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PHILIP GATCH -- SECOND AMERICAN CIRCUIT-RIDER
Compiled and Edited By Duane V. Maxey

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PART 1 -- INTRODUCTION

Large portions of this compilation are quotations from Philip Gatch, taken from "Memoirs of the Rev. Philip Gatch," prepared by John McLean, and found in A History of the Rise of Methodism in America by John Lednum. To a greater extent than from other sources, I have also used material from Abel Stevens' Methodist History. Below is a list of other works consulted in the compilation, and from among which portions of information have been taken:

hdm0008.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volume 1 by Nathan Bangs

hdm0009.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volume 2 by Nathan Bangs

hdm0011.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volumes 4 by Nathan Bangs

hdm0013.tex -- The Life of Freeborn Garrettson by Nathan Bangs

hdm0118.tex -- A Short History of the Methodists by Jesse Lee

hdm0168.tex -- Freeborn Garrettson by Ezra S. Tipple

hdm0216.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volume 1 by Abel Stevens

hdm0219.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volume 2 by Abel Stevens

hdm0226.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volume 3 by Abel Stevens

hdm0244.tex -- History of the M. E. Church, Volumes 4 by Abel Stevens

hdm0295.tex -- Methodist Character Sketches, Letter G, by Matthew Simpson
hdm0307.tex -- Methodist Character Sketches, Letter M, by Matthew Simpson
hdm0320.tex -- Sketches of Western Methodism by James B. Finley;
hdm0361.tex -- Life of Benjamin Abbott by John Ffirth
hdm0428.tex -- Protestant Methodist History, Volume 1, by E. J. Drinkhouse
hdm0520.tex -- Memoirs of Wesley's Missionaries to America by P. P. Sandford
hdm0531.tex -- Methodist Heroes of Other Days by Samuel Gardiner Ayres
hdm0560.tex -- The Heart of Asbury's Journal by Ezra S. Tipple
hdm0562.tex -- Francis Asbury, The Prophet of the Long Road by Ezra S. Tipple
hdm0563.tex -- Life and Times of William McKendree by Robert Paine

I have used freely material from various authors shown above, editing in or out this and that from the material used, and I have myself written small portions of the text in the process. --
DVM

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PART 2 -- PHILIP GATCH -- SECOND AMERICAN CIRCUIT RIDER
Born, March 2, 1751 -- Died December 28, 1835

Philip Gatch was the Second American-born Methodist Circuit Rider, was one of the most admirable characters in early Methodist history, a founder of the Methodism in both the East and what was then called "the West," and worthy to have been commemorated by the pen. William Watters worthily ranks as the first native Methodist preacher of the United States, having anticipated Gatch a short time on the records of the Conference. But Gatch was more conspicuous than Watters for his sufferings and activity in the early history of the denomination. Among the commendable similarities between Watters and Gatch was the fact that they both received the experience of entire sanctification.

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PART 3 -- PHILIP GATCH DESCRIBED BY CHARLES KOBLER

Philip Gatch was thus described by Charles Kobler, a contemporary who knew him in his prime: "He was tall and well proportioned; his hair was black, and he wore it long, extending over the cape of his coat. His dress was neat, with a straight-breasted coat, and in every respect as

became a Methodist preacher of that day. He had a most impressive countenance. It showed no ordinary intellectual development, united with sweetness of disposition, unconquerable firmness, and uncommon devotion."

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PART 4 -- PHILIP GATCH CHARACTERIZED BY H. SMITH

The following characterization of Philip Gatch was made following his death by Rev. H. Smith. His assessment was made when Gatch was an old man. However, the description no doubt quite accurately describes Gatch's character throughout his Christian life and ministry:

"On the 18th of September I left brother Hunt, and returned to brother McCormick's, and on Sunday, the 22d, I, for the first time, heard the Rev. Philip Gatch preach. He was truly a very fine sample of primitive Methodist preachers, simple, plain, and powerful; his reliance for success appeared to be wholly upon power from above. I found him a meek-spirited, agreeable old man, always willing to give counsel when asked, but never intruding. But the old veteran has gone to his reward, and I trust his praise is still in the Churches in the west. I had the pleasure of giving an exhortation after the good old man, and the Lord was with us indeed, in public and in class meeting. Some were much refreshed, and my own soul among the rest."

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PART 5 -- THE GATCH FAMILY EMIGRATED FROM PRUSSIA IN 1725

About 1725, the Gatch family emigrated from Prussia, and settled near Baltimore, in Maryland. In 1727, the patriarch of this family obtained from the Hon. Leonard Calvert, governor of the province of Maryland, a passport, securing to him the privilege of free traveling in the province. In 1737, he purchased a farm in the neighborhood of Baltimore, which was owned by his son, George Gatch, the father of Philip Gatch, the subject of this sketch. The farm, retaining its name, "The Gatch Farm," is still in the family, and on it still stands the "Gatch Church," the first Methodist meeting house built in the neighborhood.

[George] The father of the Rev. Philip Gatch served a fixed time to pay for his passage to America. Other boys came to this country at the same time and by the same means; they were cruelly beaten by their owners for no other offense than conversing together in their vernacular tongue. He married a Miss Burgin, whose ancestors came from Burgundy, and settled in Maryland, near Georgetown, in Kent county, not far from Sassafra River. They were members of the National Church -- what is now the Protestant Episcopal Church.

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PART 6 -- THE BIRTH OF PHILIP GATCH IN 1751

There, near Georgetown, Maryland, Philip Gatch was born March 2, 1751 -- seven months and two weeks prior to the birth of William Watters, who was born on the 16th of October of the

same year. Both the lives and ministries of the first two American-born Circuit Riders began at nearly the same time. They began their public labors as Exhorters the same year, and they were the first two native Methodist preachers reported in the "Minutes." They were remarkably similar also in character, being early and deeply susceptible of the dealings of God's Spirit, and following their conversions, distinguished by their usefulness in God's kingdom.

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PART 7 -- EXPERIENCES OF PHILIP GATCH PRIOR TO HIS CONVERSION

Philip Gatch says, "I learned to read when quite young; took delight in my books, especially those which gave a history of the times of pious persons. A sister older than myself used to watch over me with tender regard. Once, when I used a bad word, the meaning of which I scarcely understood, she reproved me in such a manner as to make a deep and lasting impression on my feelings; my conscience was tender, and I felt great pain of soul on account of it. I seldom omitted my prayers; hated sinful acts in general; feared the Lord, and wished to serve Him -- but knew not how; all was dark; priests and people, in this respect, were alike.

"When in my seventeenth year my mind became less concerned for my future state than formerly. This was produced by vain and wicked associations; but God, in his mercy, soon arrested me in this dangerous situation. I was prostrated upon a bed of affliction, and a beloved sister, about the same time, was called into eternity. Soon after this an uncle died suddenly. These visitations greatly alarmed me. The subject of death and judgment rested with great weight upon my mind. These impressions were strengthened by reading the Whole Duty of Man and Russell's Seven Sermons. I mourned in secret places, often wished I had never been born. I could see no way of escape; death and judgment, and, which was still worse, a never-ending eternity of pain and misery, were constantly before me. At this time the state of my mind became visible to others. My father became concerned about my situation; but such was his ignorance of spiritual things, that all he could do for me was to caution me against carrying the matter too far. Having no one to instruct me, a wicked and deceitful heart to contend with, vain and ungodly examples before me, I was constantly led astray.

"By experience I learned that the pleasures of sin were delusive, of short duration, and that they always left a sting behind them. I found, too, that my fallen and corrupt nature was strengthened by the indulgence of evil propensities. To counteract these, I determined to try a course of self-denial. I resolved to break down the carnal mind by crucifying the flesh, with its lusts and affections. I found this course to be of great service to me. All this time I had not heard a Gospel sermon. I had read some of the writings of the Society of Friends, and had a great desire to attend their meetings, but had not the opportunity. I felt that I had lost my standing in the Established Church by not performing the obligations of my induction into it, and this was a source of great distress to me. I desired rest to my soul, but had no one to take me by the hand and lead me to the fountain of life. From the errors of my ways it seemed I could not escape.

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PART 8 -- JANUARY, 1772, CONTACT WITH THE METHODISTS AND NATHAN PERIGO

"I was alarmed by dreams, by sickness, and by various other means, which were sent by God, in his mercy, for my good. Indeed, from a child, the Spirit of grace strove with me; but great was the labor of mind that I felt, and I did not know the way to be saved from my guilt and wretchedness. It pleased God, however, to send the Gospel into our neighborhood, in January, 1772, through the instrumentality of the Methodists. Previous to this time, Robert Strawbridge, a local preacher from Ireland, had settled between Baltimore and Fredericktown, and under his ministry three others were raised up -- Richard Owen, Sater Stephenson, and Nathan Perigo. Nathan Perigo [converted under the ministry of Robert Strawbridge] was the first to introduce Methodist preaching in the neighborhood where I lived. He possessed great zeal, and was strong in the faith of the Gospel. I was near him when he opened the exercises of the first meeting I attended. His prayer alarmed me much; I never had witnessed such energy nor heard such expressions in prayer before. I was afraid that God would send some judgment upon the congregation for my being at such a place. I attempted to make my escape, but was met by a person at the door who proposed to leave with me; but I knew he was wicked, and that it would not do to follow his counsel, so I returned.

"The sermon was accompanied to my understanding by the Holy Spirit. I was stripped of all my self-righteousness. It was to me as filthy rags when the Lord made known to me my condition. I saw myself altogether sinful and helpless, while the dread of hell seized my guilty conscience. Three weeks from this time I attended preaching again at the same place. My distress became very great; my relatives were all against me, and it was hard to endure my father's opposition. He asked me what the matter was, but I made him no answer, as I thought others saw my case as I felt it. He said I was going beside myself, and should go to hear the Methodists no more; that his house should not hold two religions. I thought this was no great objection, fearing there was little religion in the house; but I made no reply, still intending to attend preaching as I should have opportunity.

