mr. Moore near the Appoquimink bridge, and then rode on to Wilmington; we have made forty miles this day. What with labour and fevers my rest is greatly interrupted.

Prayer

Our Father, we realize our dependence on Thee. When we are weak, then we are strong. Afflictions may be our crosses, but they can become crowns if we will sanctify them as is our privilege. Help us to take the sicknesses, the burdens, the losses, the calamities and use them as means of grace to center our affections on our Saviour. Give me this kind of courage, this kind of faith. In Jesus' name. Amen.

III. LATE YEARS

[North Carolina, February, 1801.] We have ridden at least five hundred and fifty, if not six hundred, miles, over the hills, barrens, swamps, savannahs, rivers, and creeks, of South Carolina.

At Gause's Manor, or more properly *town*, we were pleasantly situated. I had a most solemn visit to the sea-beach, which to me was a most instructive sight: the sea reminded me of its great Maker. "who stayeth the proud waves thereof;" its innumerable productions; the diversified features of its shores—the sand-hills; the marsh; the pimenta, tall and slender; the sheep and goats frisking in the shade or browsing in the sun: or the eye, directed to the waters, beholds the rolling porpoise; the sea-gulls lifting and letting fall from high the clam, which breaking, furnishes them with food; the eagles with hovering wings watching for their prey; the white sail of the solitary vessel tossed upon the distant wave—how interesting a picture do all these objects make!

[*Georgia, November, 1801.*] *Thursday, 19.* We started, hungry and cold, crossing at Malone's mill a branch of Oconee, and came to Henry Pope's in Oglethorpe. We have ridden about eighty miles this week of short and cold days. Why should a living man complain?—but to be three months together upon the frontiers, where, generally, you have but one room and fire-place, and half a dozen folks about you, strangers perhaps, and their family certainly, (and they are not usually small in these plentiful new countries,) making a crowd—and this is not all; for here you *may* meditate if you can, and here you *must* preach, read, write, pray, sing, talk, eat, drink, and sleep—or fly into the woods. Well! I have pains in my body, particularly my hip,

which are very afflictive when I ride; but I cheer myself as well as I may with songs in the night—with Wesley's, Watt's, and Stennett's sight of Canaan, in four hymns.

[*Maryland, April, 1802.*] *Monday, 5.* Whilst in Baltimore, I received an account of the death of my mother, which I fear is true. And here I may speak safely concerning my very dear mother: her character to me is well known. Her paternal descent was Welsh; from a family ancient and respectable, of the name of Rogers. She lived a woman of the world until the death of her first and only daughter, Sarah Asbury: how would the bereaved mother weep and tell of the beauties and excellencies of her lost and lovely child! pondering on the past in the silent suffering of hopeless grief. This afflictive providence graciously terminated in the mother's conversion. When she saw herself a lost and wretched sinner, she sought religious people, but "in the times of this ignorance" few were "sound in the faith," or "faithful to the grace given:" many were the days she spent chiefly in reading and prayer; at length she found justifying grace, and pardoning mercy. So dim was the light of truth around her, from the assurance she found, she was at times inclined to believe in the final perseverance of the saints. For fifty years her hands, her house, her heart, were open to receive the people of God and ministers of Christ; and thus a lamp was lighted up in a dark place

called Great Barre, in Great Britain. She was an afflicted, yet most active woman, of quick bodily powers, and masculine understanding; nevertheless, "so kindly all the elements were mixed in her," her strong mind quickly felt the subduing influences of that Christian sympathy which "weeps with those who weep," and "rejoices with those who do rejoice." As a woman and a wife she was chaste, modest, blameless; as a mother (above all the women in the world would I claim her for my own) ardently affectionate; as a "mother in Israel" few of her sex have done more by a holy walk to live, and by personal labour to support, the Gospel, and to wash the saints' feet; as a friend, she was generous, true, and constant. Elizabeth Asbury died January 6th, 1802; aged eighty-seven or eighty-eight years. There is now, after fifty years, a chapel within two or three hundred yards of her dwelling. I am now often drawn out in thankfulness to God, who hath saved a mother of mine, and, I trust, a father also, who are already in glory, where I hope to meet them both, after time, and cares, and sorrows, shall have ceased with me; and where glory shall not only beam, but open on my soul forever. Amen.

[*Tennessee, October, 1802.*] *Wednesday, 20.* I sent word to James Douthat to explain to the elders of Georgia and South Carolina my situation. I also dispatched John Watson to meet brother Snethen, and give him my plan to fulfill the appointments in Georgia—but behold, brother Snethen had had a fall

from his horse, and was left lame upon the road! I have been sick for twenty-three days; ah! the tale of woe I might relate. My dear M'Kendree had to lift me up and down from my horse, like a helpless child. For my sickness and sufferings I conceive I am indebted to sleeping uncovered in the wilderness. . . .

[*South Carolina, December, 1802.*] *Tuesday, 28.* Yesterday and to-day I have been busy writing letters. My general experience is close communion with God, holy fellowship with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, a will resigned, frequent addresses to a throne of grace, a constant, serious care for the prosperity of Zion, forethought in the arrangements and appointments of the preachers, a soul drawn out in ardent prayer for the universal Church and the complete triumph of Christ over the whole earth. Amen, Amen, so be it! I have finished many letters, and adjusted some plans. For my amusement and edification, I was curious to read the first volume of my journals. I compared my former with my latter self. It was little I could do thirty years ago; and I do less now.

[*Georgia, January, 1804.*] *Friday, 27.* We reached Georgetown. I have suffered in my flesh, and have had "deep waters" of a temporal and spiritual nature to wade through.

If I should die in celibacy, which I think quite probable, I give the following reasons for what can scarcely be called my choice. I was called in my fourteenth year; I began my public exercises between sixteen and seven-

teen; at twenty-one I travelled; at twenty-six I came to America: thus far I had reasons enough for a single life. It had been my intention of returning to Europe at thirty years of age; but the war continued, and it was ten years before we had a settled, lasting peace: this was no time to marry or be given in marriage. At forty-nine I was ordained superintendent bishop in America. Amongst the duties imposed upon me by my office was that of travelling extensively, and I could hardly expect to find a woman with grace enough to enable her to live but one week out of the fifty-two with her husband: besides, what right has any man to take advantage of the affections of a woman, make her his wife, and by a voluntary absence subvert the whole order and economy of the marriage state, by separating those whom neither God, nature, nor the requirements of civil society permit long to be *put asunder*? It is neither just nor generous. I may add to this, that I had little money, and with this little administered to the necessities of a beloved mother until I was fifty-seven: if I have done wrong, I hope God and the sex will forgive me: it is my duty now to bestow the pittance I may have to spare upon the widows and fatherless girls, and poor married men.

