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OUTLINE OF DEVELOPMENT OF

METHODISM

IN TENNESSEE



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OUTLINE OF DEVELOPMENT OF
METHODISM IN TENNESSEE

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PREFACE

Although the Tennessee Historical Records Survey Project has as its chief purposes the preparation and publication of guides to and inventories of public archives, church records, early American imprints, manuscripts, and manuscripts depositories and collections, it has accumulated, as by-products, a considerable amount of material and prepared numerous memoranda in the course of routine editorial work which, under original plans, would not be made available generally.

Since publication, from time to time, of various portions of this miscellaneous material does not interfere unduly with the regular program of publication and since some of it may be of general interest and value, the Survey Project decided to institute a series of special publications, to make this material available in substantially the same form as it appears in the files. This bulletin is the sixth of the series.

This publication, tracing the growth and development of Methodism in Tennessee, was originally designed as an editorial memorandum to field workers of the Church Survey Units to serve as a guide for the locating and surveying of records of the individual Methodist Churches, and for the obtaining of information on their history. The differences from other denominations, occasioned by the structure of the Methodist Church, have made it necessary that the field workers be instructed on the situations to be encountered and the information to be obtained. The use of such a guide was further necessitated by the fact that, prior to 1939, the former Methodist Episcopal Church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South, both maintained conferences and churches in some sections of the State.

The sources consulted in the preparation of this publication are indicated in the footnotes and bibliography accompanying it. While the statements in this bulletin are documented, they will, in some cases, be amplified in the forthcoming Inventory of the Church Archives of Tennessee: The Methodist Church, Nashville District, to be published soon. These sources will, in that inventory, be supplemented by references to manuscript records of the churches of the Nashville District. This bulletin has been read and approved by Dr. Curtis B. Haley, Editor of the General Minutes and Yearbook of the Methodist Church, and Miss Bertha Childs, Librarian of The Methodist Publishing House, of Nashville.

The bulletin on Methodism in Tennessee was prepared under the supervision of Robert Cassell, Church Archives Editor of the Tennessee Survey Project, assisted by Milford R. Wheeler and Maurine Cantrell. This bulletin in manuscript was edited by Donald A. Thompson, Assistant Archivist in charge of the Church Archives Inventories of the Washington, D. C., office. Typing of the final draft and cutting of stencils were done by Helen P. Allen and Dosia L. Pearson. Publication of this bulletin was sponsored by the Tennessee State Planning Commission and the cover design prepared by Winston Marshall of the Commission staff.

A list of publications of the Tennessee Historical Records Survey Project may be found in the Directory of Churches, Missions, and Religious Institutions of Tennessee: Hamilton County, Chattanooga (Nashville, 1940). The publications of the Historical Records Survey Projects in all states are limited in number and in consequence are placed in centrally located designated depositories. Inquiries requesting the locations of the nearest depositories should be addressed to the State Supervisors or to the Division of Professional and Service Projects, Work Projects Administration, Washington, D. C., for the attention of the Director of the Historical Records Survey Projects.

Madison Bratton, State Supervisor
The Tennessee Historical Records Survey Project

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OUTLINE OF DEVELOPMENT OF
METHODISM IN TENNESSEE

The spread of Methodism in the different sections of Tennessee closely followed settlements in those regions; this development is attributable in part to the fact that the frontier pioneers brought their religion with them, and to the zeal of the early Methodist "circuit riders." Among the first Methodist preachers who visited the Holston country in East Tennessee were Jeremiah Lambert, Henry Willis, Mark Whittaker, Mark Moore, and Reuben Ellis. As early as 1783, these men preached on the Salisbury and Yadkin Circuits of North Carolina and on the Holston Circuit of Tennessee.¹

The Holston Circuit was organized about 1783, and from it the Nollichucky Circuit was formed about 1786. Jeremiah Lambert was the first appointee to the Holston Circuit.² In 1787, Rev. Benjamin Ogden began preaching in the Cumberland Country of Middle Tennessee.³ In 1788, two more circuits in East Tennessee were formed, the French Broad and the New River, and, after the addition in 1789 of Bottetourt and Greenbrier Circuits, the Holston District was created in that same year from those Circuits and the Holston and the West New River (New River) Circuits.⁴ The names of most of these circuits, taken from rivers, indicate the thickest settlements on the Tennessee frontier and the locations of Methodist societies. The Holston and Nollichucky Circuits covered settlements along those streams in upper East Tennessee, while the French Broad and New River spread southward, the former to the borders of the Cherokee Nation. Successive new circuits in this region were the Clinch, north of the Holston Circuit, and Powell's Valley, west to the Cumberland Mountains. In 1804, the Holston District was composed of the Holston, Nollichucky, French Broad, Powell's Valley, Clinch, and New River Circuits.⁵

Early societies in the East Tennessee region were organized at Acuff's Chapel, the first Methodist Church in Tennessee, founded in 1786 in Sullivan County near the present site of Blountville; Pine Chapel in

1. J. B. McFerrin, Methodism in Tennessee, I, 87; Walter Brownlow Posey, The Development of Methodism in the Old Southwest, 1783-1824, 6; Holston Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Annual (1937), 10, hereafter cited as Holston Conference, Annual.

2. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 87, 88; Posey, op. cit., 6; Holston Conference, Annual (1937), 9, 10.

3. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 517; Posey, op. cit., 8.

4. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 88.

5. Ibid., II, 15; Holston Conference, Annual (1937), 10.

Jefferson County, O'Haver's Meetinghouse, Old Bethcar, County-line, Carter's Station, Ebenezer, Brush Creek, and Salem.⁶

Until 1790, most of the Cumberland Valley, as well as most of present day Tennessee, was part of the State of North Carolina. The pioneers to this region were chiefly of English extraction. The Methodists came, as did the other frontiersmen, urged by mixed motives of an opportunity to gain free lands, discontent with their life and status in the settled states, and the call of an adventurous spirit. Prior to the coming of the Methodists, there was little religious activity in the Cumberland country. A few itinerant preachers of various sects probably visited the scattered settlements soon after the close of the American Revolution, but few organized churches were to be found before 1790.

The establishment of the first Methodist church in Nashville and earliest in the Cumberland region, the present day McKendree Church, marks the beginning of Methodism in the Cumberland Valley. Organized in 1787 as a preaching station of the Cumberland Circuit of the Western Conference through the efforts of Rev. Benjamin Ogden, young soldier-preacher of the Revolutionary War, the church after one year was reported as having "sixty-three members, four of whom are colored persons."⁷ Although settlers in those days went armed to their places of worship for protection equally from wild beasts and hostile Indians, the Rev. Mr. Ogden rode his circuit unarmed, and was never molested by the savages. His circuit covered Nashville and settlements along the Cumberland River from Clarksville to Gallatin,⁸ being approximately the territory now embraced by the Counties of Davidson, Sumner, Robertson, Montgomery, and Cheatham.

The first building occupied by the McKendree Congregation was a small stone and wood structure erected on the public square in 1790, reputedly the first church edifice erected in the town of Nashville.⁹ The General Assembly of Tennessee, meeting at Knoxville in 1796, authorized the trustees of the town of Nashville to execute a deed to the property to representatives of the Methodist Society.¹⁰ James Robertson, founder of Nashville, served as steward of the church for many years.¹¹

6. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 102, 123; II, 100, 483; Holston Conference, Annual (1937), 14. Carter's Station and Salem, or Stonedam, were in the region of present day Greeneville.

7. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 40, 51; III, 108; Posey, op. cit., 8, 9, 76, 77.

8. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 36, 37, 517; Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Journal (1912), 59, hereafter cited as Tennessee Conference, Journal.

9. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 51; III, 68.

10. Acts 1796, 1st ses., ch. 29, sec. 9. The representatives of the church were enjoined not "to debar, or deny, to any other denomination of Christians the liberty of preaching therein, unless when immediately occupied by the said society."

11. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 18, 19.

Other churches, Hooper's and Zion, were organized on White's Creek, near Nashville, by Absalom Hooper and by Matthew Talbot between 1795 and 1802, and Edney's Meetinghouse was erected in 1809 near the Williamson County line.¹²

When the Cumberland Circuit was organized in 1787 and Rev. Mr. Ogden assigned to it, it formed part of the Kentucky District.¹³ In 1802 the Cumberland District was created and the former Cumberland Circuit became the Nashville Circuit.¹⁴ Other circuits in the District organized about this time included the Red River (Clarksville region), Barren, and Natchez.¹⁵ The Cumberland District embraced territory between Illinois and Mississippi, and the Western Conference (organized in 1799), to which the Cumberland District belonged, covered most of Tennessee and Kentucky.¹⁶ The Duck River Circuit, in the region of Maury County, was organized about 1806, while the Goose Creek Circuit, in the region above Gallatin in Sumner County, and the Richland Circuit were both added in 1810.¹⁷ Two Districts were established in Middle Tennessee at the Conference of 1811, the Cumberland including Red River, Goose Creek, Roaring River, Wayne, Somerset, Green River, and Barren Circuits and the Nashville, including Nashville, Caney Fork, Dixon (Dickson), Duck River, Elk, Richland and Flint Circuits.¹⁸ Lewis Edney and Thomas Wilkerson first served the Nashville Circuit after it was organized.¹⁹ Other prominent pioneer Methodists in this region were William McKendree, Presiding Elder of the Kentucky District and later Bishop; James Haw, Francis Poythress, Learner Blackman, and James Gwinn.²⁰

