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**SOME EXPERIENCES OF A METHODIST ITINERANT
In A Ministry Of Half A Century**

By John Edward Risley

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01 -- FROM INFANCY TO YOUNG MANHOOD

I was born in Greensboro, Vermont, March 27, 1802. My parents were both pious before my birth, and lived consistent Christian lives until the termination of their earthly pilgrimage, so that their children had the benefit of their religious teachings and Godly example to guide them in the way to heaven.

In the winter of 1814-15, we moved from Vermont to Hartford, Connecticut In 1819 I was an apprentice boy in Middletown. About this time, while reflecting upon my past conduct, I felt to abhor myself, and wished that I had never been born. I was sensible that I was a sinner, and that if I should die in that state I should be lost forever. But I grieved the Spirit and continued to sin with a high hand.

In April, 1820, Rev. John Newland Maffitt came to Middletown and commenced those labors which resulted in a great revival, and the conversion of many souls. Under his earnest, faithful, and eloquent preaching, I was awakened to a sense of my lost condition as a sinner against God. A short time previous to this I had run to greater lengths in sin than ever: spending Sundays in playing cards and reading novels. I tremble when I look back upon the wicked life I was then living, and think how swiftly I was running the downward road to my ruin for time and eternity, and how near I stood to that fearful precipice over which I should soon have plunged had not God in great mercy arrested my wayward steps. Surely I was a brand plucked from the fire!

Mr. Maffitt began his labors Sunday morning, preaching through the day and evening, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

On Sunday one of my shopmates told me there was a great preacher at the Methodist chapel, -- a stranger, -- and invited me to go and hear him. But I was so much taken up with reading novels, that I did not go until Thursday night. His text was in Heb. xi. 24-26: "By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward."

The power of the Holy Spirit attended his word to my heart. I felt that I was a lost, undone sinner, and that without an interest in the Saviour's blood I should be forever miserable. While the good Spirit was thus making serious impressions upon my heart, some of my young companions in sin discovered it and laughed me in the face. I yielded to shame, and grieved the Holy Spirit. How justly might He have withdrawn His gracious influence from me forever! But blessed be His holy name, He did not deal with me according to my deserts, but according to His great mercy. My wicked associates invited me to go with them to the grog shop. I gave way to the temptation and went; and after pouring down a dram of that liquid fire that has been the means of sending so many souls to the fires of hell, I returned to the chapel, where I found the children of God zealously engaged praying for penitent souls at the altar. I there found some who had recently been engaged with me in the service of the prince of darkness, and felt a disposition to laugh at them. Mr. Maffitt spoke to me, asking if I had got religion, and if I desired it? I told him in a contemptuous way that I had not got it, nor did I desire it.

He told me to mark his words: that I should kneel at the altar to be prayed for; which came to pass a few days after. Oh, how it shocks me when I look back and remember, that I was then found among the scoffers and opposers of the religion of Jesus! May God help me now to be as zealous in his cause as I then was in the service of the devil! Grieving the Holy Spirit as I did, is it not wondrous mercy that He did not wholly forsake and leave me to my sin and its dreadful

consequences? But instead of this, the Spirit followed me, and the next day I was under serious impressions; but I was still unbelieving, until a young man, who had but a few days before found the pearl of great price, told me that God had promised to save all who would believe in Christ, and that I, even I, though I might be the chief of sinners, must believe that He would save me because He had promised to do it. At this time a faint ray of hope sprang up that I should some time be a Christian; and that hope gave greater joy than I had found in sin.

The next Sunday I listened to Brother Jewett, the pastor, and it seemed to me that I had never heard preaching before -- that every word was for me; and now it seemed to me it was time to come to a decision, either to seek religion until I found it, even if I went mourning all the rest of my life, or to give up seeking and go back to the world. Between the morning and afternoon meetings I went into the shop alone, locked the door and paced the floor in deep anguish of spirit. I endeavored to weigh the tremendous question, whether I would be a Christian or not, and bring to mind what would be the consequences of the decision I then made, whether it was to serve God or satan. I endeavored to bring home to my mind on the one hand what would be the awful consequences of a life of sin, in this world, at death, and in eternity; and on the other hand, what glorious results would follow from a life devoted to the service of God. At the end of this hour of reflection, I was ready to say, what folly! what madness! to barter the happiness of my mortal and immortal existence, to throw away a crown, a kingdom, to lose heaven, to lose my soul, to lose all, for the poor short-lived, uncertain, unsatisfying pleasures of sin? My resolution was taken at that time, which has never been changed; that let others do as they would, as for me, I would not be so unwise for myself, so cruel to my own soul, as to incur the penalty of sin; but would be a Christian.

After preaching, in the evening, the seekers were invited to come to the altar for prayers. Notwithstanding the resolution I had formed to seek the Lord in the use of all the appointed means, yet I felt it to be a great cross, and was unwilling to go, though I had promised a young friend that I would if the invitation was given. The young brother to whom I had made the promise came to me and urged me to go forward. But I was ashamed to have the large congregation see him talking to me, and I sent him away. A number of awakened sinners surrounded the altar, and about eleven o'clock, after the brethren had been praying for them two hours, and some had been brought into liberty, I rose from my seat, and, looking around, saw my wicked companions laughing at me.

That was, perhaps, the most critical moment of my existence. If I had yielded to shame, I should have been lost. But oh! blessed be God! by the influence of His Spirit it had the contrary effect, and made me more determined to press forward. I went and knelt at the altar, and instantly my hard heart was softened, and was melted into tenderness and contrition before God. I felt that I had left the world behind, and was more firmly fixed in my determination to seek the Saviour. I shall have reason to praise God to all eternity that I took that step. I felt that I had taken the first step towards coming out from the world. I had professed in that public manner to be a seeker of religion, and the great crisis of my life was passed. I shall ever feel to recommend this means of grace, not only because it was a great help to me, but because of the happy influence it has had upon scores and hundreds of weeping penitents that have come under my observation since that time.

The next evening I attended a prayer meeting at Brother Frothingham's, where the people of God were engaged in prayer, for just such poor, broken-hearted wanderers as I then was. After a

number of prayers had been offered, one of the brethren said that if there were any present who were deeply awakened to a sense of their lost condition, while out of Christ, if they would tell their feelings, it might prove a blessing to them. To do this, seemed indeed a heavy cross, but as I had resolved to leave no means untried, I stood up trembling, and with a faltering voice, told them I felt myself to be a poor, lost sinner, and asked their prayers.

That moment I felt the load of sin rolled off, and my mind was very calm and peaceful. I felt a desire to join my voice with the brethren and sisters in singing the praise of God, which I thought I could do from the heart. The tempter said, This is not religion; you are not a Christian, and it would be wrong for you to join God's people in singing His praise; and I did not sing. I went from that meeting distressed, and praying for conviction. A day or two after this, I met Brother Jewett, the pastor, and I told him my feelings. He said, You must pray for conversion, and the evidence of it.

Saturday morning I left my bed with the determination not to eat, nor sleep, until I had found the Saviour. Mr. Garner, at my request, gave me my time for that day, I agreeing to make it up the 4th of July. I took my pocket-Bible, retired to the wood, where no eye but that of God saw me, and spent the day in reading the word of God and prayer. In the evening I attended a class-meeting, where my poor soul found the evidence of pardon, and my heart was filled with peace and love and joy unspeakable. I now felt that I loved the Saviour more than my dearest friends, and more than any earthly good. I knew that I had passed from death unto life, because I loved the brethren. I had great love for the children of God; so much so, that if I saw a stranger on the road before me, I would say in my heart, I wish I knew whether he is a Christian, and hastening my steps and overtaking him, would speak to him about the heavenly way, and if I found him to be a disciple, would rejoice that I had found another brother in Christ.

I prayed without ceasing, and in everything gave thanks. I felt such delight in the exercise of this blessed privilege, that I was on my knees many times every day. I sought opportunities for prayer, and in cellar, in attic, in barn, behind an unoccupied building, in any secret place, I would bend the knee and spend, if it could be only one minute, in communion with God. I never went to meeting without first retiring for prayer; and in my ministry it was a rule with me to go from my knees to the pulpit.

The older members of the church, in those days, were working Christians. They went in bands of four or five, into neighborhoods two or three miles from the church, and held prayer meetings; and in order to train us young converts for the work, they took us along with them. When they could, they would take a way to the meeting leading by a grove or some other place of privacy, and kneeling on the ground, pray for God's blessing on the meeting; and those prayers were always answered.

I employed my noon-time in prayer in the attic of the shop. As this knee work was new to me, my knees soon became sore, and to remedy this new difficulty, I took some pieces of sheepskin and made a cushion to kneel on.

Mr. Warner, discovering this one day when he went into the attic, and I suppose not mistrusting what it was for, as he was not a Christian, asked me about it. Here was my first

temptation to sin; and I yielded and fell. I was ashamed to confess what use I had put the cushion to, and I told him a falsehood. I denied any knowledge of it. Instantly I was overwhelmed with remorse, and went to Mr. Warner and confessed the lie, and asked his forgiveness. But with more earnest pleadings did I besiege the throne of grace and ask forgiveness of God, until I found fulfillment of that promise, "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

Another evidence of the genuineness of my conversion was, that old things had passed away, and all things had become new. I loved the things which I once hated, and hated the things which I once loved. I not only felt it to be a duty to come out from the world, to forsake all sinful ways, all sinful pleasures; but actually had no relish for the worldly and sinful pleasures which I once delighted in. So marked was the change in this respect, that the very sound of the violin, which had been so enchanting to me, was painfully repulsive; and I could say in strict truth that I enjoyed more happiness in one day in the service of God than I had in all my previous life in sin. I chose the prayer-meeting and class-meeting in preference to the place of sinful amusement. I could say, "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand; I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

In those days we had nursing fathers and mothers in the church. They were tenderly solicitous for the growth of the converts, and that they would hold out to the end. They used to tell us with tears, that they would rather follow us to the grave, now that we were rejoicing in hope, than that we should backslide. And they told us we must all work for God, or we should be sure to grow cold and die spiritually. Being thus instructed in accordance with Scripture, I felt it my duty to warn sinners, especially my young companions, of the danger of living in sin, and of the terrible consequences of rejecting Christ; and to tell them what the Saviour had done for me; and invite them to seek His pardoning mercy. While trying to discharge this duty I encountered some persecution. An apprentice two years my senior was much enraged against me. I had several times spoken to him in love and pity respecting his sin and danger and the remedy, and one day he became so angry that he tried to throw me down stairs. And wicked young men shouted after me, mocked me, and threw stones at me as I walked the streets.