[*New York, May, 1805.*] *Friday, 31.* I read the latter part of Mr. Wesley's Journal. How great and unceasing were his labours; how various, comprehensive, and just are his observations on men, women, modes, manners,

doctrines, opinions, authors, and things! I have felt myself strongly urged to pray after every meal, where the families are in the habit of prayer; but I believe there are Methodist households that sometimes fall in my way, who never pray in this way: and is this our poor success, after eighteen years of faithful labours? God be gracious to us, and to such families and unfaithful souls!

[*Pennsylvania, July, 1809.*] *Friday, 21.* We were comfortable while resting at Doctor Hopkin's. Arrived at the ferry bank, no boat appeared, so I came back and called a meeting. Since we left Baltimore in April, we have made, we compute, two thousand miles. Such roads, such rains, and such lodgings! Why should I wish to stay in this land? I have no possessions or babes to bind me to the soil; what are called the comforts of life I rarely enjoy; the wish to live an hour such a life as this would be strange to so suffering, so toil-worn a wretch. But God is with me, and souls are my reward: I may yet rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. I might fill pages with this last week's wonders.

[*Canada, 1811.*] *Tuesday, July 2.* At eight o'clock we set sail, and crossed the St. Lawrence by rowing: the river here is three miles wide. We rode through Cornwall in the night, and came to Evan Roy's, making forty-four miles for the day's journey. It is surprising how we make nearly fifty miles a day over such desperate roads as we have lately travelled: we lose no time: Ah! why should

we—it is so precious! . . . *Tuesday*, I preached, and again on *Wednesday*: we rode along the banks of the river; they are neatly and pleasantly improved. We dined with Stephen Bailey and went from thence with brother Glassford, in his calash. I asked him how we were to get out if we upset; his answer was actual experiment: the saplings on the side of the path broke the fall, so that we escaped unhurt. . . . *Friday*, I preached at the German settlement: I was weak in body, yet greatly helped in speaking. Here is a decent, loving people; my soul is much united to them. I called upon father Dulmage: and on brother Hicks—a branch of an old Irish stock of Methodists in New York. I lodged at David Brackenridge's, above Johnston. *Saturday*, we rode twelve miles for our breakfast. Reached Elizabethtown. Our ride has brought us through one of the finest countries I have ever seen: the timber is of a noble size: the cattle are well-shaped and well-looking: the crops are abundant, on a most fruitful soil: surely this is a land that God the Lord hath blessed.

[*South Carolina, 1812.*] *Wednesday, January 1, 1812.* A steady ride of thirty-eight miles brought us into Charleston. The highways were little occupied by travellers of any kind, which was the more providential to me, for my lameness and my light fly cart would have made a shock of the slightest kind disagreeable. I was anxious also to pass this first day of the new year in undisturbed prayer.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, in reading, meditation, writing, and prayer. I do not reject visitors.

[*New York, July, 1812.*] *Tuesday, 28.* I will leave Newtown this afternoon. There must be a great change here. We came away, after meeting, to Elijah Griswold's: my host is a brand plucked from the burning—strong drink had scorched him forty years. He had a pious son who watched over, and prayed for him; and he himself never closed his doors against the pious. The Lord heard prayer on his behalf, and has entirely delivered him from the love of whisky. I hear of another wonderful emancipation from the slavery of drunkenness.

[*New Hampshire, June, 1813.*] *Sunday, 6.* I preached in the morning and afternoon with little freedom. May we not expect increasing days of distress? Methodism in the east is as likely to be anything else as that which it ought to be, unless we have great displays of the power of God, and a strict discipline. We have a gracious rain in mercy, if not in answer to prayer. Knowing the uncertainty of the tenure of life, I have made my will, appointing Bishop M'Kendree, Daniel Hitt, and Henry Boehm, my executors. If I do not in the meantime spend it, I shall leave, when I die an estate of two thousand dollars, I believe: I give it all to the Book Concern. This money, and somewhat more, I have inherited from dear departed Methodist friends, in the

State of Maryland, who died childless; besides some legacies which I have never taken. Let it all return, and continue to aid the cause of piety.

[*New Jersey, 1814.*] *Tuesday, July 19.* I would not be loved to death, and so came down from my sick room and took to the road, weak enough. Attentions constant, and kindness unceasing, have pursued me to this place, and my strength increases daily. I look back upon a martyr's life of toil, and privation, and pain; and I am ready for a martyr's death. The purity of my intentions; my diligence in the labours to which God has been pleased to call me; the unknown sufferings I have endured; what are all these?—the merit, atonement, and righteousness of Christ alone make my plea. My friends in Philadelphia gave me a light, little four-wheeled carriage; but God and the Baltimore Conference made me a richer present—they gave me John Wesley Bond for a travelling companion; has he his equal on the earth for excellencies of every kind as an aid? I groan one minute with pain, and shout glory the next!

[*Ohio, August, 1814.*] *Tuesday, [23].* I preached in great weakness in Chillicothe; but my help was with me; in God will I make my boast. From the 24th to the 30th, we are at senator Worthington's. I pay my mite of worship in this amiable family in great weakness. The kind attentions I received are greatly beyond my deserts. Mrs. Worthington has taught her boys and girls, servants and chil-

dren, to read the holy Scriptures, and they are well instructed: I heard them more than one lesson with much satisfaction. O that all mothers would do likewise! I presume the worship of God is kept up in this house, though neither of the heads thereof have attached themselves to any society of professing Christians: doubtless God will bless them, and their children after them.

[*Ohio, November, 1815.*] *Sabbath, 22.* I ordained the deacons, and preached a sermon, in which Doctor Coke was remembered. My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop M'Kendree—I will take away my feet. It is my fifty-fifth year of ministry, and forty-fifth year of labour in America. My mind enjoys great peace and divine consolation. My health is better, which may in part be because of my being less deeply interested in the business of the conference. But whether health, life, or death, good is the will of the Lord: I will trust him; yea, and will praise him: he is the strength of my heart and my portion forever—Glory! glory! glory! Conference was eight days and a half in session—hard labour. Bishop M'Kendree called upon me to preach at the ordination of elders.