Somewhat in contrast to the frontiers in the other regions of Tennessee, the Western District was settled not only by frontiersmen ever on the move; there was a considerable element of church members who came in the first inrush of settlers. Baptists and Methodists predominated, and about 1820, groups of each formed themselves into congregations, but which of the two denominations established the first organized church or erected the first church building can not be determined. The earliest type of preacher of each denomination was the local preacher -- licensed but without a regular pastorate. He was primarily a farmer, and preaching with him was but an avocation. At the Tennessee Conference in 1820, a missionary was delegated to "Jackson's Purchase" (West Tennessee) to labor and report in

12. Ibid., III, 68-70.

13. See Holland N. McTyeire, A History of Methodism, 439, 444 fn. for a description of this circuit.

14. Western Conference, Journal (1802) in William Warren Sweet, The Rise of Methodism in the West, 83.

15. Ibid.

16. McFerrin, op. cit., I, 283, 372.

17. Western Conference, Journal (1807, 1810), loc. cit., 136, 189.

18. Ibid., 189, 190.

19. Ibid., 83.

20. Ibid., I, 216, 227, 422; Horace M. DuBose, History of Methodism, 419.

the following Spring on the situation of that section.²¹ The first missionary "circuit rider" in that region was Lewis Garrett, Jr.

In Henry County, eight miles from Paris, were erected Manley's Chapel and Manley's Campground, reputedly the earliest Methodist encampments in West Tennessee.²² At the Annual Conference of 1821, two regular circuits were formed and supplied with pastors; Big Hatchie with Abraham Overall the pastor, and Forked Deer, with Andrew Jackson Crawford the pastor. In 1822, the Forked Deer District was formed with Lewis Garrett, Jr., as Presiding Elder, sixteen ministers and a membership of 687 under him, and in the following year Robert Paine, later Bishop, was selected Presiding Elder.²³

In 1831, the Paris District was created, and George W. D. Harris appointed Presiding Elder. He was long in service as Presiding Elder, and because of his influence was known as the "unordained bishop of the Western District." The Tennessee Conference met in 1831 at Paris, the first annual conference ever held west of the Tennessee River.²⁴ The following year Jackson became a station, and Forked Deer District took the name of Memphis District. In 1837, the Conference was held at Somerville, and the Wesley District was created, the third west of the Tennessee River.²⁵

Largely because of the Great Revival and the accompanying camp-meetings in the region of Tennessee and Kentucky, the membership of the Western Conference approximately tripled between 1801 and 1803.²⁶ Although attended by excesses, the Revival strengthened and invigorated the church, and by 1808 the Western Conference had five districts and nearly 20,000 members.²⁷ The Revival began in 1799 but had run its course by 1811, when a series of earthquakes in the Central Mississippi region effected another great increase in the membership of the church.²⁸

The General Conference of 1812 divided the Western Conference into the Ohio and Tennessee Conferences; the Tennessee Conference was to include Tennessee, Illinois, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and parts of Kentucky and Indiana. It was composed of the Holston, Cumberland,

21. Samuel Cole Williams, Beginnings of West Tennessee, 185, 186; McFerrin, op. cit., II, 391.

22. Williams, op. cit., 186, 187.

23. Ibid., 187; McFerrin, op. cit., II, 391.

24. Ibid., III, 529; Williams, op. cit., 187, 188.

25. McFerrin, op. cit., III, 530, 534; Williams, op. cit., 188.

26. Posey, op. cit., 31.

27. Ibid., 32. Excellent descriptions of the Revival meetings and attendant excesses are in ibid., 17-30, and W. P. Strickland, ed., Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, The Backwoods Preacher, 45-55. Being a "missionary" church, Methodism was well adapted to the Revival. (McTyeire, op. cit., 494).