"It afterward occurred to me that I had heard of the Methodists driving some persons mad, and began to fear it might be the case with me. I had often been distressed on account of sin, but I had never realized before the condition I was then in. This gave the enemy the advantage over me, and I began to resist conviction, determining, however, that I would live a religious life; but O how soon did I fail in my purpose! I was about five weeks in this deluded state. O the patience and long-suffering of God! He might in justice have cut me down as a cumberer of the ground. This I felt and feared. I was aroused from seeing a man who was very much intoxicated, in great danger of losing his life, and, as I supposed, of going to hell. The anguish of my soul now became greater than I can describe.

"I again went to hear Mr. Perigo preach, and felt confounded under the word. The man at whose house the meeting was had found peace. After preaching he followed me into the yard, and while conversing with me his words reached my heart; it was tendered, and I wept. Before I got home my father heard what had taken place, and he, with several others, attacked me; but the Lord helped me, so that with the Scriptures I was enabled to withstand them.

"My friends now sought in good earnest to draw me away from the Methodists, bringing many false accusations against them; but I concluded, be it as it may be with them, it was not well

with me. My cry was day and night to God for mercy. I feared that there was no mercy for me. I had neglected so many calls from God, that I feared that he had now given me over to hardness of heart, and that my day of grace was for ever gone. I continued under these awful apprehensions for some time.

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PART 9 -- SAVED, APRIL 26, 1772

"On the 26th of April [1772] I attended a meeting. After remaining some time, I gave up all hopes, and left the house. I felt that I was too bad to remain where the people were worshipping God. At length a friend came out to me, and requested me to return to the meeting; believing him to be a good man, I returned with him, and, under the deepest exercise of mind, bowed myself before the Lord, and said in my heart, If thou wilt give me power to call on thy name, how thankful will I be. Immediately I felt the power of God to affect my body and soul. It went through my whole system. I felt like crying aloud. God said, by his Spirit, to my soul, My power is present to heal thy soul, if thou wilt but believe. I instantly submitted to the operation of the Spirit of God, and my poor soul was set at liberty. I felt as if I had got into a new world. I was certainly brought from hell's dark door, and made nigh unto God by the blood of Jesus.

"Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

"Ere I was aware I was shouting aloud, and should have shouted louder if I had had more strength. I was the first person known to shout in that part of the country. The order of God differs from the order of man. He knows how to do his own work, and will do it in his own way, though it often appears strange to us. Indeed, it is a strange work to convert a precious soul. I had no idea of the greatness of the change, till the Lord gave me to experience it. A grateful sense of the mercy and goodness of God to my poor soul overwhelmed me. I tasted and saw that the Lord was good.

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PART 10 -- THREATENED BY HIS FATHER

"Two others found peace the same evening, which made seven conversions in the neighborhood. I returned home happy in the love of God. I felt great concern for my parents, but I knew not what would be the result of my change. My father had threatened to drive me from home, and I knew that he was acquainted with what had taken place the night before, for he heard me in my exercises near three-quarters of a mile, and knew my voice. But God has his way in the whirlwind, and all things obey him. Up to this time my father was permitted to oppose me, but now God said by his providence to the boisterous waves of persecution, Thou shalt go no farther. He said to me, while under conviction, 'There is your eldest brother; he has better learning than you, and if there is anything good in it, why does he not find it out?' That brother was present when I received the blessing, and became powerfully converted. My father inquired of him the next morning what had taken place at the meeting; he gave him the particulars, and wound up by saying,

if they did not all experience the same change they would go to hell. This was a nail in a sure place. My father had dreamed, a short time before, that a sprout grew up through his house, and that its progress was so rapid he became alarmed for the safety of his house; he wanted to remove it, but was afraid to cut it down lest the house should be destroyed by the fall. He found an interpretation to his dream in what was taking place in the family.

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PART 11 -- A MEETING AT THE GATCH HOUSE -- FAMILY PRAYER BEGUN

"Perigo had made an appointment for Monday evening, half way between his own house and my father's, for the accommodation of two neighborhoods. At this time we had no circuit preaching, and he began to be pressed by the many calls made on him by those who were perishing for the bread of life.

"My brother and I attended the meeting, and it was a blessed time; several were converted. At the request of my brother, Mr. Perigo made an appointment to preach at my father's on the ensuing Thursday evening. My brother proposed to me to have prayers with the family on Tuesday evening. I felt diffident in taking up the cross, but told him if he could induce two of the neighbors to come in and join us, I would try. The neighbors came at the time appointed the family were called together as orderly as if they had always been accustomed to family worship. I read two chapters, and then exhorted them to look to God in prayer, assuring them that he would not suffer them to be deceived. The Lord blessed me with a spirit of prayer, and he made manifest his power among us. I rose from my knees and spoke to them some time, and it had a gracious effect upon the family. Thenceforward we attended to family prayer.

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PART 12 -- FAMILY SAVED -- CLASS-MEETING BEGUN -- STRUGGLES ABOUT A CALL

"Mr. Perigo, according to his appointment, preached, and spent some time in conversation with my parents. He formed two classes in the neighborhood, and established a prayer meeting, at which both classes came together. By this time many had experienced religion. My parents, and most of their children, a brother-in-law, and two of his sisters, in about five weeks, had joined the church. The work was great, for it was the work of God. In our prayer and class meetings I sometimes gave a word of exhortation, and was blessed in so doing. After some time, my mind became exercised on the subject of extending my sphere of action, and becoming more public in my exercises. When I first began to speak a little in our neighborhood meetings, I entertained no such thoughts; but now my impressions became so strong that my mind was thrown into great conflict. I felt such great weakness that to proceed appeared to be impossible; to draw back was a gloomy thought. My comforts failed, and I sank into a state of despondency. I endeavored to stifle those impressions, but they would return with increased force, and again a sense of my weakness would sink my feelings lower than ever.

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PART 13 -- SANCTIFIED JULY, 1772

I knew not what to do. I read the first chapter of Jeremiah, portions of which seemed to suit my condition. I then concluded if the Lord would sanctify me, I should be better prepared to speak his word. I prayed that the impression to speak the word of the Lord might be removed from my mind, and that he would give me to feel the need of being sanctified. My prayer was heard, and he granted my request. I labored under a sense of want, but not of guilt. I needed strength of soul. God knew that it was necessary for me to tarry in Jerusalem till endued with power from on high. The struggle was severe but short. I spent the most of my time in prayer, but sometimes only with groans that I could not utter. I had neither read nor heard much on the subject, till in the midst of my distress a person put into my hands Mr. Wesley's sermon on Salvation by Faith. The person knew nothing of my exercise of mind.

"I thought if salvation was to be obtained by faith, why not now? I prayed, but the Comforter tarried. I prayed again, and still the answer was delayed. God had his way in the work; my faith was strengthened and my hope revived. I told my brother that I believed God would bless me that night in family prayer. He knew that my mind was in a great struggle, but did not know the pursuit of my heart. In the evening, while my brother-in-law prayed with the family, a great trembling seized me. After it had subsided, I was called upon to pray. I commenced, and after a few minutes I began to cry to God for my own soul, as there was not another to be saved or lost. The Spirit of the Lord came down upon me, and the opening heavens shone around me. By faith I saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father. I felt such a weight of glory that I fell with my face to the floor, and the Lord said by his Spirit, You are now sanctified, seek to grow in the fruit of the Spirit. Gal. v.22, 23. This work and the instruction of Divine truth were sealed on my soul by the Holy Ghost. My joy was full. I related to others what God had done for me. This was in July [1772], a little more than two months after I had received the Spirit of justification."

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PART 14 -- IN THE SUMMER OF 1772, A STRANGE PHENOMENON IN THE HEAVENS

"In the summer of 1772 there was a strange phenomenon in the heavens. A light appeared to break through the sky in the east, to the appearance of the eye covering a space as large as a common house, varying in its different hues. This light became more frequent and awful in its appearance in the progress of time. Sometimes it would present a sublime aspect. A pillar or cloud of smoke would seem to lie beneath, while frightful flames would appear to rise to a great height, and spread over an extensive space; at other times it would look like streams of blood falling to the earth.

"While God was thus revealing his glory and majesty to the natural eye, there was great outpouring of the Spirit in different parts of the country. Many precious souls were converted; many preachers were reared up who ran to and fro; and the knowledge of God was greatly increased in the earth. I could but think there was in the prophecy of Joel an allusion to these times -- chap. ii. Verse 28 -- 'I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men will dream dreams, your young men shall see visions;' 29, 'And also

upon the servants, &c.:' 30, 'And I will show wonders in the heavens, and in the earth blood and fire and pillars of smoke.' "

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PART 15 -- FALL OF 1772 -- VISITED ASBURY -- BEGINS TO HOLD MEETINGS

"In the course of the fall Mr. Asbury formed and traveled a circuit that included our neighborhood. He put into my hands Mr. Wesley's Thoughts on Christian Perfection. This work was made a blessing to me. I found in Mr. Asbury a friend in whom I could ever after repose the most implicit confidence. On entering upon what I was now fully convinced was my duty, I concluded to go out of the neighborhood of my acquaintance, as it would be less embarrassing to me. I had heard of a settlement in Pennsylvania, and concluded to make my way to it. I made known my purpose to Mr. Perigo. His only reply was, If you meet with encouragement you may make an appointment for me. I received this as a sort of license, and immediately set out, accompanied by two friends. We reached the place, and applied to John Lawson, who was reported to be the best man in the settlement, and most likely to give the privilege of holding meetings at his house. This, however, he refused on doctrinal grounds, he being a Calvinist. This was a sore trial to me. He, however, extended to us the hospitalities of his house.