Prayer

Dear Father, how great a thing it is to read the intimate glimpses of men who have walked with Thee and thereby have gotten an insight into Thy goodness, Thy mercy, and Thy love. We are thankful for Thy servants who have

finished their courses in faith and now live within the celestial city. We thank Thee for Thy redemption which comes through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May He be mine today and may my life be a witness to His grace. In the Saviour's name. Amen.

IV. A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HIS DEATH AND BURIAL

Traveling with John W. Bond in a closed carriage they came to Richmond, Virginia, where he preached his last sermon March 24, 1816, in the old Methodist Church. He was almost too weak to deliver his sermon. He had to be carried to the pulpit from the carriage in which he rode and they seated him on a table prepared for that purpose. He spoke nearly an hour from the text, Romans ix: 28, "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." After his sermon he was carried from the pulpit to his carriage and on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday he journeyed and finally came to the house of his old friend, Mr. George Arnold, in Spottsylvania County, Virginia. Here on Sunday, the 31st of March, 1816, he died in the 71st year of his age, having devoted about 55 years to the ministry, 45 of which were spent in America. He was buried at the home of Mr. Arnold but his body was moved a month later to Eutaw Place Church, Baltimore, where it remained for 40 years. It was then moved to Mount Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore, for its final interment.

THE ASBURY TRAIL AWARD

The Asbury Trail Award is offered to Explorers and their Dads under the joint sponsorship of the Boy Scouts of America and the Western North Carolina Historical Association. The Award consists of a Medal and a Certificate and will be conferred on those who fulfill the following conditions:

1. Hiking the old Cataloochee trail over which Bishop Francis Asbury crossed the mountains in 1810.
2. Reading one of the recommended books on the life of Asbury.
3. Submitting an essay of not less than one thousand words on Asbury and his contribution to America.

The official hike covers approximately twenty-three miles between Cove Greek Gap, North Carolina, and Davenport Gap, Tennessee, as indicated on the map in this folder. Other nearby points historically related to Asbury are also indicated on the map, but visits to them are optional.

Francis Asbury was the first Bishop elected and consecrated in America by any denomination. He was the virtual creator of the largest Protestant body in the United States.

The Asbury Trail Award, however, is not denominational. As the religious pioneer on the early frontier, Asbury's contribution to the country is recognized by all historians, and a bronze equestrian statue has been erected in Washington and was dedicated by the President of the United States. The Award may be earned by any Scout without regard to his affiliation.

Preparation for Hiking the Trail

Hikers on the Asbury Trail should remember that it is a twenty-three mile long, rugged mountain trail, and not a one-day hike. Not less than two days will be required. All persons should be well prepared with equipment.

Most important in personal gear is a pair of sturdy leather hiking boots, preferably at least six inches high. Other equipment may be carried as desired.

There are ample camp sites along the Trail. The best is the Cataloochee Camp indicated on the map. Water is available at three or four spots, but canteens should be carried also. Note the location of the Ranger Sta-

tion on the map; it is about two miles from the fork of the road indicated. The ranger will gladly give all needed advice and aid.

The mountains are cool at night and warm sleeping gear is a must.

Since most of the trail lies inside the Great Smoky Mountains National Park it is advisable to secure a permit for camping. This can be done by writing to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Headquarters, United States Park Service, Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

For further information and enrollment address:

**DANIEL BOONE COUNCIL
Boy Scouts of America
New Medical Building
P.O. Box 7215
Asheville, North Carolina**



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FRANCIS ASBURY, THE PROPHECY OF THE LONG ROAD
By Frank O. Salisbury, C.A.O., R.P.S., LL.D., D.F.A.

The original of this finest portrait of Asbury is in the historical library at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. It has been exhibited at the Royal Society in London.

THE TRAIL

The old Cataloochee Trail runs from Cove Creek, North Carolina, to the area around Cosby, Tennessee.

In general it parallels Highway 284, and coincides with that road at several points. It skirts the border of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for 22 miles or more, and is inside and outside of the Park at various points.

The best description of the Trail is a report submitted to the National Park Service in 1940 by Mr. H. C. Wilburn, entitled *The Cataloochee Aboriginal Trail and Its Use and Development by White People*. This report may be seen at the Park Headquarters in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, and in Washington, D. C.

It is still possible to identify parts of the Trail which do not coincide with the highway. There are indentations, "dug out" stretches, Indian "flats" or sites of settlements or resting places, a stone cairn or "Indian grave" and similar evidences, which are described and located in Mr. Wilburn's report.

The origin of the important Trail along which the Cherokees crossed the mountains is lost in antiquity. It was mentioned in literature as early as 1799, when it was called a "turnpike." The Indians had by that time abandoned their settlements along the Trail, although the area was in their hunting grounds and protected by law.

Francis Asbury crossed the Appalachian mountains around sixty times, using different routes. He frequently went from the Knoxville area by way of the present Marshall and Hot Springs to Asheville, or Buncombe Court House, North Carolina. Sometimes he went from the present Morganton, North Carolina, through the gap east of Roan Mountain near Elk Park to the present Elizabethton and Bristol in Tennessee.

In 1810, however, he took "the new route" and followed the old Cataloochee Trail.

Asbury was accompanied on this trip by Bishop William McKendree, the Rev. Henry Boehm of Pennsylvania, a German-speaking preacher who often travelled with Asbury and whose father, Martin Boehm, was a Mennonite bishop and one of the founders of the United Brethren Church, and the Rev. John McGee, one of the founders of the Camp Meeting movement.

Asbury travelled through Kentucky to the McKendree home near Nashville and to the Holston country of East Tennessee. His party reached the home of Mitchell Porter, three miles south of Sevierville on the present Highway 71, between Sevierville and Gatlinburg. Porter's Chapel was there, at the present Zion's Cemetery. Then the party started up the mountain. The story is told in Asbury's famous *Journal*.

ASBURY'S JOURNAL

Thursday, November 29, 1810. We were in doubt whether we should take the old or the new route:¹ we took Mahon's road,² and got along pretty well, thirty miles, to the gate;³ the woman was sick, but the girls of the house were attentive and polite at Mr. Mahon's.