28. Posey, op. cit., 53-55.

Nashville, Wabash, Mississippi, and Illinois Districts.²⁹ The first session of the Tennessee Conference was held at Fountain Head Church in Sumner County. Bishop Francis Asbury was present and Bishop William McKendree presided.³⁰ The membership included 20,633 white and 2,066 colored persons. There were thirty-six traveling preachers.³¹

With the subsequent organization of other conferences, the territory of the Tennessee Conference was reduced to its present dimensions, comprising only Middle Tennessee, except that portion west of a line running approximately from the western boundary of Marion County to the western boundary of Scott County, parallel to the Cumberland Mountains.³² The Holston Conference, organized in 1824, includes all of East Tennessee and that part of Middle Tennessee excluded from the Tennessee Conference.³³ At the General Conference of 1840, the Memphis Annual Conference was created from the Tennessee Annual Conference with jurisdiction over all of "Jackson's Purchase" and North Mississippi, embracing all of Tennessee between the Tennessee and Mississippi Rivers.³⁴ In that year the Memphis Conference had a membership of 12,497 white and 1,995 colored, 69 itinerant preachers, and 183 local preachers, of which approximately 8,000 whites and 1,000 colored persons were in West Tennessee.³⁵

Division and Reunion

The institution of slavery was probably the most important of the factors which divided American Methodism. Other schisms which occurred involved chiefly church government. The controversy over slavery in the eighteen-thirties and forties had a profound effect on the churches, particularly the Methodist Episcopal Church. The pioneer Methodists had opposed slavery. John Wesley denounced the slave trade as "that execrable sum of all villianies", and, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1784, the General Rules forbade the "buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them", and gradual emancipation of the slaves was advocated.³⁶ The Methodists, however, were unable to enforce this anti-slavery legislation; economic and social interests favoring slavery became prominent soon after the founding of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and because of the rapid growth of the cotton industry, many who had favored emancipation advocated the continuation of slavery as necessary for the economic welfare of the

29. McFerrin, op. cit., III, 519, 520; Posey, op. cit., 53; Tennessee Conference, Journal (1912), 99; DuBose, op. cit., 419.

30. McFerrin, op. cit., III, 519; Posey, op. cit., 55.

31. DuBose, op. cit., 419.

32. Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 513.

33. Ibid., 511.

34. Ibid.; McFerrin, op. cit., III, 509.

35. Williams, op. cit., 188.

36. McTyeire, op. cit., 376; Paul Neff Garber, The Methodists Are One People, 41.

Southern States.³⁷ The action of the Tennessee Conference, however, in refusing in 1819 to admit on trial two candidates who were slaveholders indicated that sentiment among Tennessee Methodists had not crystallized, and while the refusal brought forth a minority report, the action of the Conference was not reversed.³⁸

The Methodists gradually abated their advocacy of emancipation, until in 1840 the General Conference declared that the holding of slaves would no longer constitute a bar to positions in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The more moderate attitude of the Methodists toward slavery made possible the extension of their work among the Negro slaves. Southern planters who formerly denounced Methodism as an abolitionist movement encouraged the Methodist itinerants sent to their plantations to promote the moral and religious welfare of the slaves. In 1860, for example, there were more than two hundred thousand Negroes who were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.³⁹

The growing storm of abolition, mothered in New England, soon spread within the Methodist Episcopal Church. In May 1843, a group of anti-slavery Methodists, despairing of their attempts to commit the Methodist Episcopal Church to abolitionism, withdrew and organized the Wesleyan Methodist Connection or Church.⁴⁰ The abolition storm, however, did not abate and at the General Conference of 1844 a committee of nine representing all sections of the church was appointed to adjust the difficulties amicably. The committee prepared a report known as the Plan of Separation.⁴¹ Adopted by a large majority, this plan recommended that, should the Annual Conferences in the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the situation should be met with Christian kindness and strictest equity. The Plan of Separation specified the means by which the property of the Church was to be divided and outlined the boundaries between the two sections of Methodism. The delegates agreed by an overwhelming majority to the split in the church.⁴²

The Annual Conferences in the Southern States sent delegates to the Louisville Convention, and, on May 17, 1845, by a vote of ninety-four to three, the convention declared that "it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the Annual Conferences represented in this Convention, into a distinct ecclesiastical connexion", to be known as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.⁴³ The jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was dissolved, but otherwise very few changes

37. McTyeire, op. cit., 388; Garber, op. cit., 42, 43.

38. McFerrin, op. cit., III, 158-162.

39. Garber, op. cit., 42, 43.

40. Ibid., 45, 46; W. T. Watkins, Out of Aldersgate, 84, 85.

41. McTyeire, op. cit., 636. The immediate controversy concerned Bishop James O. Andrew who had inherited two slaves and who married a woman owning several more. (Ibid., 623).