"We had a great deal of conversation with him on the subject of religion, but mostly of a controversial character. While at his house one of my companions fell in with a man who lived near by, and stated to him my case. He said I should be welcome to hold meetings at his house. An appointment for me was circulated for the next day, it being the Sabbath. This was some relief to my mind. In the morning there was a severe snow-storm, which was gratifying to me, as I supposed there would be but a small number at the meeting. The people, however, began to assemble rapidly, and I concluded they were the largest persons I had ever seen. I arose, gave out a hymn, and the friends who accompanied me sang it. I then prayed and proceeded to give an exhortation. The Lord gave me great strength of soul. I arose above my weakness, and felt my way was of God.

I made an appointment for Mr. Perigo, visited two other places, and returned home. This was in the latter part of 1772. I now gave out an appointment in my father's neighborhood, and felt that I was called to exercise the gift of exhortation. I had many calls to attend meetings in the surrounding country; for in those days the word of the Lord was precious. The day before Mr. Perigo should start to fill his appointment in Pennsylvania, he came to my father's to let me know he had to attend court, and could not go. He did not ask me to go, but I concluded that I would try it again. I set out with another lad, and the first night we lodged with a man who knew our parents. The family was kind to us, and many inquiries were made of us. The man was orderly, and, like Lydia, received the word of the Lord with his household.

"After we had prayed with the family we were taken to an out house to sleep, which was anything but comfortable. Flesh and blood complained, but the Lord said to me that "the Son of man had not where to lay his head." Most unexpectedly this was made to me one of the sweetest nights lodgings I ever enjoyed. Thus can God overrule for good prospects the most discouraging. The next day, on our way to the appointment, we overtook John Lawson and a large company with him. The congregation was large, and gave good attention to the things that were spoken. I had a

small circuit in this part of the country till the next fall. The people had different professions among them, but little religion. They were as sheep having no shepherd. They submitted to the Gospel yoke, and the Lord raised up two preachers from among them."

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PART 16 -- THE FIRST CONFERENCE IN 1773 -- BEGINS ITINERANT TRAVEL

In 1773, moving a step beyond exhortation, Philip Gatch preached his first sermon at Evans' Meeting-house, the oldest Society of Baltimore county. This year also, he attended the first Conference held in Philadelphia. Following the Conference, he returned to his home. Then came an unexpected turn of events. The Minutes of the Conference for 1773 set down John King and William Watters to the New Jersey appointment. But this is supposed to be an error in the record. It is certain that neither of these gentlemen traveled in that state at the time specified. As Mr. Watters did not fill this appointment, Mr. Rankin called out Philip Gatch to fill his place. Mr. Gatch says:

"I had engaged to take a tour through Virginia in the fall with Mr. Strawbridge; but, previous to the time we had set for departure, the quarterly meeting came on for the Baltimore circuit, at which the official members were to be examined. Mr. Rankin, the general superintendent, was present. After my character had passed, he asked me if I could travel in the regular work. This was altogether unexpected to me, but I did not dare to refuse. He then asked me if I had a horse; I answered that I had. Mr. Asbury then asked me if my parents would be willing to give me up. I replied that I thought they would be. They had always concurred in my going out where duty called. I found that I had no way of retreat, but had to make a full surrender of myself to God and the work. Mr. Rankin then replied, 'You must go to the Jerseys.' This was unexpected to me. If I had been sent to Virginia, I should have been gratified. At first I was much cast down, but before the meeting closed my mind was relieved.

"I had but little time to prepare for my work, for I was to meet Mr. Rankin by a certain time, and accompany him as far as Philadelphia on my way. I found it a severe trial to part with my parents and friends. My feelings for a time got the ascendancy; it was like breaking asunder the tender cords of life, a kind of death to me, but I dared not to look back. He that will be Christ's disciple must forsake all and follow him. I met Mr. Rankin according to appointment. Mr. Asbury lay sick at the place of meeting. He called for me to his room, and gave me such advice as he thought suitable to my case. He was well calculated to administer to my condition, for he had left father and mother behind when he came to America.

"The first evening after we left this place Mr. Rankin preached at New Castle, and the day following we hurried on to reach Philadelphia. To raise my spirits, as I suppose, he remarked, as we rode on, that there would be meeting that night, and that we should meet with Messrs. Pilmoor and King. I asked him who was to preach; he said that generally fell on the greatest stranger, and he supposed it would be me; but said on Saturday evening they do not confine themselves to any particular subject. On our arrival Mr. Pilmoor called in, and he, with Mr. Rankin, went out, telling me to be ready on their return. But they stayed so long that I concluded they had forgotten me, and, like Agag, the bitterness of death had passed. But at length they returned and hurried me off, telling

me I must not think of them; but they did not seem to appreciate my feelings. I, however, endeavored to discharge my duty, and felt comforted.

"Next morning, in company with Mr. King, I crossed the Delaware. He preached, and held a love feast. On the following morning he pursued his journey, leaving me a stranger in a strange land." King was immediately away to distant regions, and Gatch was now alone in the whole state, as a ministerial representative of Methodism, a stripling of twenty-one years, of small stature and very youthful appearance, the first preacher sent as a regular itinerant to New Jersey. "Three considerations," he says, "rested on my mind with great weight: first, my own weakness; secondly, the help that God alone could afford; and, thirdly, the salvation of the souls of the people to whom I was sent.

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PART 17 -- INSTRUMENTAL IN THE CONVERSION OF ABBOTT'S WIFE AND CHILDREN

The Lord was with me, and my labors on the circuit were crowned with some success. Not many joined at that time to be called by our name, for it was very much spoken against. Fifty-two united with the Church, most of whom professed religion. Benjamin Abbott's wife and three of her children were among the number. David, one of the children, became a useful preacher. Though I found the cross to be very heavy while serving the circuit in my imperfect manner, when I was called to part with the friends for whom I had been laboring I found it to be a great trial, for we possessed the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The following account of the conversion of Benjamin Abbott's wife is taken from John Ffirth's biography of Benjamin Abbott. He quotes Mr. Abbott:

"About this time, Philip Gatch, one of the Methodist preachers, preached about four miles from our house: my wife and I went to hear him. He gave us an alarming discourse, which reached the heart of my wife. She called him aside, after preaching, and said, 'If what my husband tells me, and what you preach, be true, I have no religion.' He [Philip Gatch] came to me, and told me my wife was awakened, and that we must go with him to the place where he was to preach in the afternoon: we accordingly went. After he had done preaching, he asked me to go to prayer: this was a great cross, as I had never prayed in public except in my family; however, I felt it my duty to comply, and accordingly took up my cross, and the Lord wrought powerfully upon the people; among the rest, my wife was so wrought upon, that she cried aloud for mercy. So great was her conviction, that for three days, she eat, drank, or slept but little. She now saw she had only been a Pharisee, and was in a lost condition.

"On the third day in the afternoon, she went over to John Murphey's, a neighbor of ours, a sensible man, and one well experienced in religion. After some conversation with him, she returned home, and upon her way, the Lord broke in upon her soul, and she came home rejoicing in God. During her absence, I went from home to visit a sick man, with whom I tarried all night. On my return next morning, she met me at the door with tears of joy; we embraced each other, and she cried out, 'Now I know what you told me is true, for the Lord hath pardoned my sins.' We had a blessed meeting; it was the happiest day we had ever seen together. 'Now,' said she, 'I am willing

to be a Methodist too.' From that time we went on, hand and hand, helping and building each other up in the Lord. These were the beginning of days to us. Our children also began to yield obedience to the Lord, and in the course of about three months after my wife's conversion, we had six children converted to God; two sons and four daughters, the youngest of whom was only seven years old."

Philip Gatch continued in this extensive field till the Annual Conference of 1774.

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PART 18 -- FULL MEMBERSHIP IN 1774 -- LABORS ON FREDERICK AND KENT CIRCUITS

The second Conference met in Philadelphia, May 2, 1774, and continued till Friday the 27th. Gatch was also present, and though his name appeared not in the Minutes of the former session, he was now received into full membership, in consideration of his having regularly traveled during the preceding year.

Mr. Gatch says, "I went to Philadelphia, where Conference commenced on the 25th of May, 1774. At that Conference five preachers were taken into full connection -- William Watters, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Gerburg, Philip Ebert, and Philip Gatch. Joseph Gerburg, Philip Ebert, and Philip Gatch, and eight others, were received on trial. These were trying times to Methodist preachers. Some endured as seeing him who is invisible, by faith; others left the field in the day of conflict. My appointment by the Conference was to Frederick Circuit, with William Duke, who was quite a youth, for six months. We found the circuit to be very laborious; some of the rides were quite long, and only one hundred and seventy-five members in the society. Fredericktown and Georgetown were both in the circuit, but there were only a few members in each. Mr. Strawbridge and Mr. Owens lived in the bounds of this charge. We found among the few in society some steady, firm members, and in some places the prospects were encouraging. I had gone but a few rounds on the circuit when I received a letter from Mr. Shadford, directing me to gather up my clothes and books, and meet him at the quarterly meeting to be held in Baltimore.

"It immediately occurred to me that Whitworth had proved treacherous, and that the object was to send me to Kent Circuit. I accordingly met Mr. Shadford at the quarterly meeting. It was a time of the outpouring of the Spirit; my own soul was greatly refreshed. Mr. Shadford, at the interview, made a remark which was afterwards of service to me. Said he, 'When addressing the people, always treat on those subjects that will affect your own heart, and the feelings of the hearers will be sure to be affected.' I now learned that Whitworth had committed a grievous sin; that his wickedness had been discovered immediately on his reaching his circuit; and that he had fled, leaving his family behind, in consequence of which the circuit had been without preaching since Conference. So I was ordered to Kent Circuit to take the place of Whitworth.

"This, under the circumstances, was a great trial to me, he had given the enemies of Methodism great ground for reproach. But in the name of the Lord I proceeded. My first Sabbath appointment was at the very place where he had wounded the cause of God. I felt both weak and strong. There was assembled a very large congregation. Many behaved quite disorderly, evincing

an intention of treating the service with contempt. I had not the fortitude to reprove them, knowing the cause of their conduct. After I had closed my sermon, I made an appointment to preach at the same place in two weeks, and remarked that I was sorry they had been so long without preaching, and that I hoped they would not censure the Conference, for they had been imposed upon by a man unworthy, as he had proved himself to be, of their confidence; that they disapproved of the man, and of all such conduct of which he had been guilty. But the Lord reigneth, and he often saith, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' In this instance he manifested his power in an extraordinary manner, in overruling the evil which we feared.