Friday, our troubles began at the foaming, roaring stream, which hid the rocks. At Catahouche⁴ I walked over a log. But O, the mountain—height after height, and five miles over! After crossing other streams,⁵ and losing ourselves in the woods, we came in, about nine o'clock at night to Vater Shuck's.⁶ What an awful day!

¹ The "new route" was the aboriginal Cataloochee Trail.

² Mahon's road was from near Pigeon Forge on Highway 71 to the head of Cosby Creek in Cocke County, Tennessee, where it intercepted present Highway 32 from Newport to the present Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

³ The Mahon home was at a toll gate near Cosby, Tenn.

⁴ This stream was Cataloochee Creek, which had various spellings. On the bank of the creek they fed the horses and asked a blessing on a meal of bread. John McGee drove the horses through the stream while Asbury, McKendree, and Boehm crossed on the log. (Boehm: *Reminiscences*, 328).

⁵ At the eastern foot of the mountain they came to Cove Creek, passed through a gate, and reached the settlements on Richland Creek and Pigeon River. They probably went up Jonathan Creek through Dellwood Gap and along Richland Creek where it now forms Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, since the better known trail led that way. Or they could have followed Pigeon River to the mouth of Richland Creek a few miles away. (Boehm, *op.cit.*, 328; Allen: *History of Haywood County*, 217ff.)

⁶ "Vater Shuck" was "Father" Jacob Shook (or Shuck), son of a Dutch immigrant and a Revolutionary soldier, who settled on Pigeon River at the present Clyde, North Carolina, in 1786, and is said to have built the first frame house in Haywood County. It is still standing, the home of Mrs. Mary Morgan, and the attic room which was used for preaching has been preserved with its pulpit and chair. Here was the first society in the county, probably formed by the Rev. Samuel Edney, the pioneer circuit rider of Western North Carolina. Shook bequeathed a tract of land for a camp meeting and the church was long known as Camp Ground. It is now Louisa Chapel. It stands on the original property and bears the date 1798. (Allen, *op.cit.*, 217-227, 593-596.)

Saturday, December 1. Last night I was strongly afflicted with pain. We rode, twenty-five miles, to Buncombe.⁷

Sabbath, December 2. Bishop M'Kendree and John M'Gee rose at five o'clock and left us to fill an appointment about twenty-five miles off.⁸ Myself and Henry Boehm went to Newton's academy,⁹ where I preached. Brother Boehm spoke after me; and Mr. Newton, in exhortation, confirmed what was said. Had I known and studied my congregation for a year, I could not have spoken more appropriately to their particular cases; this I learn from those who know them well. We dined with Mr. Newton: he is almost a Methodist, and reminds me of dear Whatcoat¹⁰—the same placidness and solemnity. We visited James Patton;¹¹ this is, perhaps, the last visit to Buncombe.¹²

⁷ At Buncombe Court House or Asheville the party probably stayed at the home of Daniel Killian, Asbury's favorite stopping place. The place still stands in the northern edge of Asheville and is inhabited by one of Killian's descendants. A marker has been erected there. Nearby is the Asbury Church, which grew out of the society in Killian's house and in which some Asbury relics are preserved.

⁸ These men doubtless preached in the home of the Rev. Samuel Edney at the present Edneyville, near Hendersonville. The Edney society is still active.

⁹ The Rev. George Newton, a Presbyterian and Asbury's friend, conducted a well-known school at Asheville.

¹⁰ Richard Whatcoat (1736-1806) came from England in 1784 and became a Bishop in 1800.

¹¹ James Patton and his sons, James W. and John E., were large property owners in Asheville and ran the Eagle Hotel. Patton Avenue is named for them. Among others who entertained Asbury at various times in the Asheville area were Senator Thomas Foster, George Swain, whose son was three times Governor and President of the University of North Carolina, Colonel James Lowry, half-brother of Governor Swain, William Mills, father-in-law of Samuel Edney, and many others both prominent and otherwise.

¹² This was not Asbury's last visit to Buncombe County. He visited the area each autumn until his death in the spring of 1816.

FRANCIS ASBURY 1745-1816

In Washington, D. C., there stands a great equestrian statue of Francis Asbury. It was unveiled by the President of the United States, who presented it to the nation in an address which extolled the preacher on horseback as one of the greatest figures in the pioneer period of American history. More recently the Historical Publications Commission of the United States Government placed the name of Asbury on the list of sixty great Americans whose works should be collected and published, along with such notables as Washington, Jefferson, Adams and Lincoln.

Who was this minister of the Gospel who holds such a secure place in our history?

Boyhood

Francis Asbury was born on August 20, 1745, about four miles from Birmingham, in England. His boyhood home, but not his birthplace, still stands on Newton Road in West Bromwich and is by the city preserved as an historic site.

He was the only son of Joseph (1715-1798) and Elizabeth Rogers (1715-1801) Asbury. He received but little formal education and at the age of thirteen became an apprentice at a nearby forge. Soon thereafter he became a convert of the Evangelical Revival then sweeping England under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley. He became a local preacher, and in 1768 he was admitted to the Conference.

America

The Revival had been brought to America by immigrants from Ireland. It arose almost simultaneously in Maryland and New York and a meeting house had been erected in each place, and an unfinished building had been bought in Philadelphia.

Help was needed and the people appealed to John Wesley for regular preachers. He responded by sending Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor late in 1769.

In 1771 Mr. Wesley called again for volunteers for America, and Francis Asbury and Richard Wright were chosen. They sailed in September and landed at Philadelphia on October 27, 1771.

On shipboard Francis Asbury began his famous *Journal*, later to be carefully edited and published in three volumes in 1821. Among other things he wrote these well-known words:

*"Whither am I going? to the New World.
What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my
own heart. To get money? No. I am going to
live to God and to bring others so to do."*

Asbury in America

On Monday, October 28, 1771, Asbury preached his first sermon in America at St. George's Church in Philadelphia, the oldest church house of the denomination in the United States, now in a National Park by act of Congress. Immediately thereafter he went to New York, where he encountered a problem in the administration of the infant societies.