42. Ibid., 638, 639.

43. History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Comprehending all the Official Proceedings of the General Conference; The Southern Annual Conferences, and the General Convention, 186.

were made. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, came into existence without change in policy, doctrine, or rules from those of the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁴⁴ At the time of the division, the Methodist Episcopal Church had a membership of 689,316, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 462,851; and the latter church had 124,811 Negro members.⁴⁵ In 1938, there were 4,750,281 members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and 2,919,197 in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.⁴⁶

There was much controversy and discord between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, due to various causes, during the period from 1845 to 1910.⁴⁷ The appointment in December, 1910 by the Joint Commission on Federation of a special committee to devise a plan for the unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Protestant Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, made Methodist unification a popular topic of discussion in the following two decades.

An investigation in 1912 showed a large percentage of duplication of services by the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the Western, Southern, and border states.⁴⁸ As late as 1924, the Southern and Northern Methodists were engaged in competitive work in at least twenty-four states, and in some places, the Methodist Protestants were a third rival.⁴⁹ The Methodist Episcopal Church, for example, had reorganized the Holston Conference in Tennessee in 1844, and maintained it in competition with a conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, having the same name and territory until the 1939 merger.⁵⁰

The Plan of Union prepared by the Joint Commission provided for the unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church into one denomination, to be called "The Methodist Church." The articles of religion were to be those held in common by the three uniting churches.⁵¹ There was to be a quadrennial General Conference with legislative power, subject to five restrictive rules, with jurisdiction over all matters distinctly connectional.⁵² The episcopacy was retained, and the Methodist Protestant Church was authorized to elect two bishops to become bishops of The Methodist Church.⁵³ There was to be equal representation of clergy and laymen

44. McTyeire, op. cit., 642, 643.

45. Garber, op. cit., 53.

46. Ibid.

47. For a full treatment of the differences, see Garber, op. cit., 54-90.

48. Garber, op. cit., 91.

49. Ibid., 92.

50. Holston Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, Journal, (1940), 34, 94, 260, 261, hereafter cited as Holston Conference, Journal.

51. The Plan of Union Proposed for the Methodist Church, 3; Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 18.

52. The Plan of Union Proposed for the Methodist Church, 4, 6.

53. Ibid., 11, 12.

in the General, Jurisdictional, and Central Conferences.⁵⁴ The Annual Conferences were to be composed of all traveling preachers in full connection with them, together with a layman from each pastoral charge.⁵⁵ A Judicial Council was to determine the legality and constitutionality of actions of the legislative bodies, the legal decisions made by the bishops, and the actions taken by any connectional board of the church.⁵⁶

Provisions were made for six Jurisdictional Conferences,⁵⁷ composed of the Northeastern, Southeastern,⁵⁸ Central,⁵⁹ North Central, South Central, and Western. The Jurisdictional Conferences were to promote the evangelistic, educational, missionary, and benevolent interests of the Church, to provide for interests and institutions within their boundaries, and to elect bishops.⁶⁰

The Methodist Protestant Church was the first to ratify the Plan of Union in 1936.⁶¹ The General Conference of 1936 of the Methodist Episcopal Church approved the Plan of Union by a vote of 470 to 83, and the members of the annual and lay conferences approved it by a vote of 17,239 to 1,862.⁶² The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did not wait until the General Conference of 1938 to approve the Plan of Union and in 1937 the Annual Conferences of that church approved the Plan by a vote of 7,650 to 1,247, eighty-six percent in favor of unification.⁶³ When the Plan was presented to the General Conference it was accepted by a vote of 434 to 26.⁶⁴

The Plan of Union provided for a Uniting Conference to be held within twelve months after the final approval of the Plan to harmonize and combine the rules, regulations, and rituals of the three churches; to provide for the unification, coordination, and correlation of the connectional boards and publishing interests of the three churches; and to design a plan which would control and safeguard all permanent funds and other property interests of the three churches.⁶⁵ These steps were taken in April 1940 at the Uniting Conference which met in Kansas City, Missouri.⁶⁶

54. Ibid., 4, 7, 8.

55. Ibid., 9.

56. Ibid., 12.

57. Ibid., 10; Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 28, 29.

58. Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Cuba.