"The work of the Lord was greatly revived on this small circuit. Numbers were converted at the different appointments; and in the neighborhood where the wound was inflicted, the work of God was the most powerful. The Most High can work as he pleases. His way is often in the whirlwind. By request I had made an appointment out of the bounds of my circuit; and while I was preaching a man entered the door whose countenance excited my suspicion. He gradually approached toward me, and while I was making the closing prayer, he seized the chair posts at which I was kneeling, evidently intending to use it as a weapon with which to attack me; but I took hold of the short post and prevented him from striking me. The contest now became violent, and he roared like a lion, while I was upon my knees reproving him in the language of St. Paul. But he was soon seized by persons in the congregation, and thrown with such energy out of the house that his coat was torn in the back from top to bottom. While in the yard he raved like a demon, but I escaped without injury.

"At this place, Philip Cox, who afterward became a useful preacher in the traveling connection, was caught in the gospel net. Two young men who lived contiguous to my circuit, who had been on a tour to Virginia, attended Baptist meeting; one of them had experienced religion, and the other was under conviction. They induced me to make an appointment in their neighborhood. The parish minister hearing of it, circulated through the parish his intention to meet and refute me. I heard of this the day before the appointment was to take place; and I understood that he was a mighty man of war. I knew that I was weak, and that unless I was strengthened from on high I should fail. I went to God in prayer, and he brought to my mind the case of David with the lion, the bear, and with Goliath. I then gathered strength, and no longer dreaded the encounter.

"The minister met me in the yard, in Episcopal costume, and asked me if I was the person that was to preach there that day. I replied, 'I expect to do so.' He then asked me by what authority. I answered, 'By the authority which God gave me.' After a few words had passed between us, he again asked by what authority I had come to preach in St. Luke's parish. I remarked that I was just then going to preach, and he might judge for himself; for the Scripture saith, 'He that is spiritual judgeth all things.' I stood upon a platform erected for the occasion, in an orchard. Parson Kain took his station quartering on my right. I took for my text, Ezekiel xviii. 27: 'Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.' I concluded that this sentence, which is contained in the Church prayer book, would not be taking him from home. I knew a great deal of the prayer book by heart, and took it with me through my sermon. Mr. Kain's countenance evinced an excited state of mind. When I had closed, he took the stand; and on my handing him my Bible, he attempted to read the interview with Nicodemus -- but he was so confused that he could not distinctly read it.

From that passage he attempted to disprove the new birth, substituting in its stead water baptism. He exclaimed against extemporaneous prayer, urging the necessity of a written form.

"When he had closed I again took the stand, read the same passage, and remarked that we could feel the effects of the wind upon our bodies, and see it on the trees, but the wind we could not see; and I referred to my own experience, as having been baptized in infancy, but was not sensible of the regeneration influences of the Spirit till the time of my conversion; that then it was sensibly felt. I met his objection to extemporary prayer by a few Scripture cases, such as when Peter was wrecking he did not go ashore to get a prayer book, but cried out, 'Save, Lord, or I perish.' I then quit the stand to meet an appointment that afternoon, and the congregation followed, with the parson in the rear. When leaving, a man came to me and asked me to preach at his house, which was twenty miles from the orchard. These things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.

"One Sabbath, while I was preaching, there came up an awful storm. Some of the people ran out for fear the house would be blown over. I exhorted them to continue in the house, and look to God for safety. I hardly ever saw such a house of prayer. Two were converted during the storm, and our lives were spared. Salvation is of the Lord, and the pure in heart shall see him in his wonderful ways. I was called upon to visit a man who was nigh unto death. I was at a loss to know how to meet his case; there appeared to be something mysterious in it. I left him as I found him; but his case bore with such weight upon my mind that I visited him again, and dealt plainly with him. I told him plainly that I thought him unprepared for his change. The Lord sent it home to his heart. When I came round again, I found him happy in the love of God, and two weeks after I preached his funeral.

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PART 19 -- BACK TO FREDERICK CIRCUIT AGAIN

"The societies on the circuit were much united, and there was a great door opened for the spread of the Gospel. When I left it, two preachers were sent on it. I attended Baltimore quarterly meeting, and from that I was sent into Frederick Circuit again. Here we had to labor hard as formerly. Some societies were lively and on the increase, but others were barren. One Saturday evening, as I was going to my Sabbath appointment, I had to pass by a tavern. As I approached I heard a noise, and concluded mischief was contemplated. It was dark, and I bore as far from the house as I could in the lane that enclosed the road; but they either heard or saw me, and I was pursued by two men on horseback, who seized my horse by the bridle, and, turning me about, led me back to the house, heaping upon me severe threats, and laying on my shoulders a heavy cudgel that was carried by one of them. After they got me back to the tavern, they ordered me to call for something to drink; but on my refusal the tavern keeper whispered to me that if I would it should cost me nothing; but I refused to do so, regardless of the consequences.

"While the subject as to what disposition was to be made of me was under consultation, two of them disagreed, and by this quarrel the attention of the company was drawn from me, so that I rode on my way, leaving them to settle the matter as best they could. The Lord hath made all

things for himself, the wicked for the day of evil; the wicked brought me into difficulty, and by the wicked a way was made for my escape.

"Mr. Shadford attended our quarterly meeting full of the spirit of preaching. We had a large congregation, and no doubt good was done. This was a large circuit, and there was a great diversity in the manners and views of the people scattered over such an extensive country. This made it difficult for a preacher to suit himself to all cases; but we had this consolation, that though in some places indifference and persecution prevailed, yet in others the cause was prosperous, and many joined the Church.

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PART 20 -- DIRECTED TO GO TO NEW JERSEY

Before the Conference Philip Gatch was transferred again, as far as New Jersey, for there also misfortune called for his peculiar talents. Whitworth, after disgracing the denomination on the Eastern Shore, had gone thither and perverted Ebert, one of the circuit preachers, to heretical opinions; Ebert was expelled, the circuit was left some time without a preacher, and Gatch now went to supply it till the Conference. He says:

"I left the circuit a short time before conference, by direction, and spent some time in New Jersey. Whitworth, when he left Frederick, had gone into the Jerseys, and had poisoned Ebert with the doctrines of Universalism, and he had been dismissed. By reason of this the circuit had been destitute of preaching for a considerable time."

Here likewise, with his zeal and wisdom, Gatch prevailed; the evil effects of Ebert's defection were counteracted, and an increase of fifty members was reported from the circuit to the next Conference. A friend of Gatch justly remarks that "the Church in its infancy had peculiar trials to endure. The reproach of Christ had to be borne; persecution had to be encountered at every step; few as were its members there were traitors in it. And yet these things were overcome by the faithfulness of a few who were in the field. Since the days of the apostles there had scarcely been a time when so much prudence, firmness, enduring labor, and holiness were required as in the propagation of Methodism in America. To his deep piety and entire devotion the success of Mr. Gatch may be attributed. His prudence was wonderful on being sent to Kent Circuit. How soon did he retrieve the Church, and eradicate the disgrace which had been thrown upon it by his predecessor. This beginning of his labors was an earnest of what results might be anticipated from his future life." "Gatch," says one of the best judges, who knew him well, "showed traits of character eminently calculated to meet the exigencies of the time, and to inculcate and carry out the doctrines he preached. He had great firmness and perseverance, and was ready to suffer and die for the truth. While he acted with great prudence, he shrunk from no responsibility which was necessary to be met in his course of duty."

Gatch modestly summed up his last assignment for that Conference year by simply saying: "When I had fulfilled my mission there, I proceeded to the Conference, which was held in Philadelphia, the 19th of May, 1775."

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PART 21 -- IN 1775 KENT, BALTIMORE CIRCUITS -- PERSECUTION, AND SUFFERING

From the Conference of 1775, two preachers -- Philip Gatch and John Cooper -- according to the Minutes, were stationed on Kent Circuit. The following is Mr. Gatch's account of Mr. Cooper, and of their labor and sufferings at this time:--

"I was appointed by the Philadelphia Conference to Kent Circuit, with John Cooper for my colleague, a young man that I had recommended to the Conference. The first time I saw him was at a meeting on Frederick Circuit. I had heard of him before. He was a young man of a solemn and fixed countenance, and had suffered much persecution. At one time, when on his knees at prayer, in an apartment of his father's house, he was discovered by his father, who threw a shovel of hot embers upon him, and afterwards expelled him from his house. His public services were solemn, and his life was exemplary. He lived and died in the traveling connection.

"I took the circuit at Luke's parish. After the first service was over a man came to me and told me some gentlemen out of doors wished to speak with me. Here I had to appear before parson Kain and others. The parson had a great many questions to ask me, and I answered them; but he could get no advantage of me. A man standing at my left undertook me, whom I had known when on the circuit before. He expressed a wish to be considered friendly. I felt disposed to hit him, and I replied that I could not talk to two at once; and turning to a man on my right hand, I observed, 'Here seems to be a reasonable man, I will answer him any question he may be pleased to ask.' I knew not the man; I knew not the individual, but the remark made a friend of the mammon of unrighteousness. He became very friendly; but I was informed that some time before he attended a meeting, and after service invited the preacher upstairs, and shortly after they came tumbling downstairs. Pretending to wish some conversation with the preacher, he laid hold on him violently. The Lord can make the wicked a ransom for the righteous. Parson Kain's flock soon became scattered, and his place was lost, so that he troubled us no more.