My attention was early called to the great privilege of Christian perfection. A good brother who was a Norwegian, by the name of Bearg, who enjoyed this blessing, would speak of it always in the prayer-meetings, and exhort the members of the church very feelingly to seek it. I had never entertained the idea until I heard it from him, that there was anything higher in Christian experience than regeneration; and I wondered that any who had tasted the joys of pardoned sin should need to be urged to press to higher attainments. I was so happy in the enjoyment of my Saviour's love, that I was ready to resolve: If there are heights and depths, lengths and breadths, of this love, beyond what I have already attained, then am I determined to seek it with all my heart, and never rest until I obtain it.

A young man about my age, who had found the Saviour about the same time, was of the same mind with me in reference to this matter. We spent the noon-time of the Sabbath in prayer and reading the Bible together, and when we found passages that taught this blessed doctrine, we said to each other, There! do not these texts teach and prove it? And we rejoiced as those who had found rich treasure.

For want of proper instruction, I was long seeking this blessing before obtaining it. I did not receive the blessing until the fall of 1821. I was led into this rich experience through the instrumentality of several sisters in Boston, chief among whom was Mrs. Thompson. She was the instrument in God's hand in leading the late Dr. Wilbur Fisk to seek this blessing, which he retained through all the balance of his useful life. It was in her house, while she and two or three others were praying for me, that I received a clearer evidence of this entire cleansing from sin and fullness of love, than I had ever had of regeneration.

I had a tender, and, I think, an enlightened conscience, respecting things which some might regard as small; but there are no little sins. I had, unfortunately, contracted the evil habit of smoking tobacco. My awakened conscience told me it was wrong -- it did me no good -- perhaps was an injury to my health. It cost money which might be devoted to the cause of God. I was accountable for how I spent every cent with which I was entrusted, as a steward of the manifold mercies of God, and hence it was sin to spend it for needless self-indulgence, and I threw my cigars into the fire.

* * * * *

02 -- CONFLICTS AND VICTORIES -- MY EARLY MINISTRY

For two or three months after my conversion I enjoyed constant and uninterrupted peace. Then came long weeks of temptation and trial. After deep feeling and excitement there came a reaction, and the absence of ecstatic joy led me to fear that I had indulged false hopes. The thought of acting the hypocrite was deeply abhorrent to me, and the enemy suggested that the only way to avoid it would be to acknowledge publicly that I had been deceived in supposing that I was a Christian. In great distress I met some members of the church, who, with tender sympathy and tearful solicitude for my spiritual welfare, spoke to me words of encouragement and hope. But the cloud rested dark and heavy upon my soul for weeks.

At length there was to be held a camp-meeting in Burlington, and the members of the church wished me to go with them to the meeting, believing it would help me into the liberty of the gospel. But I had no disposition to go. My Christian friends, however, were so anxious to hold me up when I was ready to fall, that they influenced me by gentle, earnest persuasion, to accompany them; and the result was most favorable, for I returned from that meeting with a clearer assurance of my acceptance with God than I had before enjoyed.

That was a most extraordinary meeting, resulting in much good to the churches, and the conversion of many souls. There I heard sermons preached by the fathers (among them Bond, English and Datus Ensign) that I shall never forget. There was so much of the presence and power of God on the ground the last day of the meeting, that careless sinners, as they entered upon the sacred enclosure, were melted into contrition and penitence like wax before the fire, and so earnest were they to find the Saviour, that some of us remained to pray for them after the tents were struck. It seemed to me that camp-ground was nearer heaven than any other spot on earth, and to leave it and return to the ordinary duties of life, seemed almost like returning from heaven to earth.

I witnessed at this meeting a remarkable and most affecting incident: a person falling into an unconscious state in a trance or spiritual vision. The subject was a sister of Rev. Lewis Pease. She had been some years a consistent Christian, and enjoyed the respect and confidence of all who knew her. When she went into the state to which I have referred, she appeared to be as unconscious of everything around her as if she had been dead. After some twenty minutes, she seemed to think that she had passed away from earth to the spirit land, and she conversed with the inhabitants of the other world in a voice distinctly audible to all in the tent. She said: "This is the Lamb that was slain; let us bow down and worship;" and in the most solemn times she repeated, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of Almighty!" She had a young brother in the ministry, Rev. William Pease, -- who was a gifted, faithful, and popular young preacher, and she inquired if he would soon come to that blessed place. She was told that he would. This was literally fulfilled in the early death of her young brother. She then seemed to be led to a place where she had a view of the lost, and she shuddered at the sight, and said that she saw there one whom she had known on earth, and who had recently died in a backslidden state.

After remaining in this condition some two hours, it was revealed to her that she had not yet finished her probation, and must return to earth again. The disappointment was dreadful, and she said in tones of most passionate earnestness, "O my Saviour! must I leave Thee? O my Saviour! I cannot leave Thee! I will cling to Thee!" and she clasped her arms around the sister in whose lap her head was reclining, and the whole tent's company was melted to tears, while she writhed in agony until she returned to consciousness.

The next morning I met her, and a countenance of such angelic sweetness and solemnity I never before beheld. I asked her if she would relate to me what she saw, and she said it was not permitted to her to speak of it.

I spent the winter of 1820-21 in Charleston, South Carolina. It was here that I received my first license to exhort and hold public meetings. This bore the signature of Rev. William M. Kennedy, preacher in charge in the city, and is dated December 30, 1820. It happened in this way:

As a young convert, I was very zealous, and having been taught by the older members that it was my duty to take part in the social meetings, I felt a desire to do so. In Charleston there was no opportunity for me to improve in the prayer meetings, as the pastor called on only the official members to pray and speak. I told one of the members I could not live so; I must work or I should lose the life of religion. He said if I felt so I must ask for a license. I did so, and the preacher in charge made an appointment for me at the Marine Hospital, heard me speak, represented my case to the preachers' meeting, and they voted me a license.

I held meetings at the Poor House, and Marine Hospital in the city, and with the slaves on the plantations, and more attentive and earnest hearers it was never my happiness to address, than those poor and greatly wronged slaves.

Believing that I was called of God to preach the gospel, I began to entertain serious thoughts of engaging in that holy work, but a sense of my want of fitness greatly oppressed me. I thought if I could preach to the poor without compensation, I should be the happiest man living; but

I could not bear the thought of receiving pay or salary; and it was with this feeling that I declined the first money offered me for preaching, which was collected in a meeting of slaves.

In April, 1821, I attended a camp-meeting about twenty miles from Charleston. It was a remarkable meeting, and much good wisdom. The preaching stand was without a back, so that the preacher could turn around a part of the time and preach to the slaves; who had their camp in the rear of the stand, where they congregated in large numbers, without seats or tents; sitting or kneeling on the ground. They remained on that spot, singing, praying, and shouting day and night until the meeting closed. As a part of the fruits of that meeting twenty young men were received into the church in the city the next Sunday.

While in Charleston I enjoyed many precious seasons in meetings of the free and enslaved blacks. More than three quarters of the members were of this class; and their meetings were more lively and spiritual than those of the whites. I had heard of slavery; but never saw that sum of all villainy; that monstrous wrong, which more fully violates the spirit of the golden rule than any other ever committed by man against his fellow man.

My Christian, if not my natural instincts, told me it was wrong; and my soul abhorred it as a horrible injustice and cruelty; and my sympathies were on the side of the slaves. When parcels were sent out from the store, custom required that a slave should be employed to carry them. Going out one day with a package, a slave bearing it behind me, I spoke to him kindly, and told him to walk by my side. The poor fellow was afraid to do so, lest he should be punished for disrespect towards a white man. On being assured that I was his friend, he came up, hat in hand. I told him to put on his hat; that he was as good in the sight of God as I; that God loved him as well, and that he was my equal before God if not before the laws of man.

I saw slaves sold on the auction block; in one case a mother sold away from the babe in her arms; and was told that the purchaser was a professedly Christian minister. I often felt like crying "woe" against the perpetrators of this foul crime against God and man, and could have predicted the terrible judgments of God that came upon the nation in the slaveholders' war [Civil War] of 1861-4.

May 17, 1821, after taking leave of my dear friends in Charleston, hoping to meet them in a better world, I went on board the schooner "Mercator," Capt. Nye, and set sail for New York, where I arrived May 25th. The next day I went on to New Haven, where I met my dear spiritual father, Rev. John N. Maffitt. This was a joyful meeting; and the next day being Sunday, I enjoyed the great privilege of once more hearing him preach, and of witnessing the revival in that place.

Returning to Middletown and Hartford, I told Mr. Warner and my father that I thought it was my duty to go out into the highways and hedges and call sinners to repentance. Mr. Warner said he would consent if father would buy my time.* In a few months father paid Mr. Warner, and I was free to follow my convictions of duty.

[*John Risley was working as an apprentice. In connection with his apprenticeship, apparently there was a financial obligation if he left his apprenticeship before the full term of his apprenticeship had expired. -- DVM]

So highly did I esteem the privilege of hearing the gospel preached by faithful and gifted ministers, that I was willing to take some pains for this end. There was a very gifted young preacher by the name of William Pease, who was traveling a circuit adjoining Middletown. I went one evening on foot, after doing my day's work, a distance of eight miles, to hear him, making sixteen miles both ways; and I was well paid for my tiresome walk. Being told one Saturday that Rev. J. N. Maffitt* was to preach in Hartford the next day, I was up in the morning early enough to walk there, a distance of fifteen miles, in season for the forenoon meeting. I heard three good sermons by my dear spiritual father, was greatly quickened in my religious experience; and the next morning, before the break of day, was on my way back, arriving in time to begin my day's work.