59. The Negro Annual Conferences, the Negro Mission Conferences and Missions in the United States.

60. The Plan of Union Proposed for the Methodist Church, 11, 12.

61. Garber, op. cit., 126.

62. Ibid., 127.

63. Ibid., 129.

64. Ibid.

65. The Plan of Union Proposed for the Methodist Church, 13, 14.

66. Nashville Banner, April 9, 1940.

In 1939, the Methodist Church had become the largest Protestant denomination in America, with a membership of approximately 7,850,000.⁶⁷ There were eighty-three Methodist preachers when the Christmas Conference of 1784 was held; there are now about 25,000 clergymen in the Methodist Church and nearly forty bishops.⁶⁸ Poverty was an outstanding characteristic of pioneer Methodism and Bishop Asbury once exclaimed: "We have the poor but they have no money, and the worldly wicked rich we do not choose to ask."⁶⁹ In the Methodist Church there are now 45,500 churches and 20,000 parsonages; the total property value of the churches approximates \$600,000,000.⁷⁰

The Methodist Book Concern, begun in 1789 in the basement of a rented house in Philadelphia, for many years experienced serious financial difficulties.⁷¹ In January, 1818, the first number of the Methodist Magazine, a monthly periodical, appeared, and in 1826, the Christian Advocate, the first official Methodist weekly periodical, began publication.⁷² Progress in the field of education has also been made. At the Christmas Conference in 1784 plans were made to establish a Methodist College, and in 1785, Bishop Asbury laid the cornerstone of Cokesbury College.⁷³ Early attempts at higher education proved discouraging, but the Methodist Church now has 139 educational institutions, and an enrollment of 93,000 students.⁷⁴ The missionary program has also expanded, and in 1938, the Methodists had more than one thousand missionaries.⁷⁵ Naturally, there is a great contrast today between the religious education of pioneer and modern Methodists; early preachers had little opportunity for educational advancement.

A book depository was established in Nashville in 1832,⁷⁶ and the Methodists began the publication of church literature in the Nashville region with the issuance in the following year by Lewis Garrett and John Newland Maffitt of a weekly paper, the Western Methodist.⁷⁷ In 1836, the General Conference took over the paper and changed its name to the Southwestern Christian Advocate.⁷⁸ After the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the paper and the book depository were allotted to the Southern Church, but it was not until 1854 that the

67. Garber, op. cit., 132. The latest census figures, those of 1936, show a total for the three groups of 5,719,734 members. (Census of Religious Bodies, 1936, Bulletin No. 27, Methodist Bodies, 3).

68. Garber, op. cit., 132.

69. Quoted in ibid., 132.

70. Ibid., 132, 133. The 1936 Census figures show a total of 31,301 church edifices valued at \$495,504,013. (Census of Religious Bodies, 1936, Bulletin No. 27, Methodist Bodies, 3).

71. Garber, op. cit., 133.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid., 134.

75. Ibid., 135.

76. McFerrin, op. cit., III, 416.

77. Ibid., III, 108.

78. Ibid., III, 109.

Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was established in Nashville.⁷⁹ During the Civil War, the Publishing House was seized by the Union Army and used for a Federal printing office.⁸⁰ President Andrew Johnson, after the war, restored the Publishing House to the church and the publication of the Christian Advocate was resumed.⁸¹

Several outstanding educational institutions are maintained by the Methodist Church in Tennessee. Among the earliest founded was Hiwassee College, established in 1848 as Fork Creek Academy, and chartered as Hiwassee College in 1850.⁸² A junior college, it is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Madisonville, and became the property of the Holston Conference in 1908.⁸³ Tennessee Wesleyan College at Athens was founded in 1866 as East Tennessee Wesleyan College.⁸⁴ It became a part of Grant University in 1886, and subsequently the Athens School of the University of Chattanooga until 1925, when it was separated from the latter and took the name of Tennessee Wesleyan College.⁸⁵ It is under the auspices of the Holston Conference.⁸⁶ The Holston Conference also maintains the Holston Orphanage at Greeneville,⁸⁷ while the Morristown Normal and Industrial College, a Negro institution at Morristown, is operated under the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁸⁸ As early as 1843, the Memphis Conference had owned an interest in the Memphis Conference Female Institute maintained in Jackson, and, in 1911, the institute became the property of the Conference.⁸⁹ After that institution closed in 1920, the Conference established Lambuth College in Jackson in 1924 to replace it.⁹⁰

Scarritt College for Christian Workers was organized in 1892 in Kansas City.⁹¹ It was moved to Nashville in 1923 to bring it nearer the center of Southern Methodism.⁹² Baxter Seminary, in the Cumberland Highlands at Baxter, was established in 1908.⁹³ Martin College, named for

79. McTyeire, op. cit., 651; McFerrin, op. cit., III, 148, 422. The church was unable to establish the Publishing House until the settlement of the division of property of the former Methodist Episcopal Church. (McTyeire, op. cit., 647-651).