"Before I got around my circuit I was taken with the smallpox, which disease I had probably taken while in Philadelphia; but having no knowledge that I was exposed to it, my system was unprepared for it. I suffered indescribably, and for a time my life was despaired of. The family with whom I lay sick was large, and it brought great distress upon them. Two of them died -- the father, and a young lady who lived with the family. This caused me great distress of mind, though at times I had such manifestations of the love of God, that I was sustained. While unable to travel, Mr. Rankin sent a young man on the circuit, lately arrived from Ireland. Like Jonah, he had fled from the Lord; but he brought a letter of introduction from Mr. Boardman to Mr. Rankin, which requested him to put the young man immediately on a circuit. After I recovered two of us were employed on the circuit, and one visited those places not yet taken into the regular work. By this means we enlarged our borders. Our quarterly meeting was held in St. Luke's parish. Mr. Rankin was with me. Great threats had been made against this meeting, but it passed off without interruption. About this time the young man who had been converted and joined the Baptists in the South, and who was instrumental in introducing the gospel into St. Luke's parish, fell sick unto death. I visited him, conversed with him on subjects suited to his condition, prayed with him, kissed him, and parted with him till the resurrection of the just. While on this circuit I had the

opportunity of hearing Captain Webb preach. He spoke much on the important point of introducing Methodism into the colonies, in a most solemn, and impressive, and practical manner.

"I left Kent Circuit in the fall, and was in Baltimore town and Circuit for some time. When I went round the circuit I found John Lawson's house a preaching place. He then related the exercise of mind through which he passed when I first introduced preaching into his neighborhood. Glory to God! the man who was once a great trial to me, when refusing me the privilege of holding meeting in his house, is now a comfort to me; but the Lord took care of me, and provided me a house in which to speak his word. It encourages me still to think of the great goodness of God to me when I was but a child. The preacher in Frederick Circuit was under a business necessity of coming into Baltimore; so we exchanged, and I went to Frederick the third time. I was glad to see my old friends, but persecution raged in some places on the circuit. I was called on to preach about ten miles below the circuit, where two Baptist preachers had a short time before been taken from the stand. The friends supposed that I would be treated in like manner; but I went trusting in the Lord. When I arrived there three of the great ones of the earth were in waiting to receive me; one of them examined my doctrines, and when he found they were not Calvinistic, he said no more. They all remained and heard me through. At a third appointment in the same place -- it being at the house of a widow lady -- a large man met me at the door, and refused to let me go in. He claimed some connection with the family, from which he imagined his right to act as he did. A small man present said his house was close by, and if I would preach there I should be welcome. The other asked him if he knew what he was doing. He said yes, and let any person interrupt if he dared.

"In the world there is tribulation, but in Jesus there is peace. Generally where the work of God prospered most, persecution raged with the most violence. There was a large society between Bladensburg and Baltimore, at which I had preached in the forenoon, and was on my way to an appointment in the evening. I had heard that a man, whose wife had been convicted under the preaching of Mr. Webster, intended to revenge himself on me that afternoon. We saw them at a distance, for there was a large company with me of men, women, and children. I was not in the least intimidated. Two of the company met us, and demanded my pass. I told them that I was not so far from home as to need a pass. They caught my horse by the bridle, and said I should go before a magistrate. I told them the only objection I had to that was, it would be taking me out of my way. By this time a third one came up, and asked me if I was the great orator they had there. My feelings were composed, and I inquired of him why he would like to know. He said he had heard me. I then asked him how he liked my discourse. He replied that a part of it he liked well enough. He was a man of good disposition, and went to the place with no intention of joining my assailants. I afterwards understood they charged him with being cowardly; but rather than lie under the imputation, he sacrificed his conscience. Come out from the wicked. Evil communications corrupt good manners, both toward God and man.

"Those that were in waiting hailed the men that had me in custody; so I was conducted to the mob, and all further ceremony ceased. The tar was applied, commencing at my left cheek. The uproar now became very great, some swearing and some crying. My company was anxious to fight my way through. The women were especially resolute; they dealt out their denunciations against the mob in unmeasured terms. With much persuasion, I prevented my friends from using violent means. I told them I could bear it for Christ's sake. I felt an uninterrupted peace. My soul was joyful in the God of my salvation.

"The man who officiated called out for more tar, adding that I was true blue. He laid it on liberally. At length one of the company cried out in mercy, 'It is enough.' The last stroke made with the paddle with which the tar was applied, was drawn across the naked eyeball, which caused severe pain, from which I never entirely recovered. In taking cold it often became inflamed, and quite painful. I was not taken from my horse, which was a very spirited animal. Two men held him by the bridle, while the one, elevated to a suitable height, applied the tar. My horse became so frightened that when they let him go he dashed off with such violence that I could not rein him up for some time, and narrowly escaped having my brains dashed out against a tree. If I ever felt for the souls of men, I did for theirs. When I got to my appointment, the Spirit of the Lord so overpowered me, that I fell prostrate in prayer before him for my enemies. The Lord, no doubt, granted my request, for the man who put on the tar, and several others of them, were afterwards converted.

"The next morning a man who was not a professor of religion, came to the house where I had lodged the previous night, and calling out my host, he informed him that a mob intended to attack me that morning on my way to my appointment. They agreed among themselves -- I was not yet let into the secret -- that the man of the house should take the main road, and that the informant should conduct me by a different road not so likely to be interrupted. We proceeded some distance, when we discovered horses tied, and men sauntering about at a crossroads. My guide thought it was rather a suspicious state of things, and bore off conducting me by a circuitous route to my appointment. My friend, who had taken the main road, came to a bridge, beneath which several men had concealed themselves; and as soon as they heard the noise on the bridge, they came rushing out with weapons in hand. When they discovered their disappointment, they appeared to be somewhat confused. The man assumed surprise, and inquired what was the design of the movement. At length they replied, though with apparent reluctance, that they were waiting for the preacher. What are you going to do with him? inquired the man. Why, we are going to tie him to a tree, and whip him till he promises to preach no more, was their answer. The group seen by myself and guide was a detachment, I afterwards learned, from the same company, designed to prevent the possibility of my escape. But the snare was broken, and I escaped.

"Then it was reported that I had been shot in an attempt to rob a man; that I was blacked, but on being washed was found to be Gatch, the Methodist preacher. I suppose they thought they had succeeded so far as to deter me from ever coming back again. But in four weeks I put to silence the report. I never missed an appointment from the persecution through which I had to pass, or the danger to which I was exposed. At another appointment there was a number of guards brought for defense; if the mob had come according to expectation, I suppose there would have been a conflict. I sometimes felt great timidity, but in the hour of danger my fears always vanished: This I considered a clear fulfillment of the promise Which says, 'Lo, I am with you always.'

"A very worthy young man, who was an exhorter and class leader, was in the employment of a Presbyterian minister, living near Bladensburg; and while laboring in the field, some of the persecutors whipped him so cruelly, that the shirt upon his back, though made of the most substantial material, was literally cut to pieces. His employer took the matter in hand, and had them arraigned before the court, and they were severely punished. This put an end to persecution in Frederick Circuit. Our last quarterly meeting for the year was held in the neighborhood of

Bladensburg. Mr. Rankin was with us, and I gave them my last address with a feeling heart, and set out for Conference, to be held in Baltimore, May 21, 1776."

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PART 22 -- METHODIST PREACHERS PERSECUTED DURING THE REVOLUTION

Ezra S. Tipple wrote: "The native ministers who had been raised up, Watters, Gatch, Morrell, Ware, and Garrettson, were true-hearted Americans, and while the moral views and conscientious scruples of some of these, and many other Methodists, were not on general principles favorable to war, they were consistently loyal, even though many of them suffered persecution. It was a common experience for the preachers to be 'honored' with tar and feathers. Caleb Pedicord was cruelly whipped, and carried his scars to the grave. Joseph Hartley was imprisoned, and during his confinement preached through the gratings of his window to crowds of people. In many places our preachers were insulted, beaten, and maimed. Garrettson, because of his refusal to subscribe to the oath, was the object of more frequent attacks than any other preacher of the time."

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PART 23 -- IN 1776 HANOVER CIRCUIT IN VIRGINIA

Messrs. Gatch and Sigman were stationed on Hanover Circuit this year. Mr. John Sigman was a local preacher in Alexandria, Va., when Methodism was first planted there in 1774. In 1780 he located.

Mr. Gatch says: "Mr. Rankin asked me if I was willing, at this Conference, to take an appointment in Virginia. I gave him to understand that I could have no objection. So my next appointment was to Hanover Circuit. I had the privilege of Mr. Shadford's company into Virginia, he also having an appointment to that state. My circuit was very large. It lay on both sides of James river, and was a part of six counties. But it appeared like a new world of grace. The Baptists, who preceded us, had encountered and rolled back the wave of persecution. Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall, who were the first-fruits of George Whitefield's labors in the East, had become Baptist members of the separate order. They had traveled extensively through the state, and others, through their instrumentality, were raised up, and became faithful and zealous ministers, and they endured a great deal of persecution. As a token of respect, I will here name John Waller, with whom I became intimate. He was an American in sentiment, a good preacher, and suffered much for the cause. He was confined in jail, first and last, one hundred and thirteen days, in different counties. Mr. Garrett and Mr. McRoberts, two ministers of the Church of England, who did not confine their labor to their respective parishes, had also preached in those parts, and we entered into their labors.

"The congregations on the circuit were very large, so that we had frequently to preach in orchards and in the grove. Mr. Rankin was with us at our first quarterly meeting. Though the labors of the circuits were hard, yet they were rendered pleasant to me till the fall of the year, when the weather became cool. From preaching out of doors to large congregations, which made it

necessary to extend the voice, my health failed; and my lungs became so affected that for some time I was entirely unable to preach. Mr. Shadford, who had been appointed to Brunswick Circuit, attended our second quarterly meeting, and I took his place. My health remained so poor that it was a considerable time before I could reach the circuit. On my way I lay sick two weeks at the house of Mr. St. Patrick. I thought him the most holy person I ever saw. He seemed to breathe in an atmosphere of prayer, and enjoy communion with God at all times, even while engaged in the secular employments of life. I found it good to be afflicted at the house of such a saint, and his society and example were a blessing to me. When I got into my circuit I was able to preach but seldom. Sometimes it was with great difficulty I attempted to pray in public. It appeared to me that my lungs were entirely gone. Frequently I would have to raise up in the bed to get my breath. I felt it even a difficulty to live. The sensation of my whole system was as though thousands of pins were piercing me. While in the North, I had to contend with persecution; now bodily affliction attended me. At times I felt comfortable; but not being able to serve the circuit was a great affliction to my feelings.