[*John Newland Maffitt seems to have been a powerfully anointed preacher of that time. The sketch of William J. Paxon in the Cyclopedia of Methodism records the following: [William J. Paxon was] "a member of the Philadelphia Conference, was born in Philadelphia, December 15, 1826 ... His early religious influences were received among the Orthodox Friends, but hearing, in 1843, a sermon by John N. Maffitt, he was deeply moved, and in the following December united with Dr. Chambers' independent church." John N. Maffitt became Risley's spiritual and ministerial mentor. See also Risley's remarks about John N. Maffitt in succeeding paragraphs of this book. -- DVM]

Sunday, August 6, 1821, I left my father's house in Hartford, to attend an appointment in a school house in Meriden, nineteen miles from Hartford. I started very early, and walked to the place in time for the forenoon meeting; spoke three times, and the next day walked twenty miles to Burlington Camp-meeting . It was my privilege this year to attend five Camp-meetings; one in South Carolina, in April; one on Long Island, in July; two in Connecticut, in August, and one in Massachusetts in September. At the Long Island meeting, after a wonderfully eloquent, and powerful sermon by Rev. J. N. Maffitt, two hundred penitents came to the altar for prayers, and in one hour, forty were converted.

In September I left my father's house, to devote my whole time to the great work of calling sinners to repentance. Father was a Congregationalist, and believed that a liberal education was necessary. He took me to see his pastor, Rev. Joel Hawes, who advised me not to undertake the work without it. But I was constrained from a sense of duty, to enter the work immediately.

Brother Maffitt, having been invited to preach in Boston, at his request I accompanied him there, about the middle of September, 1821. On our way we stopped a day or two at a Camp-meeting in Milford. Here, I saw and heard for the first time, the sainted [Wilbur] Fisk, then a young man, and the only educated man we had in the New England Conference.

An event of great interest to me, occurred at this meeting I saw, for the first time, Miss Mary Eldredge, a young lady from Coventry, Rhode Island, who had experienced religion in the summer of 1821, at a Camp-meeting in North Kingstown, under the same man who had been instrumental in bringing me to Christ three months before. I did not, at that time, even know her name; but on the 8th of July, 1822, she became my wife; and I have felt ever since, that she was the richest gift of God to me after Christ and His salvation.

Saturday morning we left the camp-ground in company with Bro. William Wyman, of Roxbury. On our way we stopped at a Tavern [Interpret "Tavern" here as "an inn, or public house," Oxford Dict. -- DVM], and Bro. Maffitt held a prayer meeting in the parlor. On our way to Bro. Wyman's, Mrs. Wyman, who had been a seeker at the Camp-meeting, was converted while riding along the road; and shouted the praise of God. We stopped at Bro. Wyman's that night, and the next day Bro. Maffitt commenced a series of labors in Boston, which resulted in the conversion of many souls. He was very popular in Boston, as well as in every other place where he preached. Such multitudes flocked to hear him that the chapel in Bromfield Lane would be so completely packed that he had to be put into the pulpit window.

While in Boston, I one day met Rev. Wilbur Fisk, and speaking to him about what father and his minister said respecting the importance of education, I asked him if he would advise me to go to college. His reply was that he would not. Expressing some surprise, I said, "Bro. Fisk, have you not found education a help to you in your ministry?" He said, "Yes; but I backslid while in college, and broke down in health, by severe study;" and furthermore, there was a great scarcity of preachers, so much so that the Conference, at its last session, appointed a day of fasting and prayer, that God would send more laborers; and he did not believe it would be right for those whom God had called to this work, to turn aside from it and spend four or seven years in study while sinners were perishing in their sins. I suppose he thought with Wesley, that learning is good, but saving souls is better.

God heard the prayers of the church for more laborers; and thirty-seven young men were received by the Conference at its next session, in June, 1822, -- a larger number than had ever been received in any one year by any Conference. My unworthy name was among the number; and many a time when I have been sorely tried by a humiliating, depressing scene of my unfitness for the work, I have drawn comfort from the thought that I was thrust out in answer to the prayers of the church.

The names of the class of 1822, are as follows: S. G. Atkins, A. D. Sargeant, T. Smith, E. Case, H. Bulfinch, J. N. Maffitt, J. Allen, H. Thatcher, A. Barnes, E. Frink, E. K. Avery, J. W. Case, W. Barstow, M. French, J. E. Risley, George W. Fairbanks, J. D. Dow, S. H. Norris, R. Putnam, J. Templeton, P. Ball, W. Mack, D. Fletcher, N. S. Spaulding, D. Lessley, D. Scott, C. D. Cahoon, A. D. Merrill, Caleb Dustin, Samuel Kelley, E. W. Stickney, Herschel Foster, William Gardner, John Shaw, N. P. Devereaux, Melville B. Cox, and Otis Williams.

Only three of the number are now (July 1, 1881) living, -- S. Kelley, N. S. Spaulding, and J. E. Risley. Three of the number, -- J. W. Case, A. D. Merrill, and A. D. Sargent, -- have died within the last two years.

Bro. Maffitt took me to see Elijah Hedding, presiding elder of Boston district, and told him that I was his son in the Gospel, and that I felt it to be my duty to preach. "Well," said he, "let him try his hand at it, and see if he can preach." He advised that I should spend a Sabbath with Bro. Frost, at North Malden. I did so, and made the attempt to preach.

I spent the last week in November and the first in December in Lynn, where I found an excellent home with Bro. and Sister Perkins. Bro. Maffitt was preaching there, and a blessed revival attended his labors. After preaching one evening, he invited the seekers to come to the altar, and among those who came were two sisters, daughters of widow Dixon. They left the singers' gallery and pressed their way through the great congregation, and fell upon their knees at the altar. It was a scene of thrilling interest, and while angels rejoiced to witness it, the whole congregation was moved to tears and shouts of joy and gladness. They soon found the Saviour, and then wept and prayed for their brother Francis, until he also was blessed with pardon. The names of these sisters were Martha and Mary, and they and Francis were all the children the widow had; and so the whole family were now walking together in "that path which is as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day."

While in Boston, I attended prayer and class meeting often at Sister Brewer's. She had years before dedicated her house as well as herself to the Lord, for His children to come and sing and pray and rejoice, and we always had good meetings there; it seemed as though the house was always full of the Divine presence. Bro. Brewer had been an invalid for many years, suffering the will of God with patience and resignation which were wonderful to behold.

Most of the time which I spent in Boston I was made welcome to a home in the family of Bro. David Patten, the honored father of Dr. David Patten. I can never forget their great kindness to me. They were like father and mother to me; and in this and hundreds of similar instances I experienced the fulfillment of the promise, that if we forsake all for Christ, we shall find fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, houses and homes; yea, an hundred-fold in this world and in the world to come, life everlasting.

Sunday, December 9, in the afternoon, went to Waltham, intending to hold a meeting, but being told that there was a quarterly meeting at Needham, I continued on to Bro. Harrington's, where I met Rev. E. Otis, presiding elder of New London district, and Bro. Hazelton, preacher in charge of Needham circuit. Passing a pleasant evening with them, and the next morning parting from them, not expecting soon to meet again, they going two miles in one direction to hold a meeting at the house of Sister Loker; and I intending to go in an opposite direction to Boston. But God had other purposes concerning me. I started several hours after they had gone, but had not proceeded far when I discovered that Elder Otis had taken my bridle and I had his. I turned and went to the meeting, and rectified the mistake; and it was this special overruling of Providence that led to my appointment on Warwick, Rhode Island, Circuit.

After the sermon, Elder Otis called on me to exhort. We all spent the night at Bro. Fish's. The next morning the Elder told me that Rev. F. Dane, the preacher on Warwick Circuit, was in poor health, and needed help; and asked me if I would go and labor there until Conference; I gave my consent willingly, as it seemed to me the very opening I had been praying for.

Tuesday, December 11, 1821, I enjoyed the privilege of once more visiting my dear Bro. and Sister Wyman. In the evening I attended Bro. Dixon's class. The Methodists in Roxbury were a despised few. December 17, I parted with my dear spiritual father and his wife, in Boston, not expecting soon to see them again. I had made their house my home for several weeks by their

cordial invitation. When I took the parting hand with Mrs. Maffitt, she said I must remember that in my Father's house there were many mansions.

December 18, I expected to start for New London, and thence to Warwick Circuit; but a storm prevented my going that day; and in the evening I went to Boston and heard Bro. Maffitt preach a charity sermon. So moved was I by his earnest, feeling, and eloquent appeal, that although I had but fifty cents, and expected to start the next day on a journey of two hundred miles, I gave it all. I first thought I would give half, then I seemed to hear an inward voice saying, Give it all; God can give you more. I heeded this voice, and like the widow's two mites, all was cast into the treasury of the Lord. The next morning as I parted with my Christian friends in Roxbury, Sister Brunam left in my hand a dollar; so it was doubled to me.

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03 -- WARWICK CIRCUIT -- FROM DECEMBER, 1821 TO JUNE, 1823

Wednesday, December 26, 1821, I started from Hebron, Connecticut, for my appointment on Warwick Circuit, walking the whole way, 70 miles, and arriving at Bro. Dane's, Friday, 28th, without a cent in my pocket, and my shoes worn through to my stockings, walking on the rough, frozen ground. Those were days of Christian hospitality. The Methodist families kept open house, called Methodist taverns [inns, public houses -- DVM]. I found welcome entertainment in these kind families all along the journey.

Although I was quite weary with my long walk of three days, the brethren insisted that I should preach that evening. Most of the people of the village worked in the cotton mills until 8 o'clock, and if the school-house bell was rung at that hour, it was understood that a stranger had come and would preach. They took a hasty supper, and in their working clothes flocked to the meeting, and so it was that I preached my first sermon on Warwick Circuit, from Heb. xi. 7.