80. McFerrin, op. cit., III, 150.

81. Ibid.

82. Boyd M. McKeown, Universities and Colleges of the M. E. Church, South, 27.

83. Ibid., 28.

84. Tennessee Wesleyan College, Bulletin (April, 1940), 10.

85. Ibid.

86. Holston Conference, Journal (1940), 90.

87. Ibid., 98, 99.

88. Ibid., 87. The Holston Conference contributes to institutions in other States, including Emory and Henry College, Triangular Mountain Institute, and Martha Washington College in Virginia, and Centenary College in Louisiana. (Ibid., 95, 131, 165).

89. McKeown, op. cit., 26.

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid., 27.

92. Ibid.

93. Baxter Seminary, 2.

the donor of its endowment Thomas Martin, was chartered in 1870 and established at Pulaski.⁹⁴ A junior college for girls, it was destroyed by fire in 1904 and subsequently rebuilt.⁹⁵ The Methodist Hospital in Memphis was opened in 1921, was moved in 1924 and has been open continuously since that date.⁹⁶ It is still maintained by the Church, with a new \$600,000 addition being completed.⁹⁷ The Church also maintains several settlement houses in the large cities of the State.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, through the efforts of Bishop Holland N. McTyeire was responsible for the establishment of "The Central University of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South",⁹⁸ which became Vanderbilt University after a large endowment was contributed by Cornelius Vanderbilt to assure its organization.⁹⁹ Vanderbilt University remained under the jurisdiction of the Church until 1914.¹⁰⁰ The University of Chattanooga, founded in 1886 by the Methodist Episcopal Church as Grant University¹⁰¹ was completely removed from control of the Church in 1936.¹⁰²

Since the organization of the Methodist Church in America in 1784, there have been many schisms in the denomination attributable to various causes. The Methodist Protestant Church separated over the episcopal principle in 1828.¹⁰³ Among the large branches which did not enter into the union of The Methodist Church in 1939 are the Free Methodist Church, Wesleyan Methodist Connection or Church, Reformed Methodist Church, Holiness Methodist Church, Congregational Methodist Church, New Congregational Methodist Church, African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and Colored Methodist Church.¹⁰⁴ The African Methodist Episcopal Church split from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816, as did the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1821.¹⁰⁵ The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (now Colored Methodist Church) was organized by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1866, and still retains a close affiliation to The Methodist Church.¹⁰⁶ There are also colored churches of The Methodist Church organized under the Central Jurisdiction.¹⁰⁷

94. McKeown, op. cit., 28.

95. Ibid.

96. Memphis Conference, Year Book (1939), 58.

97. Ibid.; Memphis Commercial Appeal, May 22, 1940.

98. Dedication and Inauguration of the Vanderbilt University, 6; McTyeire, op. cit., 676, 677.

99. Dedication and Inauguration of the Vanderbilt University, 6, 7, 46, 47.

100. Edwin Mims, Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt, 189.

101. Holston Conference, Journal (1940), 91.

102. Ibid.

103. Watkins, op. cit., 82, 83; Garber, op. cit., 30.

104. Watkins, op. cit., 79-88; Garber, op. cit., 138.

105. Watkins, op. cit., 79, 80; Garber, op. cit., 39, 40.

106. Ibid., 67, 68; Watkins, op. cit., 87, 88.

107. Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 501.

Records and Duties

The preacher in charge and the District Superintendent of The Methodist Church are appointed by the Bishop at the Annual Conference.¹⁰⁸ All preachers are to be consulted by District Superintendent before they are appointed.¹⁰⁹ Immediately next to the Annual Conference in authority is the District Conference, meeting annually and presided over by the District Superintendent.¹¹⁰ The District Conference is generally composed of thirty to sixty churches in a region comprising not more than a half-dozen counties. It may include pastors and lay leaders of several circuits, which are groups of churches under the charge of one preacher, as well as "stations", which are individual churches attended by regular pastors.¹¹¹ Until 1792 there were no Presiding Elders, the equivalent of the present District Superintendents,¹¹² and it was not until four years later that the Annual Conference, composed of members of District Conferences, was inaugurated.¹¹³ Quarterly Conferences, the governing body of each charge, are composed of preachers and lay leaders of the charge, and elect officers and committees for the circuit or station.¹¹⁴ The Recording Steward of the Quarterly Conference keeps an accurate and permanent record of the proceedings and is the custodian of all records and reports.¹¹⁵ Each Church either has an executive body called the Official Board, composed of the Pastor, Deaconesses, Stewards, Trustees, Church Treasurer, and other officials of the church, or the Board of Stewards performs the duties of that Board.¹¹⁶