Mr. Jarratt lived in the bounds of this circuit. He labored extensively, and was very useful. Several preachers were raised up under his ministry, who became connected with our society, and some of them itinerated. He fitted up his barn for our accommodation, and it became a regular preaching place, where quarterly meetings were occasionally held. The hospitalities of his house were generously conferred upon us, while he was truly a nursing father to Methodist preachers. Mr. Shadford had spent the principal part of his time for two years on this circuit. His ministry had been owned of the Lord. Great numbers had embraced religion; some professed sanctification, and the societies were comfortably established in the gospel of their salvation. I was in company with one of the preachers raised up under Mr. Jarratt's ministry, who I heard had professed sanctification. I spoke to him on the subject. He said he had once professed it, but afterward concluded that he must have been deceived. I inquired for the reason. He said his wife became sick, apparently nigh unto death, and he could not give her up. I asked him if she did die -- I knew she was still living. He answered no. Then, said I, you was right, as it was not the will of God she should die. I exhorted him to hold fast faith, and make a proper use of it; for then it will be like the flaming sword in the east of the garden, turning every way, and then will our confidence in God remain unshaken.

"Mr. Jarratt attended our quarterly meeting, and rendered good service. The Spirit of the Lord moved upon the souls of the people. My own soul was greatly refreshed. In the latter part of my time on the circuit, I had more strength of body, and the Lord blessed me with the spirit of preaching. I had a great attachment to the people of the circuit, and hope to meet many of them in the kingdom of our heavenly Father. After our last quarterly meeting, I set out for the Conference to be held in Baltimore, May 20, 1777."

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PART 24 -- IN 1777 SUSSEX AND HANOVER CIRCUITS -- PERSECUTION AND LABOR

The Fifth Conference was held in May, 1777, in a preaching house of Mr. John Watters, near Deer Creek, in Harford county, Maryland. Philip Gatch, and Hollis Hanson, were appointed to Sussex Circuit, Va.

"At this Conference I received an appointment to Sussex Circuit, in Virginia. The young man who was appointed to the same circuit, failed to serve, but his place was supplied. This was a pleasant circuit, and it contained many promising societies, and the prospects were encouraging. But I remained unable to do effective service. Sometimes I was unable to do any work at all, and while on the circuit I never preached an entire week without being exhausted. In consequence of my inability to serve the people, a third preacher was sent to our aid. The forbearance and kindness of the friends to me, were all that I could desire. When from the critical state of my health they thought it unsafe for me to travel alone, they sent a person to accompany me from one appointment to another.

"One Sabbath morning, while on my way to my appointment, accompanied by Frederick Boner, late of Green county, then a youth of about eighteen years, I was met by two men, of whom I had no knowledge, of a stout and rough appearance. They caught hold of my arms, and turned them in opposite directions with such violence that I thought my shoulders would be dislocated; and it caused the severest pain I ever felt. The torture, I concluded, must resemble that of the rack. My shoulders were so bruised that they turned black, and it was a considerable time before I recovered the use of them. My lungs remained seriously affected, and my system was so debilitated that my prospect for serving the church as formerly failed. I thought I must of necessity retire from the work. This to me was a gloomy reflection, and my mind became much dejected.

I remained on the circuit till fall, when the preachers met to exchange appointments. Hanover, that formerly lay on both sides of James river, had been so altered as to leave it only on the north side. It was again divided so as to make it a four weeks circuit, which cut off a part of the north. It was agreed in council that I should take a young man and go to the part cut off, and try to form a new circuit, laboring only as my strength would permit. After making a visit to my friends in Maryland, I returned and entered upon the duties assigned me. We enlarged our border, doors were freely opened, many received the gospel in the love of its benefits, and by Conference we had formed a four weeks circuit."

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PART 25 -- INCIDENTS THAT MAY HAVE OCCURRED BEFORE GATCH LOCATED

An Army Captain Saved -- A Powerful Visitation of the Spirit

"A captain came from the army to visit a brother living the neighborhood, who was a Methodist and a captain also. While at his brother's he became concerned for the salvation of his soul. He came to my house when I was about leaving home to fill a round of appointments. I prevailed on him to accompany me, and on our tour he got religion. Immediately he took his knife from his pocket, cut the ruffles from his bosom, and had his hair -- which, according to the custom of the time, was long -- cut off. After preaching at a quarterly meeting on our route, I felt so exhausted that I thought I could have no further enjoyment of the meeting; but God frequently makes his power manifest in our weakness. In love feast the captain's servant became graciously wrought upon. My eye affected my heart. Faith comes by seeing as well as by hearing. The Spirit of the Lord came upon me. In a short time the house appeared to be filled with his presence, and the work

became general. Some were converted. I never had so great a blessing before in a public congregation. A preacher present sought to stay the exercises, but could not. He called it my wildfire, but it was the Lord who was carrying on the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire. The flame was sweet -- one like unto the Son of God was with us."

A Great Revival in Powhattan, Virginia

"A great revival took place in Powhattan county, Va. It commenced with the children of Methodist parents, and extended into Baptist families. It spread generally over the state of Virginia, and into Carolina. Six young men, the fruits of this revival in our neighborhood, became preachers; five of them, namely, D. Asbury, Chastain, Pope, Maxey, and Locket, became traveling preachers."

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PART 26 -- IN 1778 LOCATION AND MARRIAGE

At the Conference of 1778, Mr. Philip Gatch took a location. When he went to Virginia, persecution did not rage to the same extent, but his health soon failed, from excessive labor and exposure to the open air, in field preaching; so that at the Conference, in 1778, he received no appointment; and Jan. 14, 1778, he was married to Elizabeth Smith, of Powhattan county, daughter of Thomas Smith. She, with her father's family, was the first fruits of the reformation in Virginia. Though Gatch received no regular appointment after this time, he had the superintendence of some of the circuits in the vicinity of his residence, and spent a considerable time in traveling and preaching at large, until the stability of the work, and the cares of his family, reconciled his mind to a more circumscribed sphere.

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PART 27 -- PROVIDENTIALY ON HAND WHEN HIS WIFE WAS INJURED

[This incident may have occurred after Gatch located, but still traveled here and there closer to his home. -- DVM]

"My wife's heart was in the work when I left home to serve the Church; we parted in peace, and when I returned we met in love. I once started to be absent some time from home, and finding that I had forgotten a book I intended to take with me, I returned, and my wife met me with her arm bleeding, where it had been pierced by the spindle of a big wheel which had fallen against her. She was so injured that I thought it would be imprudent for me to leave home; but she insisted that I should go on and fill my appointments. After I left her the thought struck me that an enemy had done this, but he was foiled in his purpose."

When the controversy arose which led to the present organization of the Church, he was one of three who superintended the southern part of the work, and to whom the present state of things in part is to be attributed; Reuben Ellis and John Dickins were the other two. He was the

mover and vindicator of the rule for trying members by a committee; and from his labors in the business department, and in the pulpit, it may be said, he bore the burden and heat of the day.

Of the time immediately following Gatch's location and marriage, Abel Stevens wrote:

"At the Conference of 1778 his name disappears from the list of appointments. There was then no 'supernumerary relation' recognized by that body; a preacher without an appointment was therefore without a record. Gatch located his family on a humble farm in Powhattan County, Virginia, but continued to labor in the ministry as his health would allow. One of his friends, referring to this period of his retirement, records that 'He generally preached twice on the Sabbath, sometimes from ten to fifteen miles distant, attended many funerals, frequently administered the ordinance of baptism and matrimony. Many became convicted and were converted through his instrumentality. His house was a retreat for Methodist preachers, and his company much desired by them. He stood high as a preacher among ministers of other denominations, as well as those of his own Church, and was beloved by all Christians.'

"It was here that he liberated his slaves, nine in number, who had come into his possession by his marriage. He declared manfully in the deed of emancipation, 'Know all men by these presents, that I, Philip Gatch, of Powhattan County, Virginia, do believe that all men are by nature equally free; and from a clear conviction of the injustice of depriving my fellow creatures of their natural rights, do hereby emancipate and set free the following persons.'

"Asbury regretted the disappearance of Gatch's name from the Minutes, and frequently recommended its reinsertion, insisting that he still belonged to the itinerant ministry, for he still labored extensively in his new neighborhood, and he had never, by his own act or that of the Conference, been formally dismissed from that body. After his removal to the West, whither we shall hereafter follow him, it was restored to the record. We shall have occasion to retrace his important services during the present period in the sessions of the Annual Conference, particularly in connection with the sacramental controversy. He and Watters, the first two native Methodist itinerants, were in the opposite parties of that controversy, and by their prudence and conciliatory loyalty saved the denomination from imminent disasters. He did active service for the Conference even when his name no longer appeared in its list of appointments.

"As the English preachers had retired before the storm of the Revolution, and Asbury was in confinement, the session of that body in 1777 appointed a committee of five to take the general superintendency of the denomination. It consisted of Gatch, Dromgoole, Glendenning, Ruff, and Watters. Gatch served in this capacity till Asbury could again venture into the open field. His services are however unnoticed in the published Minutes. It was yet the day of primitive simplicity in the Church; its annual records or Minutes seldom exceed a page in print; they record no names except of men who actually take appointments, save only that of Asbury; those who fall martyrs in their work are left in silence to the 'record on high;' there are no 'superannuates,' no 'supernumeraries,' and down to 1779 no 'locations' noticed. Even at this date the 'locations' are not yet distinguished from secessions -- all who retire from the itinerancy are classed as 'desisting from traveling,' and disappear from the record, however laborious may be their subsequent services as 'local preachers.'"