The circuit included Warwick, Coventry, Cranston, East Greenwich, and North and South Kingstown, in Rhode Island, and Sterling and Plainfield, Connecticut. It was a two-week's circuit with one preacher, who preached one Sabbath in Warwick, Cranston and Coventry, and the other Sabbath in Wickford.* [*I pastored in Wickford. It was, in 1972, a village in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. -- DVM] The week day preaching places were Washington Village, Roger Williams' Factory, Frozen Point, Fulling Mills, East Greenwich, Quinnet Neck, and three neighborhoods in South Kingstown.

There was no church edifice on the circuit. The preaching was in school houses and private houses. When I began my work on this circuit it was mid-winter and severely cold. I had spent the previous winter in the warm climate of South Carolina and several winters before in a warm shop. My clothing was scant and insufficient. I had no under flannels and no overcoat, and I suffered much from the cold. But the brethren and sisters soon made the discovery of my wants, and they were speedily supplied. In a very short time boots were purchased and on my feet, flannel was made up into warm under garments, cloth bought for a cloak, and I rejoiced in the possession of an ample camelot cloak, a garment and material much worn at that time, and my spirit as well as the physical man was made warm with the glow of gratitude and joy.

December 29 and 30, there was a quarterly meeting at Quitnecet Neck -- an old-fashioned circuit quarterly meeting: preaching Saturday afternoon; quarterly conference after preaching; prayer meeting in the evening; love-feast Sunday at 8 a. m.; preaching at 10 a.m., and 1 p. m., followed by the Lord's supper. The members of the different societies on the circuit attended in considerable numbers, some coming twenty or thirty miles. I was surprised and made to tremble with anxiety by the request of the Presiding Elder that I would preach Saturday afternoon. Usually the Elder preaches Saturday afternoon and Sunday p. m., and the preacher in charge Sunday a. m.

Perhaps if I had been older in years and experience I should have declined; but I had the impression that as a son in gospel I must defer to the judgment of my superiors; and as the preacher in charge added his authority to that of the elder, I did not feel at liberty to refuse. So for the first time I attempted to preach before a Presiding Elder; and I see by my journal of that date that God, who has ever been my helper, stood by me.

Sunday at 8 o'clock was the love-feast. At the close of this meeting I requested all who would pledge themselves to pray at least once a day for one week that God would revive His work on Warwick Circuit, to stand up. Every one in the room rose, including one seeker. Those prayers were answered before the close of the week in the conversion of souls. At 10 a. m. the Presiding Elder set me to preaching again, he preaching at 1 p. m.

The next evening I preached in the Congregational Church in South Kingstown. Tuesday evening, in the same town, at the house, of Bro. Gould, the seeker in the love-feast, now a happy convert. More came than could get into the house, and some poor sinners wept for their sins.

Wednesday, January 2, 1822, I had an appointment at Quitnecet Neck. Up to that time I had enjoyed great liberty and was much encouraged and unspeakably happy in my work. But now my great trial was to come. In attempting to preach I was much embarrassed, could not remember anything that I intended to say, was confused, and after saying a few words by way of exhortation, sat down covered with shame.

I retired immediately to my room and passed through a terrible conflict with the adversary. He suggested first, that I was deceived in supposing that I was called to preach, then, that I must give it up and never again attempt to preach. But I had engaged myself to the Presiding Elder, and had entered upon the work, and oh, how could I give it up! Alas for me, what could I do! Oh, that I had never made the attempt!

And now the old crooked serpent had the audacity to suggest that there was one way by which I might free myself from all my troubles and difficulties at once, and that was by committing suicide. The subtle enemy over shot the mark this time, for this bold push had the effect to arouse me to the consideration of where the adversary was leading me and I fell on my knees, and wept and prayed until I obtained the victory.

The next evening in a prayer meeting at widow Eldredge's in Coventry, where half that were in the room were weeping for their sins and seeking pardon, and one found Jesus, -- I understood what that temptation meant.

I had no horse and had to walk to most of my appointments. When going to the extreme point, we both alternately used one horse owned by my colleague. The revival which commenced in a prayer meeting, spread in every direction through the circuit, until seventy or eighty were saved, and two new societies were raised up, one in East Greenwich and the other in Sterling, Connecticut. The most marked and wonderful work, was that in East Greenwich, and I shall give a more particular account of the revival in that village.

There had been a class there years before, but it had dwindled to one member, a colored sister by the name of Sarah Gardner. Bro. Nane had preached there once in two weeks, on a week evening, but now as he had a helper he arranged to have me preach there on the Sabbath, the county officers kindly giving the use of the Court House for our meetings.

I went to my first appointment in East Greenwich, with such feelings as I had never experienced on entering any other town. It was six miles from Warwick. I went on foot; and to shorten the distance went across lots. I prayed much before going, prayed every step of the way, and when from the top of a hill I looked down upon the village, my emotions were indescribable, my eyes filled with tears. and the fervent prayer of my heart was, "O Lord revive thy work in East Greenwich! Oh, go with me and stand by me! Let me not go in my own strength. If Thou go not with me, send me not. Give me souls whatever else Thou deny me. Oh, let Thy word have free course and be glorified! If Thou hast called me to preach, give me a token for good."

In preaching I had such Divine help as I had never experienced before. After preaching there a few times I spent a day or two in the place, and going to a funeral one day, I was accosted after the service in a very friendly way by a man who proved to be Capt. Richard Spencer, who with his wife were Baptists. He gave me a very cordial invitation to go home with him, which I accepted. As I entered the house Sister Spencer met me with the salutation, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!" With this dear family I found one of the best of homes as long as I remained on the circuit, and whenever I visited the place afterward. She was a mother in Israel indeed to me, showing me as much kindness and affection as if I had been her own son; and always seeming to take pleasure in making me welcome to whatever of accommodation and comfort the house afforded, seeming to think that nothing which she could provide or do was too much or too good for me. They soon both became members of the M. E. Church. They lived to a good old age, and are now in Heaven, with twenty-two children, twins, who had all died in infancy, and whose little graves they showed me in the burying ground. The last time I saw the dear old motherly Christian lady was about thirty years after I was stationed there, she then being over ninety years old, she saluted me with the kiss of Christian affection as she had often done before, calling me her dear boy.

Soon after this I was invited by Bro. Casey to visit his family, and I named an hour when I would call. This Mr. Casey and his wife were Baptists. He was "Master" Casey, because he was a school-master. He had for many years kept a private school for young ladies in a small building which was called Master Casey's school-house. In passing the front yard to the house, I passed directly by the school-house. He saw me pass, and in a few minutes he sent four or five of the scholars to the house, one being his only daughter, and Sister Casey sent them into the parlor where I was. I saw instantly the work I had to do, and instantly set about it. I spoke to each respecting her

soul's salvation, asked each one if she desired an interest in Christ, and receiving an affirmative answer from all, while flowing tears testified to their sincerity. I told them if they would kneel, I would pray for them. Without a moment's hesitation they all prostrated themselves before the Lord, and with sobs of penitence offered the prayer of broken and contrite hearts to a merciful God for the pardon of their sins.

In a few weeks every one, with scores of others, including Master Casey's only child, were rejoicing in hope. The revival was rapid and powerful, and its good influence seemed to pervade the whole community. My joy was rapturous and unbounded. I was filled with ecstasy and delight. God had answered my prayer and the prayers of the Church, and had set His seal to my call to the ministry, and the language of my joyful heart was, "Hallelujah to the Lamb who hath purchased our pardon!"

My joy was so great that I was ready to speak of the revival to every one I met. Seeing some brethren from Quitnecet Neck whose natures were not excitable and were slow to believe good tidings, I said to them with great animation, "God is reviving His work in East Greenwich!" It seemed hard for them to believe it could be true, and their looks seemed to say, "We will take time to consider."

In Sterling, there was in January, 1822, but one Methodist family; but now that Bro. Dane had a helper he made it a Sabbath appointment. Bro. Asa Potter owned and ran a cotton factory. He took the machinery out of the attic and put in seats, and here we had our Sunday meetings, and a blessed revival.

One week evening in East Greenwich, a Baptist preached in the Court House. All went, young converts, seekers, and all, but they could not make it seem like the revival meetings we previously had, and after the meeting closed, nobody seemed willing to leave, there was a craving that had not been satisfied. A proposition was made to go to Master Casey's Schoolhouse and have a second meeting. The multitude flocked thither, filling the house to overflowing. The religious feeling that pervaded the entire mass was so intense, that when I gave the invitation for seekers to kneel for prayer, nearly the whole assembly were in tears, and many bowed themselves before the Lord.

This second meeting over, a score or more of the young converts and seekers followed me to my lodgings, and there we had religious conversation, singing and prayer, and thus closed one of the most memorable evenings of my ministry. Bro. Dane organized the converts into a class, and this was the origin of the present M. E. Church in East Greenwich.

During this spring my health became much impaired, in fact it received a shock from which it has never fully recovered. The cause of this was twofold: First, I had begun the work too young, before I had attained the full strength of manhood, and in my youthful vigor and enthusiasm and inexperience, not dreaming that I could break down, I went beyond my strength. I preached three times every Sabbath, and once or twice nearly every week day; held class or prayer meeting after preaching; and did not know but I could exhort, sing, and pray for hours together without injury to my health.

The meetings were mostly held in schoolhouses and dwelling-houses, much crowded and much too warm, and then going out in a state of perspiration into the cold night air, I ignorantly sowed the seeds of disease, which in after life brought forth a too abundant harvest, and made it necessary to ask a superannuated relation, before attaining the age of middle manhood.

Another cause was, my ignorance of the laws of health as connected with proper diet. I did not know but I could, without detriment, eat whatever was pleasant to a vitiated taste; and this difficulty was increased by the well-meant indulgence of the good sisters who entertained me, they thinking that nothing was too good for the minister, made their food too rich, and served it at unseasonable hours. Coming in after meeting at ten or eleven o'clock at night, weary and languid with the labors of the evening, with the digestive organs in the worst possible state to receive food, I would find the highly seasoned mince pie upon the table, made still more unwholesome by being hot; and of this health-destroying dish I would partake just before retiring.