It related to the famous system of itinerancy, or a "circulation of preachers," under which the ministers are changed at intervals. Asbury had been trained under Wesley's rule of frequent changes, but Boardman and Pilmoor preferred longer tenures. On November 27, 1771, Asbury wrote in his *Journal*:

"At present I am dissatisfied. I judge we are to be shut up in the cities this winter. My brethren seem unwilling to leave the cities, but I think I will show them the way."

Show them the way he did. He became the first and greatest of the Circuit Riders, who carried religion, morals, education and general culture along the advancing frontier of this continent. He established the itinerant system which enabled the preachers to keep up with the migrating multitudes and to outstrip all others in growth.

At the Conference in 1774, after Boardman and Pilmoor had returned to England, it was officially determined that the preachers should exchange each six months and that those in New York and Philadelphia should move quarterly.

The first Conference met in 1773, stationed ten preachers, and reported 1160 "numbers in Society." Year by year Asbury, along with the ever-increasing number of preachers, rode circuits in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and as far south as North and South Carolina.

During the Revolutionary War the other British preachers left the country, but Asbury remained. For several months he was forced to go into seclusion in Delaware because his nationality brought him under suspicion. New York was cut off from the Conference. But by 1784 the number of preachers had increased to 83 and the "numbers in Society" to 14,988.

Organizing a Church

These people were not members of any Church. The preachers were all laymen: not one had been ordained and they were forbidden to give the Holy Communion to their flocks. After the ties with England and the Church of England were broken they were in an anomalous situation with reference to the ordinances, which the people were demanding from the hands of

their own preachers, but which both Wesley and Asbury opposed. The societies in the South broke away from those in the North in the controversy.

It was clear that something had to be done.

It was then that John Wesley made one of the important decisions of ecclesiastical history. The British Church authorities refused to ordain one of his preachers for America, and he took the momentous step of ordaining one with his own hands, though he was not a Bishop.

Wesley did this because his studies of the early Church convinced him, as they had convinced others, that Bishops were not a "third order" of the clergy. There were only two "orders," namely, deacons and elders or presbyters. Episcopacy was an office, and a Bishop was an elder who had been set apart to a certain office or work in the Church.

It followed, therefore, that Wesley, being an ordained elder or presbyter of the Church of England, had a right to set apart persons for this office or work in his own societies, and this he proceeded to do.

In September, 1784, assisted by James Creighton, also an elder, he "set apart" Thomas Coke, LL.D., another presbyter, as "superintendent" for America, and sent him to these shores with instructions to "set apart" or ordain Francis Asbury to the same office.

But Asbury, who knew Americans, refused to accept the ritual and office on Wesley's appointment but insisted upon learning the will of the preachers. They were called together at Baltimore in December, 1784, and at this famous Christmas Conference the first independent denomination in America was formally organized and Francis Asbury was unanimously elected to the office of "superintendent," which soon became Bishop.

On three successive days he was ordained deacon, elder, and Bishop by Dr. Coke, becoming the first Bishop of any Church to be ordained in America.

The New Bishop

Asbury was the superintendent of societies scattered along the Atlantic seaboard from New England to Charleston, South Carolina, and as far westward as the Holston country of East Tennessee across the Appalachian Mountains.

The *Minutes* showed that John Wesley and Thomas Coke were also superintendents, but Wesley did not visit the new Church and Dr. Coke came only at intervals. Even when Coke was here Asbury attended all the conferences, and since he alone knew the country and the preachers he necessarily discharged nearly the whole responsibility.

Immediately after the adjournment of the Christmas Conference he started on his first episcopal

round. It led him through Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and to Charleston. Then he turned northward and on April 20, 1785, he and Coke convened the first Conference of the new Church at the home of the Rev. Major Green Hill, a local preacher and Revolutionary soldier, whose house still stands near Louisburg, North Carolina.

The operations of the new Church were now in full swing. There were ordained elders and deacons, the sacraments were administered, the people were satisfied since they had the status of members in a recognized Church. Asbury and Coke, accompanied by the Rev. Major Thomas Morrell, another Revolutionary soldier among the preachers, and John Dickins, who became the first Publishing Agent, visited President George Washington immediately after his inauguration and presented him a congratulatory address on behalf of the Church.

In the meantime the Circuit Riders followed the pioneers as they streamed westward along the Wilderness Road and the other early routes. It was said that the first sound in the wilderness was the ring of the settler's axe as he cleared a space for his cabin, and the second was the "hello" of the Circuit Rider at the settler's door.

The Church spread ever westward as they rode. When Asbury died in 1816 it had reached the Father of Waters.

The Great Circuit Rider

Asbury was "The Prophet of the Long Road." From 1784 until 1800 he was alone in the episcopacy and visited each annual conference. Richard Whatcoat was elected in 1800 and travelled with him. Whatcoat died in 1806, and William McKendree was elected two years later, and the practice continued.

Year by year until his death Asbury rode his circuit from New England to Charleston and over the mountains. As long as he was able to do so he rode a horse, and in later years he used a chaise. In spite of almost superhuman sufferings at times, he rode on, though on his last journey he could not stand and had to be carried bodily from the chaise to his preaching places.

In forty-five years Francis Asbury travelled 275,000 miles over the pioneer trails of the continent. He preached more than 16,000 times, an average of a sermon a day. More than sixty times he crossed the uncharted Appalachians.

When he came there were only ten preachers of his faith in the land; when he died there were 700, and he had ordained 6,000 with his own hands. Under his supervision the members increased from under twelve

hundred to nearly a quarter of a million, a ratio of growth greater by far than that of the population.

Asbury never had a home. He did not even have a rented room. He lived literally on the road and slept wherever night overtook him. His only address was "America," and letters so addressed always reached him.

On his last journey in 1816 he was unable to reach the Conference at Charleston, although he was within thirty miles of the city where he was forced to stop. He turned back northward and went a few miles a day when he could travel at all, intent on reaching the General Conference at Baltimore. But he could not go on. His travelling companion, the Rev. John Wesley Bond, carried him into the cabin of George Arnold in Spottsylvania County, Virginia, where he died on March 31, 1816.

He was buried at Arnold's house, but a month later his body was taken to the General Conference and buried under the pulpit of the Eutaw Street Church in Baltimore. Forty years later it was moved again, and now rests in Mount Olivet Cemetery with many other notable men of his Church.