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PART 28 -- IN 1779 NORTHERN CONFERENCE AND THE FLUVANNA CONFERENCE

The Conference for the Northern Stations was held at Judge White's, April 28, 1779, Mr. Asbury presiding; there was much prayer, love, and harmony, and all the preachers present agreed to walk by the same rule. We may gather from the Minutes that the following preachers attended this Conference:-- Francis Asbury, William Watters, Daniel Ruff, John Cooper, Freeborn Garrettson, Joseph Hartley, Thomas McClure, Caleb B. Pedicord, William Gill, Thomas S. Chew, Joseph Cromwell, Philip Cox, Joshua Dudley, Lewis Alfree, Richard Garrettson, and Micajah Debruler.

It was held for the convenience of the preachers in the North, to give all an opportunity of meeting in Conference, and was considered as preparatory to the Conference in Virginia, that was held at the Brokenback Church in Fluvanna county, May 18, 1779. The Rev. William Watters was sent from the Delaware Conference to represent its sentiments in the Virginia Conference. The question of administering the ordinances, that had been laid over at the Deer Creek Conference in 1777, and also laid over at the Leesburg Conference in 1778, came up, and after discussion, was carried in the affirmative at the Fluvanna Conference. As "hope deferred makes the heart sick," these brethren, seeing no prospect in the darkness of surrounding circumstances of obtaining them from Mr. Wesley, went to work to help themselves. They set apart some of their oldest preachers to travel through the work in Virginia and North Carolina, and administer the ordinances of baptism and the Eucharist, and perform the marriage ceremony.

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PART 29 -- GATCH FAVORED ADMINISTERING THE ORDINANCES

The preachers who sanctioned the arrangement at the Fluvanna Conference to have the ordinances of Christianity administered among the Methodists, were Isham Tatum, Charles Hopkins, Nelson Reed, Reuben Ellis, Philip Gatch, Thomas Morris, James Morris, James Foster, John Major, Andrew Yeargan, Henry Willis, Francis Poythress, John Sigman, Leroy Cole, Carter Cole, James O'Kelly, William Moore, and Samuel Rowe.

These brethren had nothing in view in the course they pursued, but the good of the people that had been brought to God under their ministry; and who greatly desired to receive the ordinances from their spiritual guides. The measure, however, was regarded by Mr. Asbury, and all that agreed with him, as an innovation of Methodism, and it lasted but one year; for at their next Conference they agreed to suspend them for a year; and consulted Mr. Wesley, by whose judgment they would abide; they were not resumed again till Dr. Coke came in 1784.

Drinkhouse wrote: "Philip Gatch had retired in 1777, being one of the few married men, but such was the respect in which he was held that he was elected to preside over the [Fluvanna] Conference of 1779 ... Stevens says, "The Church owes to him one of its most momentous legislative measures: the trial of accused members by committees in place of the previous clerical

power of excommunication.' The Fluvanna Conference adjourned, to meet at Manakintown, Powhattan County, Va., May 8, 1780 ... "

Gatch, and other good and godly men, believed that Methodist clergymen should be given the authority to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Adhering to Wesley's desires, Asbury opposed this at that time. Much has been written about this controversy. Suffice it to say here that, while for the time being Gatch others who were like-minded finally agreed to table the matter, in the end when the M. E. Church was organized in 1784 the rights which they advocated were finally, granted.

We have seen that after Philip Gatch married and located, he continued his labors, in Virginia, but apparently little is recorded of his life in the 20-year span from the time of his location in 1778 to the time of his move westward in 1798.

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PART 30 -- IN 1798 TROUBLED ABOUT SLAVERY -- MOVE TO OHIO

In October, 1798, Philip Gatch started for the West [the Ohio area, then considered to be the "West"]. "My mind," he writes, "had dwelt on the subject; still I could not relinquish the enterprise. I viewed the evils of slavery at present as great, and apprehended more serious results in the future, if some effectual remedy should not be applied. Before setting out I met with a large assembly of my neighbors and acquaintances, and discoursed to them on Acts xx, 25. ["And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more."] We reciprocated warm feelings, and shed many tears on the occasion. On the 11th of October my brother-in-law, Rev. James Smith, my friend Ambrose Ransom, and myself, with our families, set out."

Mr. Gatch removed to the State of Ohio, settling near Newtown, in the forks of the Little Miami River. Of this move, another wrote: "Subsequently he removed to Ohio, some twenty miles east of Cincinnati, and was instrumental in laying the foundations of Methodism in the West, but he never re-entered the itinerancy." However, Gatch's home became a "preaching place" and a shelter for the itinerants. Most of his children were here gathered into the Church. While the Circuit was without a preacher, as noticed in the extracts from Smith, Gatch labored hard to supply it, and "a great revival," he says, "took place in our settlement."

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PART 31 -- GATCH BECAME AN HONORED AND INFLUENTIAL JUDGE

And now, for the remainder of his life, he was a representative man of his Church in Ohio, preaching often, and promoting zealously its rising interests. He was made a magistrate, was a delegate to the convention which formed the Constitution of the state, and was appointed by the legislature an Associate Judge. He became a most influential citizen, a patriarch of the commonwealth as well as of the Church. Asbury, Whatcoat, and McKendree were often his guests, and his old eastern fellow-laborers, Watters, Dromgoole, and others, cheered him with letters. For

twenty-two years his position, on the bench of the Court of Common Pleas, reflected honor on the public justice. His friend and fellow-preacher, Judge Scott, who, as we have seen, attained the honor of the Supreme Court, says he was "regarded as a man of inestimable worth." His connection with the early history of the Church rendered his old age venerable, and the Ohio Conference placed his name among its superannuated preachers, that he might die with it on their record.

Samuel Gardiner Ayres wrote: "In 1808, or just before, he was appointed associate judge of Clermont County, and served three terms of seven years each, and then retired voluntarily. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of Ohio. He was much esteemed for his sound judgment. During court he usually preached once or twice. At the Conference of 1796 he introduced two laws which remain as law for us today. First, the law that members of a church should be tried by the society to which they belonged. Previously ministers might try the members where they pleased. Second, the ordination of local preachers as local deacons. Dr. Coke was opposed to both measures, but they were passed by the Conference."

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PART 32 -- GATCH HONORED FOR HELPING TO PLANT METHODISM IN OHIO

In "Sketches of Western Methodism," James B. Finley wrote: The names of Ellis, Tiffin, McHenry, and Burke; of McCormick, Scott, Kobler, Lakin, Gatch, Sale, Collins, Parker, Axley, and a host of others who planted Methodism in the west, [the Ohio area] will ever have a place in our memory, and be handed down to future generations as those whose arduous and abundant labors have produced what we so richly enjoy; and though no splendid monuments of brass, or marble, or even rude, simple stones may tell where their ashes rest, yet in the faithful urn of a thousand hearts their memories shall live forever fresh and the fair fame which they achieved on the well-fought field will be better than the precious ointment which loses its fragrance and departs with the dead.

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PART 33 -- MCKENDREE VISITS CAMPMEETINGS AT GATCH'S

In "The Life and Times of William McKendree," Robert Paine tells of a visit McKendree made in perhaps 1809 to a campmeeting held at Philip Gatch's:

"Thence, again parting with Bishop Asbury, who proceeded to Pittsburgh, Pa., he [McKendree] visited Washington and Middletown, attended a quarterly meeting; came to Steubenville on August 24 and to Zanesville, Ohio, on the twenty-ninth. On September 23, 24, he assisted in holding a campmeeting near Chillicothe, preaching each day with decided effect. On September 13, he got to John Collins', of precious memory, and spent from the fifteenth to the eighteenth, inclusive, at a camp meeting at P. Gatch's. The next week he assisted at Collins' Camp Meeting, and on September 27 reached Cincinnati. Here the Western Conference began on September 30, thus completing his first episcopal tour of visitation to the Annual Conferences."

Another visit of McKendree and others to a campmeeting at Gatch's is recorded by Paine as follows:

"From this place the bishops proceeded westward, taking different routes for the Western Conference, Bishop Asbury going through Pittsburgh and Bishop McKendree passing through Washington, Pennsylvania, Steubenville, Zanesville, Chillicothe (Ohio), and reaching Cincinnati on September 27. Before reaching there, however, he attended one quarterly meeting near Middletown and three more campmeetings -- the first near Chillicothe, the second at P. Gatch's, and the last at John Collins'. At these meetings he preached nearly every day, and even when traveling usually preached either in the day or at night where he might lodge.

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PART 34 -- AN INCIDENT RECALLED AFTER WORD OF ASBURY'S DEATH IN 1816

"During the summer I took a tour into Hanover Circuit. I was at George Arnold's, in company with another preacher, and we took a walk into the corn field. The corn was in beautiful silk. We separated for the purpose of secret prayer. Here the Lord visited me in an uncommon manner. His gracious Spirit so operated on my body, soul, and spirit, that it was visible to the preacher who was with me. After waiting some time on me, he started to the house, but the cases of Enoch and Elijah came to his mind, and he turned back to see what would become of me. I felt in a measure like I was in heaven, and some that I knew were with me.

"When I heard of the death of Bishop Asbury, that took place at George Arnold's, it brought fresh to my recollection what I had enjoyed at the same place, and I felt assured that he had gone to rest.

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PART 35 -- GATCH'S LAST SERMON AND PEACEFUL, VICTORIOUS DEATH

After invaluable services to his Church and country, he preached his last sermon on the day in which he was eighty-four years old, and died the next year (1835) "in great peace and unshaken confidence in Christ."