In June, 1822, I was received into the New England Conference. The preachers appointed to Warwick Circuit that year were Lewis Bates, John E. Risley, and Francis Dane, supernumerary, the large increase in the membership requiring three preachers where there was but one six months before. The work of the circuit was divided this year: Bro. Dane being assigned to Sterling and Plainfield, Connecticut, and Bro. Bates and I to the part in Rhode Island. This was a prosperous year; there were a number of conversions. When I joined the New England Conference it embraced the territory now contained in the six New England Conferences.

On July 8, 1822, an event occurred which was more intimately connected with my well-being during all the future of life (and which will extend in its consequences through the ages of eternity), than any other, except the conversion of my soul. On that ever-memorable day, I took upon myself, in the presence of God and my friends, the vows of holy matrimony, and was united in bonds the most sacred, tender and endearing of any earthly relationship, with Miss Mary Eldredge, of Coventry, Rhode Island. She was the daughter of widow Sarah Eldredge. She was brought to Christ at a camp-meeting in the summer of 1820, in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, through the instrumentality of that honored servant of God, Rev. John Newland Maffitt, who had led me to Christ three months before in Middletown, Connecticut. After a long and happy union of fifty-eight years, I regard her as I have from the first day of our married life, as the most precious gift of our beneficent Heavenly Father, after the unspeakable gift of His dear and only Son Jesus Christ. She was eminently fit and worthy to occupy the important and responsible position to which she was called in the providence of God; a position perhaps requiring more of good sense, prudence, patience, gentleness, kindness of heart and true piety, than any other to which woman was ever called, that of the wife of an itinerant minister of the M. E. Church.

Few women are called to occupy positions so trying or to suffer privations so great. The frequent removals, the necessity in order to give satisfaction, that they should keep up a good appearance as to table, apparel, and neat and orderly housekeeping, though the salary is so small that she cannot hire help, often bring her into most painful straits and in the case of my dear wife, she becoming the mother of fifteen children, born in four different States and twelve different towns, five of the number dying in infancy, and buried in four different States.

Never was a preacher's wife more endeared to the people among whom she lived than was my beloved wife. As to myself, it gives me unfeigned pleasure to say that I cannot say enough in her praise. She has been the guide, the support, and the joy of my life, ever ready to cheer me on when I have been ready to faint and when I have been more troubled on her account than my own, and when for me to go forward would involve the greatest privations and the severest trials to herself, she has ever, with a noble, Christian heroism, which nothing but the grace of God, joined to as much natural goodness of heart as ever a daughter of Eve possessed; could inspire, she has urged and cheered me on.

Naturally of a cheerful, hopeful disposition, with an amiableness, light-heartedness and gaiety, elevated by refinement and sanctified by genuine heart and life piety, she has endeared herself to all who ever knew her, and brought the warm, bright sunshine of noon-day into the household and to her husband's heart. We made a very sober, common-sense matter of our courtship and marriage. We did not spend more than six hours altogether after the family had retired, and not one of those hours was devoted to what is commonly called courting; but the time which custom seemed to require that we should be by ourselves, was spent in reading to each other from some interesting book.

As to the wedding day it was quite a matter-of-fact day, for I did not omit a single appointment. Having an appointment to preach that evening, and failing to secure the services of a brother preacher to preach for me, he perhaps declining for the joke of the thing, supposing it may be that I would not go, I went and preached, walking a distance of eight miles, so that there was not the omission of a single week-day appointment, even on my wedding day.

There was a little bit of romance connected with our marriage which perhaps is worth recording. There was a rule of the Conference which required that a preacher should not marry until he had traveled four years. Of this rule I happened to be profoundly ignorant, and so it came to pass that the excellent Presiding Elder, Rev. Joseph A. Merrill, when he came to the circuit, found his single man had taken to himself a wife. However, the matter was compromised by my drawing only a single man's support, and that amounted that year to forty dollars.

In the days of large circuits, the preacher seldom occupied the same bed two nights in succession. It was my custom when I entered a house where I was invited to pass the night, to ask the privilege of retiring to my room for the purpose of asking God's blessing on my own soul, that I might be prepared to preach in the evening, and on the family that gave me entertainment, that each member might be blessed, and that my visit might be made a blessing to all. Passing through South Kingstown thirty-five years after, and stopping at a house to inquire the way, the lady asked my name, and related the following incident in her religious experience:

She said that when she was a little girl I came one day to her father's house to hold a meeting in the evening; that her child curiosity was excited by seeing me go into the bedroom, shut the door and remain in some time, and she crept softly to the door, opened it carefully just enough to peak in and saw me on my knees in the act of prayer. It made a deep impression on her child's heart, which did not wear off until she sought and found the Saviour.

My year and a half of labor on Warwick Circuit closed June, 1823. During this time I preached in East Greenwich 89 times, Phenix 12, Centerville 24, Riverpoint 7, Anthony 27, Cranston 24, Wickford 32, South Kingstown 35, Quitnecet Neck 7, Apanough 18, Washington 18, Sterling, Connecticut, 27, and Plainfield, Connecticut, 16 times -- in all 336.

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04 -- NEW FIELDS OF LABOR

The Conference of 1823 held its session in Providence Rhode Island, Bishop Roberts presiding. I went on foot. I was continued on trial, and appointed to Milford Circuit, Massachusetts, with Hezekiah Thatcher. It was a part of old Needham Circuit two years before, and was now part of New London District, Joseph A. Merrill, Presiding Elder. This was a large circuit, extending from Paxton, north of Worcester, to Smithfield, Rhode Island There were two preaching places in Milford, three in Hopkinton, one in Holliston, one in Medway, one in Mendon, one in Upton, two in Northbridge, one in Grafton, one in Uxbridge, one in Sutton, one in Ward, one in Milbury, two in Worcester, one in Paxton, one in Douglass, one in Burrillville, Rhode Island and three in Smithfield Rhode Island -- twenty-four in all.

In some of these places, there was one class in each, some having fifteen or twenty members while others had not more than five or six. In other places there was but one Methodist family, and in several not one of our members in the town; but some friendly family opened their doors for our meetings. There were probably not more than a hundred members on the whole circuit. In those days, when Methodism was truly a missionary work, it was the policy to enter every open door, and to seek open doors and not wait to be invited.

In half of these places we did not receive a cent for our year's labor, we only asked the privilege of preaching the gospel; and the whole salary for the year was but \$200, and much less than half in money. Now, 1881, we have a number of strong churches in the territory embraced in Milford Circuit in 1823, East Douglass, Holliston, Hopkinton, Milbury, Milford, Upton, Uxbridge, Whitinsville, West Medway, Worcester, (Trinity, Coral Street, Grace Church, and Laurel Street,) Cherry Valley, Webster Square; with a membership of three or four thousand.

On Warwick Circuit, I had traveled mostly on my feet, having no horse of my own. But now, on a large circuit I must have a horse. I had no money to buy one The good Presiding Elder helped me over this difficulty by purchasing one for me; and waiting two years for his pay. I mounted my new horse, with change of raiment and Bible and hymn book in saddle-bags, and rode to my circuit, -- but now I met a new difficulty. The horse would leap any ordinary fence into mowing lot or cornfield. The brethren swapped him off to the stage company for a miserable old horse that wasn't worth ten dollars. I could get no travel out of him without urging and whipping, a thing that was not pleasant to do. But he had not life enough to jump fences. After a severe trial of patience for two years, a good brother took pity on me and gave me a good horse. But now that I had a family, I must have a carriage, and a brother sold me a rickety old wagon and harness for six dollars, and in this miserable conveyance, my wife, worthy of the chariot of a princess, rode to the circuit and to three other circuits. Three weeks out of four we preached not only three times on the

Sabbath but on nearly every week-day. The fourth week we called our rest week, and the preachers met and arranged the work for another month.

I arrived on the circuit that week. It seemed to me to be a needless waste of time to spend the week without preaching, so I started off to look up extra work. I went to Medway, where there had been no Methodist preaching; and inquired for Methodists, and was directed to the agent of the factory, whose sister, residing with him, was a member of our church. She invited me to preach in the evening in the school house, and went from house to house and circulated the notice. We had a good congregation. The agent made me welcome at his house and invited me to come again, though he was not a professor of religion.

The great event of the first part of the year was our beginning housekeeping. During the previous year, my wife had remained at home with her mother. About the last of July I took my young wife and infant daughter onto the circuit, and we commenced housekeeping in Northbridge, in a very humble way. There were but few parsonages in those days, and none on this circuit, so the best we could do was to go into two small rooms on the second floor of the ell-part of a farm house. No furniture was provided, and we had to get along as well as we could with what I could bring on a small one horse wagon from Mother Eldredge's.

The salaries paid preachers then were very small, and but a small part of what was paid was money. The farmers would bring produce, meal, meat, vegetables, butter, etc., sometimes in smaller and sometimes in larger quantities. This was all new and strange to my poor wife; and the first thing brought in (a pound of butter) brought a blush to her cheek and tears to her eyes. In her inexperience, she was puzzled to know how to regard it, whether as a deed of charity to a very poor and needy neighbor, for which she was expected to be very humble and very thankful, or as the discharge of a debt which they owed the preacher and his family.

Pretending to the good sisters who had kindly called to pay their respects to the new preacher and his wife in their new home, that she was looking for a dish in which to put the butter, she allowed for one minute the tears to fall plentifully. Then she wiped her eyes, and tried to obliterate all traces of the tears, and with a face now covered with smiles, and not mock smiles either, but real genuine smiles, -- the smiles of the heart shining through the face, for she was not offended but truly thankful. But somehow there was a feeling came over her that would make the tears run in spite of her efforts to keep them back. She had always been independent, and now to be dependent on others for the bread she ate, was a trial which severely tried her amiability and light-heartedness as well as her moral heroism, of which she had a large stock.

She was very lonesome and homesick. Her mother's family was large, consisting of six daughters. They lived in a village where there was much activity and they had much company, and this was all so different, in a country town, at a distance from neighbors on a road little traveled. She was alone most of the time, she and the baby, for I was away on the circuit three-quarters of the time. But young as she was, she met these unpleasant things with a brave heart.

As for me, I was the happiest man living: I had the dearest and best wife in the world; our union had been blest with a darling little daughter, who was a perfect prodigy of beauty and

loveliness; I had a family and home of my own; and it did seem to me then, and has ever since, that no man in the wide world had more reason to be thankful and happy than I.