Asbury's Place in History

Asbury was the virtual creator of a great Church. His genius shaped its policy and his iron control guided it during the perilous formative days. He made it, by his insistence on itinerancy, into one of the most effectively functioning bodies in the world. Whatever it has meant to America is due in no small degree to the organizing and administrative genius of Francis Asbury.

As the bearer of a moral culture to the rude frontier settlement, he probably has no peer in our history. He and his Circuit Riders went into every new community and into nearly every log cabin in the wilderness. In their saddle bags they carried the Bible, the hymnal, books, and religious literature of every kind. They brought the news of the outside world. They fought intemperance and every form of wrong doing, and they made law-respecting citizens out of people who might have been ruffians.

Asbury was the educational pioneer of his day. He has long been credited with establishing the first Sunday school in America. His preachers, who had little formal education, were required to preach annually on education. Furthermore, they dotted their wide circuits with schools. As early as 1780 a plan was drawn and money was raised for a school in North Carolina, though it was not actually opened for several years. In Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky, and both the Carolinas they established schools, and they opened a degree-conferring college in Maryland.

Their successors established hundreds of schools and colleges in practically every state. Many of these were suspended as the progress of public education rendered them unnecessary, but more than 150 are in operation today, and some of them are among the greatest in the land.

In 1789 Asbury was instrumental in starting a Publishing House, which is now the largest of its kind in America or in the world. In the same year he started *The Arminian Magazine*, a monthly periodical which, under different names and with some lapses, has continued until this day. Books and periodicals poured from the presses in a stream which has been increasing in volume for more than 150 years and is now greater than it has ever been. Asbury may almost be said to deserve the title of American Publisher Number One.

It is small wonder that President Calvin Coolidge, in dedicating the Asbury monument, exclaimed, "Who shall say where his influence, written upon the immortal souls of men, shall end!"

★ ★ ★

REFERENCES

The following books are recommended for reading in connection with the Asbury Trail Award. One of them should be found in your public library, or they can be read in the Historical Library at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina. They cannot be borrowed from the library but may be used in the reading room.

1. Asbury: *The Journal of Francis Asbury*, 3 volumes
2. Tipple: *The Prophet of the Long Road*
3. Tipple: *The Heart of Asbury's Journal*
4. Strickland: *The Pioneer Bishop—Life and Times of Francis Asbury*
5. Smith: *Life of Francis Asbury*
6. Briggs: *Bishop Asbury, a Biographical Study*
7. Du Bose: *Francis Asbury, a Biographical Study*
8. Duren: *Francis Asbury*
9. Mains: *Francis Asbury*

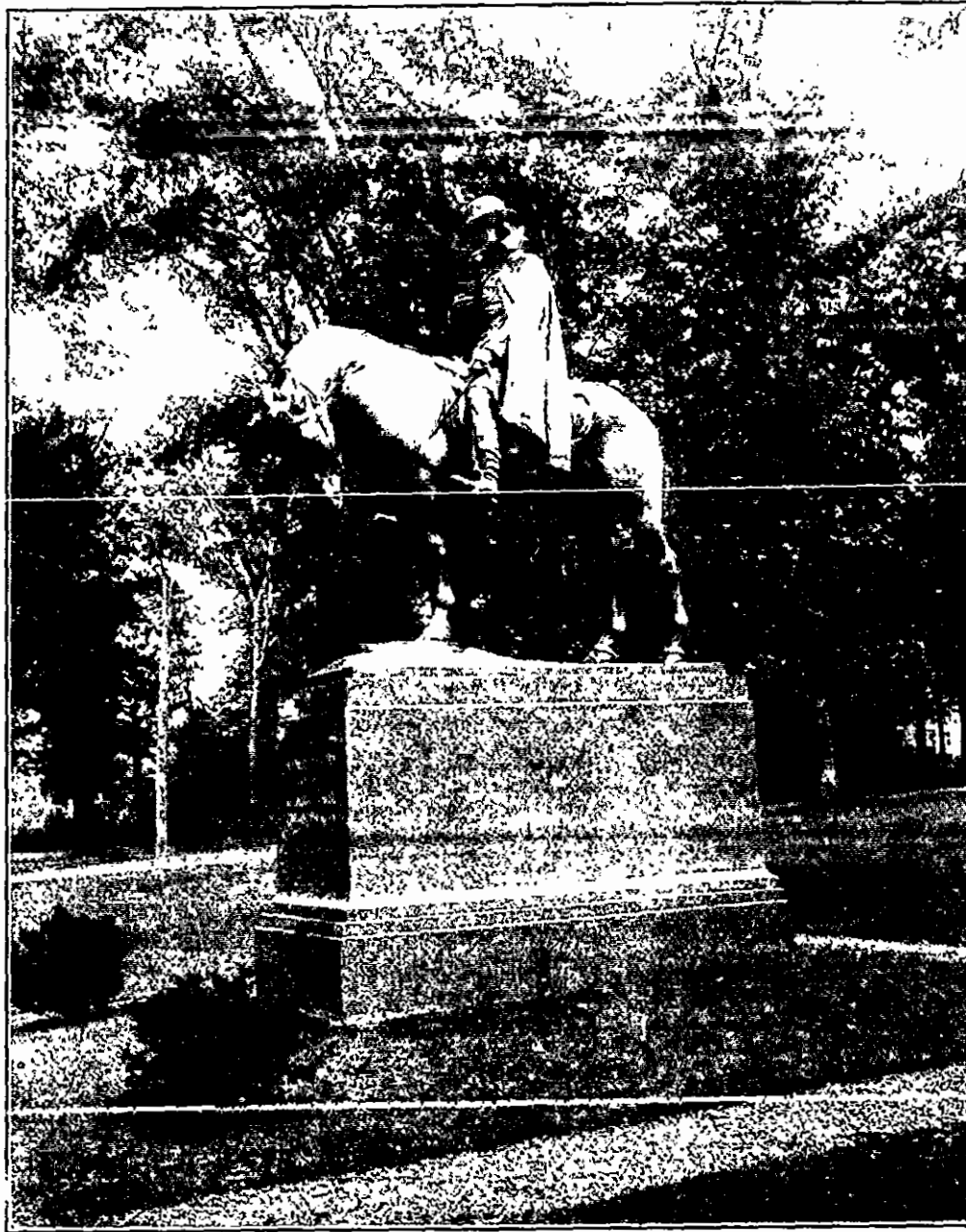
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"A Chevalier of God"