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PART 36 -- REVERED, AND TEARFULLY REMEMBERED

His old friend, Kobler, revisited the country six years after his death. "Taking my hand," writes a son of Gatch, "he held it for some time in silence, looking me in the face with a most impressive expression of countenance, which produced in me a sensation that I shall not attempt to describe. At length, in the most emphatic manner, he said, 'Your father was a great man in his day. He fought many hard battles for the Church. May you be a worthy son of so worthy a father!' He visited the graves of my parents, took off his hat, and stood some minutes as if absorbed in deep thought; fell upon his knees for some time, arose bathed in tears, and walked out of the graveyard

in silence." He was burdened with great memories, for the two veterans had shared in events which history, ages to come, may commemorate.

Henry Smith says of Philip Gatch, "He preached extensively and successfully, and did much toward establishing and extending Methodism in that country, and giving it a proper tone. We all looked up to him as a patriarch, a counselor, and waymark. In a word, he was a prince in our Zion."

McCormick, Gatch, Tiffin, Scott, laymen and local preachers, with not a few others of like spirit, gave a character and impulse to Methodism in Ohio, to which must be ascribed much of its subsequent power over all the old Northwestern Territory.

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PART 37 -- NATHAN BANGS' TRIBUTE TO PHILIP GATCH AFTER HIS PASSING

"Among those whose deaths are recorded this year, we find the name of Philip Gatch, who joined the traveling ministry in 1773, under the superintendence of Thomas Rankin, when there were but ten traveling preachers in America. He outlived all his contemporaries, and maintained an unblemished reputation to the last, though he desisted from the labors of an itinerant preacher from the year 1787 until toward the close of his life, when he was readmitted in the relation of a superannuated preacher. In this relation he died on Sabbath evening, the twenty-eighth day of December, 1835, in the eighty-fifth year of his age. On the day of his eighty-fourth year he preached his last sermon, and finally closed his life in great peace of mind, and no doubt rests from his labors.

"In the early days of his ministry he endured sometimes 'a great fight of affliction,' having to contend with the common prejudices of the day against Methodist preachers, and with the troubles originating from the war of the Revolution. He, however, kept 'his soul in patience,' and manfully buffeted the waves of persecution which sometimes raged around him, though he did not wholly escape their fury. At one time he fell into the hands of a mob, who, while endeavoring to cover him with tar, cruelly drew some of it across his naked eye-ball, which came near destroying the use of his eye; but he still persevered in his work, 'as seeing Him who is invisible,' and who upholds and rewards his faithful servants in the midst of their labors and sufferings. Want of health compelled him to desist from the work of a traveling preacher, and in 1798 he removed into the Northwestern territory, now state of Ohio, and settled on the Little Miami, a few miles from Cincinnati. The country was then new, Cincinnati being only an inconsiderable village, and Methodism scarcely known to its inhabitants. Here he became actively and usefully engaged as a local preacher, and was much respected as a citizen, contributing greatly, by his active exertions and example of piety and diligence, to advance the cause of religion and morals.

"Not willing that he should die in obscurity, unwept and forgotten, his brethren of the Ohio conference readmitted him into their fellowship as a worn-out veteran of the cross, and he ended his days in the sight of his brethren, beloved and respected as 'an old disciple' of his Lord and Master."

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PART 38 -- ENTRIES IN ASBURY'S JOURNAL INVOLVING THE GATCH FAMILY

Following are some entries from Asbury's Journal where the name "Gatch" is found, referring either to Philip Gatch or another member of his family. These excerpts are taken from "The Heart of Asbury's Journal" edited by Ezra Squier Tipple. The bracketed remarks are those of Ezra S. Tipple. Instead of inserting them into their chronological place in the foregoing material on Philip Gatch's life, I decided to simply present them as an addendum on the end of the file. -- DVM:

NOVEMBER 1, 1772 -- After preaching at H.'s in the morning I intended to preach in the schoolhouse in the afternoon, but it would not contain half the people; so I stood at the door and the people without. Went to bed very ill this evening, but rose at five, and, feeling better, set off for Susquehanna. The next morning my soul longed for God. I felt a comfortable sense of his love in my heart, and can rejoice in him as my all-sufficient portion. In the afternoon we rode in company to the bay side. A few people, who came straggling after the time at friend Nathaniel Giles', felt themselves affected by the power of God. At friend Gatch's the family was called together in the evening, and Richard Webster gave a moving exhortation. One person seemed affected. The next morning I rose at five, my usual time, and spent one hour in solemn, secret prayer. Friend Gatch treated me with great kindness, and pressed me to call again.

[Philip Gatch was "one of the most admirable characters in early Methodist history." His name occurs frequently in the Journal.]

NOVEMBER 5, 1772 -- Rising at my usual time, I had a comfortable sense of God upon my heart. Glory be to thee, O Lord! After breakfast, Mrs. Gatch, her brother, and myself set out for Deer Creek. We called at a Friends' meeting, and heard two men and a woman speak. They all spoke to purpose ... The Lord hath done great things for these people, notwithstanding the weakness of the instruments and some little irregularities. Men who neither feared God nor regarded man -swearers, liars, cock-fighters, card-players, horse-racers, drunkards, etc., are now so changed as to become new men; and they are filled with the praises of God. This is the Lord's work, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be all the glory!

NOVEMBER 12, 1772 -- Preached at friend Gatch's. There are some Baptists in this neighborhood, who oppose the work under us, and perplex and trouble our young beginners, though they let me alone.

[Presbury was one of ten or twelve native local preachers and exhorters who had been licensed in Maryland, such as Richard Owings, William Watters, Richard Webster, Nathan Perigo, Isaac Rollins, Hezekiah Bonham, Nicolas Watters, Sater Stephenson, and Philip Gatch.]

MAY 3, 1779 -- Yesterday we had some melting under the Word, at the house of E. White, and today I wrote to John Dickins, to Philip Gatch, Edward Dromgoole, and William Glendenning, urging them, if possible, to prevent a separation among the preachers in the South, that is, Virginia

and North Carolina. And I entertain great hope that the breach will be healed; if not, the consequences may be bad.

OCTOBER 29, 1797 -- I opened the new church in Light Street with reading 2 Chron. 7:12; Psa. 132; Hag. II; Mark 11. The elders read and prayed. My subject was Eph. 2:19-22; and at Old Town I preached on 2 Sam. 16:17. I had to preach the funeral sermon of Father Gatch on I Thess. 4:13, 14. I observed: 1. The pleasing, cheering, and charming manner in which the apostle described the death of the righteous; sleep, sleep in Jesus; a rest from labor, sorrow, affliction, and pain; happy opening, visions of God; 2. The hope the pious who are alive have for their pious dead who have had experience, and long continuance in religion, and a comfortable dying in the Lord.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1805 -- We have made one hundred miles in four days. I was made glad to hear of the revival of the work of God in the new settlements: the local ministry have shared in this labor with the traveling preachers. On Friday we came down the east branch of the Little Miami, to Judge Gatch's. On Saturday we rested, and I read and wrote. On the Sabbath we held a meeting of four hours at Philip Gatch's. Brother Whatcoat's subject was, "Repent and be converted"; Joseph Crawford's, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ"; and F. Asbury's, "I have no greater joy than this, that my children walk in the truth."

[Philip Gatch, one of his old preachers in Maryland and his opponent in the sacramental controversy in 1779, was now living in Ohio, one of the leading men in the state. He was still a devoted Methodist and rendered valuable service in establishing Methodism in Ohio. Many of Asbury's Maryland friends had moved to this state and many of his Virginia friends to Kentucky, and he found himself often now in the homes of children whose parents he had received into societies in the East.]

SEPTEMBER 23, 1807 -- We found a lodging with Andrew McGrew, lately from Baltimore County, Maryland. I preached on Thursday at Philip Gatch's, on Heb. 4:2. On Friday we stopped in Cincinnati, and dined with Mr. Farris. Solomon and Oliver Langdon had come on, and were of the company.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1809 -- I spoke in the new chapel in Milford. Brothers Lakin and Boehm also spoke. I feel the importance of the approaching Conference. At Brother Gatch's, on Monday, I filled up the day in planning, writing, and reading.

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PART 39 -- THE GRANDSON OF PHILIP GATCH

Conduce H. Gatch was born in Clermont County, Ohio, July 25, 1825, and was the grandson of Rev. Philip Gatch, one of the pioneers of American Methodism. Conduce Gatch was converted while quite young, and was active as a Sunday-school superintendent and trustee of the M. E. Church. He was educated at Augusta College, Ky., he studied law, and began his law practice in 1849. He occupied a high position at the bar, both in Ohio and in Des Moines, Iowa. While a resident of his native State he was a member of the Ohio senate, prosecuting attorney, and subsequently was district attorney in Iowa, delegate to the first National Republican Convention in

Philadelphia, in 1856, and was also captain and lieutenant-colonel in Ohio regiments during the Civil War. He represented the Des Moines Conference as a lay delegate to the General Conference of 1876.

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PART 40 -- JOHN MCLEAN, PUBLISHER OF GATCH'S MEMOIRS

John McLean, judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, was born in Morris Co., N. J., March 11, 1785. His parents removing in his childhood to Warren Co., O., he worked on a farm until sixteen years of age. In 1803 he commenced studying law in Cincinnati, and began practice in 1807, at Lebanon. He was a member of Congress from 1813 to 1816, when he became judge of the Supreme Court of Ohio. In 1822 he was Commissioner of the Land Office, and in 1823 was appointed Postmaster-General, in which position he remained until 1829, after the accession of General Jackson to the Presidency. He was then appointed associate justice of the United States Supreme Court. He was distinguished for the eloquence and ability of his charges, and for the clearness and strength of his opinions. In 1856 he was the leading competitor with Fremont for the Republican nomination at Philadelphia. He published several volumes of law reports. When engaged in the practice of law he was led to read the Bible with great care, and was subsequently converted, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He remained an active and consistent member during his whole public career, and was a faithful attendant on its duties. He also contributed several volumes, such as the "Life of Gatch" and the "Life of John Collins," to its biographical treasury. He died at Cincinnati, April 4, 1861.

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THE END