My wife has often told me laughing, in later years, of her fruitless endeavors to earn a little pin money. She had at home money of her own, and now felt the loss of it. She never asked her poor husband for any, well knowing how little he received from the circuit, and that every dollar of it and more was needed to provide the bare necessities of life for the family. A sister asked her if she could make a vest, a thing she knew no more about than making shoes. But believing she could do any thing, she undertook it, visions of pin money flitting before her eyes. She said she would try, and try she did by ripping up an old vest and using it for a pattern, and succeeded very well.

The garment completed, the sister asked her what was her price; she told her she did not like to set a price; she might pay what she pleased, so she gave her a pound of candles, worth fourteen cents. Thus were her fond hopes of pin money, dashed to the ground in a moment. She had worked hard several days, and sat up late nights, to do the work that was to bring the coveted pin money, and now not a cent of pin money did she get. It had all melted into tallow candles.

This experiment was repeated several times during the first years of my itinerant life, until more years and more wisdom, taught her better than to waste her precious time and strength working for less than half price, for those who were able to pay what work was worth, and take her pay in anything but the very thing she wanted -- money.

Lee Claflin was one of the pillars of the Church in Milford in 1823. His son William, now (1870) Governor of Massachusetts, was then a lad of six years. On Milford Circuit, as elsewhere in my itinerant work, I met with much kindness and hospitality, not only in Methodist families, but among strangers. I record a single instance.

July 14, I left Douglass on my way to Burrillville and was overtaken by a rain-storm. I stopped at a house where the family were entire strangers, and found an aged pilgrim who told me that three times she had been brought where she saw death staring her in the face, and she declared it had lost its sting. I here got refreshment, and when I left, the man of the house refused compensation, assuring me I was welcome, and inviting me to call on him again if ever I passed that way.

In April, 1824, I passed through a severe conflict with the adversary respecting my call to the ministry, similar to what I had experienced 15 months before. Now, as then, he told me I was deceived in my supposed call. I had an appointment to preach at Allen's Factory. Riding there in the early part of the day, I retired to a grove to read my pocket Bible and to think upon a subject to present to the congregation and pray for God's blessing upon my work. No light broke upon, my mind as I searched for something to say to the people, and when I kneeled on the ground and wrestled in prayer for Divine help, the Heavens seemed brass over my head.

Instead of wrestling, Jacob-like, until I prevailed, I yielded to unbelief and temptation, Satan whispering, God has no message for you to deliver to the people this evening. I reflected upon the importance of the work of the Gospel ministry and my unfitness, and came to the

conclusion that I could not preach, and it could not be that I was called to the great work. I reasoned it in this way: If I was called to preach I should have a clear view of souls, and of their danger while out of Christ, and a greater desire to save them, and should see more fruit of my labors, and a clearer evidence of my call to the work.

Jonah-like, I ran away. When I met my friends I trembled at the thought of telling them what I had so rashly done. My good angel wife entreated me with tears not to give up preaching, telling me that if I neglected my duty we should never prosper in anything; that our happiness would be at an end, and that she feared I should backslide, at the same time assuring me that she would much rather suffer anything that she might be called to suffer as the wife of an itinerant, than that I should forsake the work of God.

The Lord by His Spirit directed my thoughts to many encouraging promises, and I began to feel if I was back again I would cheerfully pursue the path of duty. I returned to the place where I had neglected my appointment. When I entered the place I felt guilty and ashamed, and thought that all who saw me would accuse me of folly. But instead of this, my Christian friends (though they did not approve my course) had nothing for me but such kind and sympathizing words of encouraging, as melted my heart into tenderness and gratitude, and gave me strength and resolution to continue in the blessed work of the Lord.

They told me they believed that after these trials God would give me greater success; that young preachers often had such temptations, that they had believed my labors in that place would be blessed in the salvation of souls, and they still believed they would, -- that they hoped I would not be discouraged by what had passed; and they gave a pressing invitation to come and preach again, telling me they would pray for me.

I preached there again and we had a crowd -- twice as many as the evening I disappointed them -- and the awakening Spirit rested upon the assembly. Thus has the Lord, I trust, forgiven me, and blessed my feeble efforts to do good. I have often since then felt my unworthiness, and never entered the pulpit without feeling that I was wholly dependent on the Holy Spirit for success, but never doubted my call to preach.

During the year I preached in Milford 29 times, Hopkinton 30, Douglas 10, Upton 12, Northbridge 21, Houston 10, Milbury 6, Worcester 5, Medway 7, Ward 3, Mendon 12, Paxton 3, Grafton 12, Sutton 6, Leicester 7, Uxbridge 3, Burrillville, Rhode Island, 9, Slatersville 23, Greenville 10, Allen's Factory 10, Georgiaville 3 times -- in all 231.

In June, 1824, the Conference met in Barnard, Vermont. I was ordained deacon by the apostolic Bishop George, and admitted to full membership in the Conference. My appointment was to Needham Circuit, with Benjamin Hazelton and Ira M. Bidwell for my colleagues. The preacher in charge occupied the parsonage in Marlboro, and we went into a small house in Weston with another family. In the fall we removed to Lunenburg, and had better accommodations.

On this circuit we were very cordially received, the brethren and sisters and friends doing all in their power to make us feel at home with them, and comfortable and happy. Especially was this the case in Lunenburg, where we lived most of the year. Bro. Harlow's family, in particular,

showed us great kindness. Had we been their own children they could not have treated us with more kindness and tenderness.

Near the close of the year a delegation from Lowell attended the quarterly meeting and requested the Presiding Elder to supply them with preaching a few Sabbaths before Conference. Accordingly each of the preachers spent a Sabbath there. I went first, and preached three times in a school-house on the east side of Concord River. I believe that was the first Methodist preaching in Lowell.

On Needham Circuit I preached in Lunenburg 40 times, Leominster 14, Harvard 15, Marlboro 16, Lowell 3, Needham 14, Weston 15, Stowe 3, Waltham 6, Framingham 13, Bolton 6, Sudbury 7 times -- in all 143. There were about two hundred members in Needham Circuit in 1824. Now (1881) in the same territory there are fifteen stations, with 3500 members.

The Conference held its session in East Cambridge, June, 1825. Bishop George presided, and preached a sermon on the Sabbath before ordaining the deacons, of wonderful eloquence, power and effect; the two hundred preachers, as well as the congregation generally, were in tears, and if the Bishop had at the close called for volunteers to go to Canada or anywhere else, I believe a score would have responded. I was appointed to Winchester Circuit, New Hampshire. We lived in Keene, a beautiful town on the banks of the charming Ashuelott.

One of the pleasant events remembered as occurring at our home in Keene, was a visit from Father Newell. He came about the middle of the day. As I was going to the spring to bring water for dinner, I saw coming towards the house a venerable looking man on horseback. I hurried to the house and told my wife that a man was coming up the road who looked like a Methodist preacher. We had the pleasure of welcoming Father Newell. He stopped and dined with us, and after dinner conversed and prayed with us. We were charmed by the sincerity of his manners, the sweetness of his spirit, and the fervency of his piety; and we have ever remembered that visit as one of the pleasantest and most profitable events of our lives. George W. Fairbanks was my co-laborer.

During the first four years of my itineracy Joseph A. Merrill was my Presiding Elder. His was called the New London District, and it embraced a part of Connecticut, all of Rhode Island a part of Massachusetts, and a part of New Hampshire. Winchester Circuit had eleven preaching places. My year of service was one of the most pleasant, successful, and yet trying of my itinerant life. Bro. Fairbanks was one of the best of God's servants; a true friend, a genial, pleasant companion, a wise counselor, and a good and real Christian gentleman. We loved, sympathized and labored together like David and Jonathan.

He was a bachelor, and I had the pleasure of solemnizing his marriage before the close of the year. He was always a welcome guest to our house. He seemed to enjoy those visits hugely. He was very social and companionable; would sit up until twelve and one o'clock, and we never wearied in listening to his intelligent, pleasant and entertaining conversation. I really believe he was strengthened in his purpose to marry, if not led to it, by witnessing in my dear family the protection, peace and happiness which may be enjoyed in Christian matrimony, where the true, the

kind-hearted, intelligent, always patient, always cheerful wife and mother, is the ministering angel of the household.

We were favored with more or less revival in all parts of the circuit, and through the whole year, but it was a year or summer of some trial. My dear wife's health was very poor, so that she was unable to do the housework. We could not hire help, for the salary was so small as barely to keep soul and body together. In this sad dilemma, a good brother and sister insisted on our making their house our home until she should be better.

The summer of 1825, will be remembered by many as the hottest in New England for fifty years. The heated term began the fore part of July, and continued until the latter part of August -- six long and dreadful weeks, during which not one drop of rain fell, and the heat was intense without one comfortable day or cool night. The hospitality of our kind friends, Bro. and Sister Maynard, was far beyond their means. Their house was small, having but two rooms. Our sleeping room was an attic, under a low roof, and the blazing sun pouring its burning rays upon it during the day, made it intensely hot at night.

I soon saw that if my precious wife was to be preserved to me a little longer, I must take her out of that place. But how was this to be accomplished, I could take her to her mother, but the distance was so great that the expense would be considerable, and I had no money, and I had no suitable covered carriage in which to take my family. But the case was desperate, and desperate means must be used to meet it. So I went to a wealthy brother and borrowed money to meet the expense, and we started on our four-days' journey in a wagon without a cover to shield us from the rays of a burning sun. My wife carried one babe in her lap, and I held the other on my knees. I held the reins in one hand and with the other an umbrella over the four, and thus we pursued that ever-memorable, uncomfortable and painful journey, and oh, how thankful that we had a loving mother's house to go to under such circumstances!

There resided in Gilsom, a town adjoining Keene, a young lady, a member of the church, by the name of Eunice Hall. She was a great sufferer having been in very poor health several years. She possessed a good mind, and was somewhat gifted as a writer of poetry. She presented us some lines which we prize very highly, and I think worthy of record.

[Lines written while confined by sickness.]