ON Thursday afternoon of last week in the sunshine of a perfect October day, a bronze equestrian statue of Francis Asbury, Methodist pioneer itinerant preacher, was unveiled on the campus of Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J. The statue of Bishop Asbury, which was executed by Augustus Lukeman of New York City, well-known sculptor, is a gift to the seminary from Mr. William S. Pilling of Philadelphia, Pa., in memory of his brother, Rev. Edward Stettin Pilling, a graduate of Drew in the class of 1885. Bishop Luther B. Wilson of New York, president of the seminary board of trustees, made the principal address at the unveiling ceremony. A feature of the program was the singing of a new hymn, written for the occasion by Rev. Frank Mason North, LL. D., Di. North, who is now secretary-counsel of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church and who is a member of the board of trustees and the faculty of Drew, stands high among the hymn-writers of the Christian church, his lines beginning "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life" being particularly well known. The new Commemoration Hymn has been given the name "Francis Asbury" and is sung to the tune of "Habakkuk." It is printed in full below.

From out the stern, heroic past
Rides forth into our softer days
A stalwart, mystic soul;
So long as sun and shadow last
That fell upon his rugged way
His fame will onward roll

Across the nation's restless seas
He marked the trails which men
Tread
Secure and unafraid;
The challenges which stir men's fears,
The sinking heart, the pallid
Still left him undismayed.

They watched him with a strange
prise
The somber garb, the quiet word
And in his hand the book;
They saw within his patient eyes
The kindling glory of his Lord,
The far, immortal look.

Our forest welcomes now his form,
Ere, forthlooking, hero, set,
A chevalier of God,
In summer's heat in winter's storm
He rides, a mighty leader here,
This prophet of the road.

Each soul is still a pioneer,
Still mind must venture, still the art
Of seeing have its test;
The frontiers of the faith are here;
Give us, O God, the singing heart
In life's undaunted quest.

We crave the gifts of simpler days,
The culture of the wilderness,
The wisdom of the wood,
The courage of the lonely ways,
The brooding thought, love's eager-
ness,
The grace of hardihood.

O Master of his life and ours,
Thou art the Light, Thou art the
Force!
The conquest is with Thee,
Reveal to us the mystic powers,
The stalwart strength, the secret
source
Of winning ministry.

The softer day, the harder task!
A wider world? Come from above!
Set faith and hope aflame!
Command us forth, O Christ, we ask,
With burning heart, with deathless
love,
Victorious in Thy name!

DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A More Worshipful Service

ONE of America's well-known writers is preparing a novel on the church. We are not vouching for this particular individual's qualifications for the task to which he has assigned himself. We are interested, however, in one of his preliminary observations. The writer has let it be known that he regards the average protestant service of worship as woefully lacking in what he would call "a spiritual thrill." He believes that our public worship, in the main, has degenerated into a perfectly innocuous thing, spiritually. His criticism is that the average church service is not enough unlike the average mass meeting of social reformers and anti-imperial crusaders to merit any further claim upon the public.

Worthy Temples Needed

What this author is trying to say is that we have so completely lost the sense of the mystical in our service of worship, that the much-talked-of "man in the street" cannot sense in that service the presence of the Heavenly Father. Somehow, we feel that there is more than a grain of truth in that general observation. Is it not true that we need not only more worthy temples but a more worshipful service as well? We believe that both are essential, and that the one will have a reciprocal influence of benefit upon the other.

Manifestly, it would be incongruous to have anything but a dignified and spiritually uplifting service in a temple of worship such as the one pictured on the cover of this issue of the HERALD. If we have a ramshackle church, we are more likely to have a ramshackle service. On the other hand, where thought and care are manifest in the construction of the church, the same qualities are likely to emerge in the preparation of the service. The two very often, and almost inevitably, go together. We shall have a more worshipful service when we have a more worshipful type of religious edifice.

Is Music Simply a "Filler"?

We have scarcely begun to appreciate the relation between religion and music in the matter of public worship. Music is still regarded by many people as a preliminary gesture in the progressive development of the service. It is still thought of as "filler." That is because we do not sufficiently understand the art of music. The singing of hymns and the rendition of anthems, chants, and responses contribute their share to the rounding out of a full-featured service of divine worship.

Many non-liturgical churches have gone so far in their departure from a ritualistic form of worship. The resulting service is too informal. It lacks those qualities of reverence, adoration, and praise so indispensable to the nurturing of the soul. The participation of the whole congregation in the gradual unfolding of the more formal type of service brings into the act of worship a sense of mental continuity and religious uplift. The present tendency in a large number of Protestant communities is very marked in the direction of more liturgy and less informality. That is as it should be.

We hasten to add, however, that this liturgical service can and must be kept free of those elements of superstition and fear which so often creep into the religious practices of those churches that emphasize this particular form of worship. We are not in sympathy with that type of

prayer-chanting and creed-reciting which lulls into sweet and complacent numbness the conscience of the worshiper. We have had entirely too much of that sort of thing. Let us hope that the Protestant Reformation has delivered us forever from the paralyzing influences of that particular brand of public worship which works for the mental and spiritual bondage of the supplicant.

In stressing the need of a more formal service of worship, we do not for a moment have any desire to reintroduce in the public praise of God any of those repudiated practices of former days. Do we need we go so far as we have gone in the opposite direction? Not at all. That is why the spiritual hunger of the multitudes is not being fed by the extemporaneous informality of the average Protestant service. That is why the author which we spoke of, though a Protestant, goes to the Roman Catholic Church in search of "a spiritual thrill." We believe it is possible to salvage the more redemptive and symbolic forms of public service without in the least endangering that freedom and spontaneity which is so characteristically a part of our Protestant heritage. That can be done, and we believe must be done, before our worship can be productive of those enduring spiritual benefits to which the people who frequent our churches are entitled.

The Place of the Sermon

A word in behalf of the sermon needs to be crowded in at this point in the consideration of a more worshipful service. It does not follow that simply because the service is to be built around God instead of the preacher, there is to be no room for the sermon. Many have thought that the sermon was about to come to a glorious end and an enforced interment. Nothing could be more foolish than to believe that the voice of the prophet is to be silenced.