It is the duty of the pastor in charge, in addition to his preaching, to administer the Discipline, to hold Quarterly Conferences in the absence of the District Superintendent, to make a written report of his charge every quarter to the Quarterly Conference, to leave his successor a particular account of his charge, to see that a permanent record of all baptisms and marriages within the bounds of his charge is kept, to keep a register for his charge, in which shall be noted the name, with the time and manner of reception and disposal, of every person belonging to the church in his station, circuit, or mission; in charges containing more than one organized congregation, the names of the members shall be arranged under the name of the church or appointments to which they belong; to keep and transmit to his successor two Directories, in one of which the residence of all the members shall be recorded, and a Constituency Roll;

108. Ibid., 70, 74. See also The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1938, 92.

109. Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 99.

110. Ibid., 29, 155.

111. Ibid., 155.

112. McTyeire, op. cit., 406, 407; Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 74-77.

113. McTyeire, op. cit., 406-408; Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, 1940, 26-28.

114. Ibid., 165-172.

115. Ibid., 166.

116. Ibid., 174, 175.

to make a report to the Annual Conference of all items for the statistics of the Conference; and to deliver to the Conference Treasurer all moneys raised for benevolent causes or vouchers for the same.¹¹⁷

The duties of the District Superintendent are: to travel through his District to preach and to oversee the spiritual and temporal affairs of the church; in the absence of the Bishop, to take charge of all the traveling and local preachers and exhorters in his District; to change, receive, and suspend preachers during the intervals of the Conferences, and in the absence of the Bishop, to be present, if practicable, at all quarterly meetings, and call together the members of the Quarterly and District Conferences over which he presides; to decide all questions of law which may come up in the regular business of the Quarterly and District Conferences, when submitted to him in writing, subject to an appeal to the President of the next Annual Conference; to procure statistics from every charge to be reported at the Annual Conference, should the preacher in charge fail to make his report; to have the records of his District Conference at the Annual Conference for examination; to see that all charters, deeds, and other conveyances of church property in his District conform to the Discipline and to the laws of the county or state; to prepare and deliver to his successor an official list of all abandoned church buildings, parsonages, cemeteries, and other property within the bounds of his District, and a list of all endowments, annuities, investments, and unpaid legacies belonging to any charge or organization in his District; to report annually to the Annual Conference an accurate record of all financial transactions pertaining to abandoned properties; to issue licenses for local preachers and to renew them in accordance with the action of the District or Quarterly Conferences; to report the names and addresses of all local preachers for insertion in the Conference Journal; and to report the names and addresses of all who have been licensed to preach during the year and all candidates for the ministry to the Commission on Courses of Study.¹¹⁸

The Bishops are elected by the respective Jurisdictional and Central Conferences and ordained or consecrated in the "historic manner" of Methodism.¹¹⁹ The duties of the Bishop are: to preside at the General, Jurisdictional, Central and Annual Conferences, to fix the appointments of the preachers in the Annual Conferences, provided that before the official declaration of the assignment of the preachers to their charges, he shall announce openly to the cabinet his appointments, except those made during the interim of the session of an Annual Conference; to choose the District Superintendents, to fix their stations, and change them when necessary; to change, receive, and suspend preachers in the intervals of the Conference, and fill other appointments; to consecrate Bishops and to ordain Elders and Deacons, to see that the names of the persons consecrated and ordained by him are entered on the journals of the Conference.¹²⁰

117. Ibid., 70-74.

118. Ibid., 74-77.

119. Ibid., 95.

120. Ibid., 95-102

Each Bishop reports in writing at least annually all his decisions of law in Annual and District Conferences to the Judicial Council, which affirms, modifies, or reverses them. One fifth of an Annual or District Conference may appeal from the Bishop's decision to the Judicial Council, whose decision in the case is final. The Council of Bishops holds annual meetings to survey and consider all the work of the church at large. At the close of each meeting the results of its deliberations are published in the official organ of the church and in various organs of the Annual Conferences.¹²¹ After consultation with his cabinet, the Bishop sees that the Districts are formed according to his judgment, and he may divide a circuit, station, or mission, or unite two or more circuits or stations and appoint one pastor for the united congregation.¹²²

Additional records which may be encountered in Methodist Churches include minutes of the meetings of the Boards of Stewards, and, perhaps, minutes of business sessions of the church, Church Council of Methodist Youth (formerly Epworth League), Church School (formerly Sunday School), and Woman's Society of Christian Service (formerly Women's Missionary Society) records. Manuscript copies of the pastor's reports to the Quarterly Conference may be retained by him.

121. Ibid., 32, 33.

122. Ibid., 98.

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