TO [THE MONTH OF] MAY

Thou loveliest month in all the year,
I can enjoy thy charms no more,
But oft I drop a silent tear
For days now o'er.

Thy beauties catch my fading eye,
But cannot raise my drooping head,
Ah, no! they only draw a sigh,
For health is fled.

How oft I've ranged the woodlands through,
Or strayed in meadows gay with flowers,
And plucked the violet wet with dew
In morning hours.

But I may never more inhale
Thy balmy breath, sweet fragrant May,
Nor rove through Ashuelott's vale
At break of day.

E'er thou, sweet month, hast sped thy flight,
Death may have closed these eyes in sleep
Which once have hailed thee with delight,--
No more to weep.

Thy flowers, like me, will soon be gone,
For both of kindred dust are made,
And when our fleeting race is run,
Alike must fade.

But formed for nobler end than they,
My moldering dust will soon revive,
And He who formed at first my clay,
Will bid it rise.

Yes, I must live while nature dies,
Nor leave a lingering wreck behind;
And far beyond these azure skies,
A mansion find.

Amazing thought! why should I dare
To mourn for May, or all her train;
Oh, let it be my only care
A Heaven to gain.

* * *

TO MRS. RISLEY

Have you not felt this world to be
A dreary land of grief and woe,
And inly [inwardly] sighed for Heaven your home?
Have you not cast an upward look
While distant from your native place,
And thought, "Soon will my wanderings end,

Soon shall I see my Father's face?"

Oh, the sweet thought of Heaven can soothe,
Though trials press on either side,
Nor can affliction's tempests move,
While built on Christ we firm abide.
No; was the world enwrapt in flame,
Still would our souls securely rest;
We know that our Redeemer reigns,
And lean on his beloved breast.

Ah, my dear friends, the time draws nigh
When we shall part to meet no more
Till We shall reach the promised land
And sing with joy, our sufferings o'er.
From one thy memory shall not fade,
Tho' hills and mountains rise between,
Tho' rivers roll and pour their floods
And trackless forests intervene.

A child of sorrow from my birth,
I hasten onward to the tomb,
Expecting soon to leave this earth
And have my sun go down at noon.
Adieu, my friend, the wish accept
That love Divine may fill your heart,
And you by grace be ever kept,
Till we shall meet no more to part.

-- Eunice

* * *

ACROSTIC

J-oy is the portion of that wedded pair,
O-rdained by Heaven to soothe each other's care.
H-ow sweet they glide along life's rugged road,
N-or feel their cares to be a heavy load.

E-ntwined together, death alone can part,
D-eath only can divide united hearts,
W-ither their hopes and blast in one short hour
A-ll their fair prospects by his cruel power.
R-elentless foe? he breaks the tender tie,
D-omestic bliss at his approach must fly.

A-h? long may Heaven avert the fatal stroke,
N-or let the union of the friends be broke.
D-ear Savior, shield them from afflictions storms.

M-ake them Thy chosen, bear them in Thy arms,
A-nd while they labor in Thy precious cause,
R-eward their toil and bless with Thy applause,
Y-es, bless them, Lord, and when their work is done,

R-eceive and place them near Thy sacred throne.
I-n thy bright world may they resplendent shine,
S-eraphic and celestial pleasures find;
L-ive in thy smiles, and sing in rapturous strains
E-ternal praises to Thy glorious name.
Y-e heavenly hosts respond with me, Amen.

-- E. H.

On this circuit I preached in Winchester 53 times, Chesterfield 6, Alsted 18, Westmoreland 25, Gilsom 27, Rindge 13, Marlboro 12, Roxbury 9, Fitzwilliam 7, Richmond 2, Walpole 1:-- 173 times.

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05 -- ASHBURNHAM CIRCUIT -- ROCHESTER, N.H. -- HEBRON, MANCHESTER, CONN.

At the Conference of 1826, held in Wilbraham, I was ordained Elder by Bishop George, and appointed in charge of Ashburnham Circuit, with Hiram Waldron for my colleague. It was a part of a new district called Lynn, and John Lindsay was my Presiding Elder.

Here we found for the first time a parsonage. Moving into it I started on my first round, visiting every preaching place, to arrange the work. This was a year of small pay and of much hard work, but of glorious success. My colleague being single, his allowance was so small that he was compelled to resort to school-keeping to piece it out. My wife and children were not so well fed and clothed as they deserved to be, and passed through some severe straits. The stewards neglected their duty, and did not come near us to see whether the family had anything to eat or not.

One day during my absence the last food was eaten for breakfast, -- the last morsel was gone. There was a garden connected with the parsonage, but it was not planted. It had been planted the year before, however. In her extremity my poor wife thought she might find some potatoes of last year's growth left in the ground. She went to a corner of the garden and dug with her hands and found two or three in good condition. Making a little fire in the fireplace she sliced the precious potatoes, put them in the spider and put them over the fire to cook for supper. Just before the savory morsel was done, the foresticks broke and the anticipated supper went into the ashes, and for the first time, and the only time in their lives, the dear ones went to bed supperless.

My wardrobe was scanty and much worn. My best coat had been given me on Needham Circuit two years before. My dear wife and help-mate in the work had a wonderful faculty for hiding our poverty, and making a good appearance with small means. She was particularly anxious to present the best side possible when we went to a new circuit or station. So she, with her poor health and the care of two children, had set up nights to turn, press and make up anew the old coat, transforming it into what appeared very much like a new coat. There is an amazing incident connected with the history of that old, threadbare coat renewed, which is, perhaps, worthy of recording.

It was customary in those days for the Presiding Elder to advise the preacher in charge to hold what was called temporary quarterly meetings with the societies where they could not themselves go. There was a small class in Montague, and they desired a quarterly meeting. They had never been favored with one before, and they made excellent arrangements for it, erecting a preaching stand or platform and providing seats for the congregation in a pretty grove. I preached twice, and administered baptism and the Lord's Supper.

As the congregation was returning from the grove, my wife heard one sister ask another how she liked the new preacher. The reply was, she liked his preaching, but thought he was proud. "Did you not," she asked, "see how his boots shone? and he wore a new, fine broadcloth coat."

My colleague teaching school through the winter, threw the greater part of the work on me. His school was in the neighborhood of the parsonage, and to favor him I made division of the work, leaving him the appointments near his school, and I spending most of the winter in Northfield, forty miles away from my family. But the hand of the Lord was in it, for a revival broke out, which continued all winter, and a large number were converted and added to the Church. Jonathan D. Bridge, then a boy twelve years old, was among the number. He was called to preach, and became one of our most gifted and useful ministers, filling some of the best appointments, and when he died in 1862, occupying the position of Presiding Elder.

This arrangement of the work cost me many a cold ride over the long road between Northfield and my family. In the last end of winter my wife being in feeble health, I did not dare to stay away from home long at a time. The last Sabbath in February, after preaching three times, and administering baptism and the Lord's Supper, and taking a late supper at Sister Lyman's, I started at ten o'clock for home. The snow was deep and the night very cold; but a kind Providence preserved man and beast, and I reached home in safety early next morning.

But these excessive labors and exposure began to tell seriously upon my health. My good Presiding Elder perceiving this, gave me the next year a very pleasant station, where my health improved, I had more time for study, and we were much better provided for.

On Ashburnham Circuit I preached in Westminster 27, Ashburnham 17, Orange 21, Winchendon 24, New Salem 2, Wendal 11, Northfield 38, Royalston 8, Warwick 2, Montague 11, Templeton 1; -- 162 times in all.

From the next Conference, June 1827, I was appointed to Rochester, New Hampshire.

Moving then was a very different thing from what it is now. Now removals are short distances, often but a few miles, and sometimes from one charge to another in the same city. The preacher leaves a furnished parsonage, takes his family and library and goes by steam or street cars to another furnished house. Then, there were but few parsonages, and none furnished. The distance from Ashburnham to Rochester was more than one hundred miles, and was a three days' journey.

A brother took our small stock of furniture on a one-horse wagon, and my family and I on another. Thus we proceeded, up hill and down, over rough and crooked roads to our destination. The last day between Dover and Rochester we saw sad sights: there were perhaps twenty dwellings on the road, and more than half of them had signs beside the front doors with the words, rum, gin, and brandy, in large letters. Let the discouraged temperance worker note the contrast between then and now, and bless God for the great advance of the cause. [But, how many liquor establishments do you suppose might again be in the area now? -- DVM]

Rochester New Hampshire, was a very pleasant station. We found a good sized brick church edifice in the center of the village, and a parsonage being built, into which we moved before the close of the first year. We found here a noble band of brothers and sisters, earnest and faithful workers in the vineyard, ever ready to rally round and stay up the hands of the preacher, and make his family comfortable and happy.

The plan of the work was, preaching in the Church morning and evening, and in schoolhouses and dwelling houses in every part of the large town Sunday evening and week evenings. The first year there was to my knowledge, but one converted, a young lady by the name of Mary Dame, and she is now (1870) living in the enjoyment of religion in the city of Boston. But the second year there was a blessed revival.

January 2, 1828, we were called to suffer our first great family affliction in the death of our angel babe, Elizabeth Porter, at the age of nine months, a most lovely and beautiful child, and the very picture of health. Taking a sudden cold, she died in less than three days with inflammatory fever and convulsions.

John P. Adams was my Presiding Elder the two years of my stay in Rochester. About the year 1825, Rev. John Lord originated the "four days' meeting," which was held all over New England for a couple of years, and was the means of the conversion of thousands of souls. There had been no general revival for a long time. We went through the first year and part of the second year without any special work, and began to feel that something must be done; and that something in those days was the "four days' meeting."

They had never had one there. I spoke to the brethren about holding one. They neither opposed nor encouraged it, seeming to think it would be a doubtful experiment. Not to be thus discouraged, I spoke to my excellent Presiding Elder about it, and he advised me to hold the meeting, notwithstanding the indifference of the brethren. When it was decided to hold it, the Church rallied nobly to sustain it. So the meeting was appointed to be held from Tuesday to Friday inclusive.