There is a place for the sermon, and a big place, which nothing else can fill provided, of course, that the sermon is prepared some time prior to the midnight hours of the day before. There is no room, we will grant, for that extemporaneous haranguing which masquerades under the title of a sermon, and to which people have a right to object. It would be a crime against heaven if they did not. In fairness to the preacher, it should be added that he is not given sufficient time in the mad rush of his administrative and executive duties, adequately to prepare a sermon. We know of no relief for this situation unless it be in the free use of a lock and key that will keep out of the minister's study during the morning hours all those transient book-agents, civic-duty men, and numerous other "good cause" representatives who feel that they have a prior claim on the preacher's time.

Pulpit Architecture

Would it not be well in this connection to say a word for a little different type of pulpit architecture? There should be a place in every church which is reserved exclusively for the preaching of the gospel. In this hallowed spot it is inconceivable that the preacher would indulge in poorly prepared exhortations. It is more than likely that in such a place the evangelist would have a "voice" and the people would listen to his message as their souls would be strengthened. A sermon that is well prepared, and delivered with conviction and power and divi-

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Moreover, it appears from sources to be relied upon, that the amount appropriated by the Board for the support of domestic Missions for the year commencing April 15th 1843, is already exhausted. And whereas, there remain several interesting & highly important Missions to be provided for. Therefore,

Resolved, that Wm. Soule be, and is hereby authorized to draw on the Treasurer for such sums as he may deem absolutely necessary for the support of domestic Missions, within the bounds of the Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina Conferences for one year, not to exceed, however, the sum of sixteen thousand Dollars.

Bro. Moore stated to the Board that the Widow of the late John Paradise had a portrait of the late Bishop Asbury, which she was anxious to dispose of. He remarked that he thought it desirable that the Missionary Board should possess it, and for that purpose, he proposed that each member subscribe one dollar. After some conversation it was referred to a Com^{ee} to ascertain whether the painting was an original, or a copy, & to report to this Board. Bro. Moore was appointed said Committee.

Adjourned. per ediction by the Chairman

J. Hall
Recy Secy.

Geo. Peck.
" "

... "dorming, hoping, lingering, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying."

She is gone to join her husband before the Throne of God.
She was nearly 77 years of age. Pray for us, that we may be
supported by divine grace.

Bro. Moore stated that he had obtained from Mrs. Paradise
the portrait of the late Bishop Asbury, which is believed
to be an original ~~one~~ With the understanding that this
Portrait of Bishop Asbury be paid for by private subscription.

It was Resolved that Mrs. Paradise be paid \$20. for
the portrait of Bishop Asbury, which is now in the
Committee Room.

The amt. was immediately subscribed by the
Members present on Motion.

Resolved that our next anniversary be held on the
second Monday of May.

The following are the Committee of Arrangements for the
Annual Meeting, & for the Anniversary.

1. Corresponding Secretary, Chairman
2. Recording Secretary.
3. Wm. B. Skidmore.
4. Rev. H. Bangs.
5. B. F. Howe.
6. Rev. N. Livings.
7. Henry Moore.

Adjourned

Prayer by Rev. Am. Osborn

Francis Hall
Rec. Secy.

H. Moore

ASBURY, FRANCIS, 1745-1784-1816

b. Handsworth, Staffordshire, England, about four miles from Birmingham, August 20 or 21 (His own statement). His parents were of the Church of England, but were members of the Methodist Society. At fourteen he heard Methodists at Wednesbury "pray without reading and preach without writing." He was "awakened" while praying with another lad in his father's barn. His conversion at sixteen was much influenced by Alexander Mather's "new" sermons. He joined the Wesleyan Conference 1767 and was a striking "boy preacher." He "offered for America," 1771 and "initiated the first regular circuit work in America." He alone of Wesley's missionaries allied himself with the cause of the Colonies and was protected by Judge White. He refused episcopacy unless elected, which was done at the Christmas Conference, 1784. He traveled widely, hazardously and devotedly until his health was shattered. His last sermon was preached at Richmond, March 24, when he was "unable to either walk or stand." He died at the home of George Arnold, 20 mi. south of Fredericksburg, Virginia, March 31. His burial was first in the Arnold plot, then at Eutaw St. Church, and finally in Mt. Olivet, Baltimore. Of Methodist bishops Asbury was "the first ordained in America," (Simpson) Coke having been ordained by Mr. Wesley in England.

From Leete. Methodist Bishops

Francis Asbury

(excerpt from Encyclopedia of Methodism)

Matthew
Simpson

A Conference was convened in Baltimore on Christmas, 1784; a church was organized, by the unanimous consent of the preachers present, called the "Methodist Episcopal Church," and Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury were elected superintendents or bishops. Mr. Asbury was ordained by Dr. Coke, with the assistance of Revs. Whatcoat and Vessey, who had been ordained elders by Mr. Wesley and also by Rev. Mr. Otterbine, of the German Reformed Church.

At that time there were eighty-three Methodist ministers and about fourteen thousand church members. The superintendence of the church devolved almost entirely upon Bishop Asbury, As Dr. Coke, in the following spring, returned to England, and thereafter only visited, for a few months at a time, the churches in the United States.

Francis Asbury

(excerpt from Encyclopaedia of Methodism)

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FRANCIS ASBURY, America's first bishop (see page 38) "live or die, I must ride!"

**It was Christmas Eve, 1784: To Baltimore journeyed
60 enthusiastic young men from Wesley's 'societies'
to organize Methodism as a church in this new land.**



Methodism Spans the Mississippi

It was 1810 Settlers flocked to the new meetinghouse near Cape Girardeau, Mo.



ONE OF WASHINGTON'S young adjutants who saw Cornwallis surrender at Yorktown in 1781 was a fellow Virginian, William McKendree. Then, with the Revolutionary War over, as this ex-GI was adjusting himself to peacetime pursuits, he fell under the influence of Francis Asbury (1772-1842). Soon he himself became a preacher and, in 1808, a bishop who was to carry Methodism into what was then the West. Two institutions, now bearing his name, attest his influence. One is McKendree College, founded in 1828 at Lebanon, Mo., the oldest college under continuous Methodist control; the other is McKendree Chapel five miles northwest of Cape Girardeau, Mo. Some historians say it was built in 1810; others date it from an 1819 conference. Its land, to be exact, had been bought by the first west of the Mississippi.

Photographs from this
file have not been
included but are
available upon request.
For more information
please contact
research@gcah.org