Invitations were sent to neighboring ministers, and Benjamin R. Hoyt, of Dover, Aaron N. Sargent of Great Falls, and others, responded. The meeting was conducted in regular camp-meeting style, devoting the whole of each day and evening to the work. The altar was nightly crowded with seekers, and more than a score of souls were converted and added to the Church as the immediate fruit of that first four-days' meeting in Rochester.

But this was not the extent of the good done. The revival spread all over the town, and the Church was much quickened. I was assisted in this work by a young preacher of the Maine Conference by the name of John W. Atkins. He was more zealous than I, and succeeded in some cases where I should have failed.

A staid farmer in middle life, not a Christian, invited us to hold a week-evening meeting at his house. Bro. Atkins asked him to kneel for prayers. He said he had no conviction. Bro. Atkins said to him, "You have rational conviction; your reason tells you [that] you ought to be a Christian, and to seek the Lord, feeling or no feeling." He yielded, bowed before the Lord and prayed for himself, and soon had feeling enough, and was soundly converted before he rose from his knees, and was many years a pillar in the Church.

Two events of considerable importance occurred during my term of service in Rochester, of which I knew nothing at the time, but which came to my knowledge many years after, and afforded a striking illustration of that truth of holy writ, "Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt see it after many days."

About the year 1852 I attended the dedication of a new church in Milford, Massachusetts. I there met for the first time, as I supposed, a gifted and promising young minister by the name of John Twambly. It subsequently appeared that we had met before, when he was a boy living on Salmon Falls Road, in Rochester, and that the meeting was a great blessing to him.

Being introduced to me he told me that he and his young brother had never heard a Methodist preacher, their father being a Congregationalist. Hearing that I was to preach at a neighboring house one evening, he and his brother attended the meeting and received good impressions that never wore off. He subsequently became a Methodist minister and his brother a member of the Congregationalist Church. He had never forgotten the text or the sermon, and said that the solemn and impressive manner in which the text was read and repeated affected him much. The text was Prov. 29:16 -- "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

Bro. Twambly, since the interview in Milford, has often referred in a very feeling manner to that, to him, ever memorable incident in his life. He spoke of it in a love-feast at Hamilton camp-meeting. He and I were on the platform with many other preachers, and when he spoke he referred to me as the first Methodist he ever heard preach, related the circumstances connected with it and repeated the text from which I preached, the solemn reading of which had so impressed his young heart. He is now (1870) stationed in Boston for the second time.

The other incident came to my knowledge in this way: Being engaged in soliciting subscribers for the "Ladies' Repository" in 1862, and calling on Dr. Cooke, the pastor in Cambridge, he gave me the names of several whom he supposed might subscribe. Calling on one of these ladies, she learning my name, asked if I preached in Rochester many years ago; and being told that I did, she said that when she was a young girl I visited her father's house, and after speaking to the other members of the family, I did not forget or pass her by, but went into the closet where she was washing dishes and I spoke to her so feelingly respecting her soul's salvation, that the good impression did not leave her until she sought and found the Lord, and now she had been a member of the Church many years. She said she thought that if I felt so much concern for her soul's salvation as to take so much pains to speak to her, there must be something in religion demanding her attention.

These, and some other similar events, together with the many souls the Lord has given me as seals to my ministry, have served to confirm my belief that I was called of God to preach the gospel.

During the two years in Rochester I preached in the village 135 times; in twelve other parts of the town, 79; Milton, New Hampshire, 11; Dover, 2 Wakefield, 4; Dover Upper Falls, 14; Strafford, 1; Farmington, 7; Bristol Camp Meeting, 1; Pembroke Camp Meeting, 1; Eliot, Maine, 5; Alford, Maine, 3; Lebanon, Maine, 1; Marblehead, Massachusetts, 1; Newmarket, New Hampshire, 1; Georgiaville, Rhode Island, 2; East Greenwich, Rhode Island, 2; North Kingstown, Rhode Island, 1; South Berwick, Maine, 3; Barrington, New Hampshire, 13; Kittery, Maine, 2; Somersmith, New Hampshire, 2; Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 2; -- in all, 295 times.

We left many very dear friends in Rochester, whose memory will ever be precious to us.

When I became a member of the New England Conference in 1822, it included within its limits the territory now (1870) covered by the six New England Conferences. In 1824, the Maine Conference was set off; and in 1829 New Hampshire, and Vermont, were set off as a separate Conference. My wife's relatives and mine resided within the limits of what would remain the New England Conference, and it was quite natural that we should wish to be set down on that side of the line. So, when the Presiding Elder came round the last time, I made my request accordingly. He said if I would stay within his district, I should have as good a station as Rochester; but if it was my deliberate wish to go, he would try to accommodate me.

This was the first and last request I ever made respecting my appointments, and it proved to be one of the great errors of my life. Rochester was within thirty miles of the New England Conference line, and I supposed I should not have to move more than 50 or 60 miles, but instead of that I was sent to Hebron Circuit, Connecticut, two hundred miles away, and it was four years before I had as good a station as I should have had on the Dover District.

What was to be done? All the money I possessed did not amount to \$20. There were no railroads in those days. As to hiring a team to transport my goods, it was out of the question. So after selling the heavy things, and packing what I supposed could be carried on my one-horse wagon, I started with my goods; but after proceeding twenty miles I found the load too heavy for

my horse, and was compelled to leave a part and return after it; so that going with the two loads and with my family, made more than a thousand miles travel.

The roads being very hilly, and walking up the hills to favor my horse, and the whole occupying more than a month, I was often so weary that it seemed sometimes as though I should drop down in the road before reaching my stopping place, and I felt the effects of it for months after. And when after an almost incredible amount of toil and fatigue, and wear and tear of the physical man, I reached the circuit, what did I find? Oh, how different from the poorest appointments of the present day! -- a large, rough circuit, with a great amount of labor and less than \$200 to support a family of five!

The stewards had provided no residence for the preacher's family, and the best I could get was miserably poor; and such as few would submit to occupy. But what could I do? Could I leave the work of God! It seemed worse than death to think of that; for I never saw the day during the years of my itinerancy when I could not from the heart adopt the sentiment of the apostle when he said: "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." My dear wife was of the same mind, and would rather suffer any privation or inconvenience than that I should leave the work. But it did seem to me that it was a burning shame, if not a sin, to put so good a woman, worthy of a palace, into such a poor place.

During the Conference year I preached in Haddam Neck, 20 times; Hebron Hill, 10; Hebron Green, 10; Chatham, 17; Chatham Quarry, 8; Salem, 2; East Hampton, 19; Haddam Landing, 8; Niantic, 5; Lynn, 3; South Factory, 2; Young Street, 6; East Haddam, 4; Millington, 15; Colchester, 11; Hebron Woods, 1; Marlboro, 4; East Hartford, 1; Middletown Camp Meeting, 1; Willington Camp Meeting, 1; Stone S. House, 4; Montville, 1; New Market, New Hampshire, 1; Georgiaville, Rhode Island, 1; -- in all 155 times.

In 1830, I was appointed to Willimantic Circuit, Connecticut. We were favored with a number of conversions. This year I had my first experience in begging money to pay a debt on the church edifice. I spent a Sabbath in New Haven; the stationed preacher invited me to preach for him, which I did. The next day, calling on some brethren whose names the pastor gave me, I collected some money. One brother said he would not give anything for the Church, but he heard my morning sermon and liked it, and would give me a dollar for that. I visited Boston, and called on Bro. John Gove, who gave something, and called with me on Bro. True, the father of Dr. C. K. True, of the New England Conference, who invited me to stop with him over the Sabbath.

I preached a part of the day for Bro. Bonney, at the Bromfield St. church. After supper, Bro. True handed me two bills, saying it was a trifle for my cause. To my surprise and delight it was two ten dollar bills, which seemed to me then a large sum in hand. I went to Lynn, and Bro. A. D. Merrill took me around among the members and helped me to collect some money.

I preached during the year in Mansfield, 44; Willimantic, 42; Boston, 3; E. Winsor, 1; Coventry, 4; Chatham, four-days meeting, 1; Sterling, 2; Stafford, 8; Willington 1; New Haven, 2; New Boston, 1; Norwich, 3; Georgiaville, 3; S. Wilbraham, 1; Boston, 2; -- in all, 117 times.

My appointment, June, 1831, was to Manchester Circuit, Connecticut. Orange Scott was my Presiding Elder this year, Ephraim Scott was my colleague. About the first of October there was a meeting of the preachers of the district; two or three put up at the same house with me. One evening the conversation turned on the privilege of the preacher to expect success in every place at all times, and in every sermon. We talked and prayed about it until I for one was fully baptized into that faith, and went from that meeting expecting to see sinners awakened under every sermon, and I was not disappointed.

Preaching in Scotland the second Sabbath in October, I gave the invitation for seekers to rise for prayer, and one rose, a thing that had not been seen there for years. In fact, the invitation had never before been given in the day-time. Preaching in Manchester the next Sunday, I gave the invitation at the close of the sermon in the afternoon, when two stood up in that large congregation of seven hundred and asked the prayers of the people of God.

Such a scene had never been looked upon there before. I spent the next Sabbath in Centerville, Rhode Island; preached morning, afternoon and evening. At the close of the sermon in the evening, I went down into the altar and invited seekers to come forward. There had been no revival there for years, and I do not suppose a single member of the church expected to see any one respond; but thank God one came -- a middle-aged lady; an humble, penitent and earnest seeker, who found the Saviour before the meeting closed, and died a few years after in triumphant faith.

During this Conference year, I preached in Manchester Center 25 times; North Village, 9; Eastbury, 15; S. Glastonbury, 25; Scotland, 23; Hodgetown, 7; Manchester East, 1; Manchester South, 3; Birch Mountain, 2; Eastbury North, 5; Nipsic, 8; Mulcton Hill, 9; Hill Town, 6; Salem Camp Meeting, 1; Chatham, 1; North Street, 5; Keevey Street, 4; Sterling, 2; Gleason School House, 1; Warwick, 2; Wearsfield, 3; E. Hampton, 2; Centerville, Rhode Island, 4; East Greenwich, 2; -- in all, 166 times.

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06 -- SOUTH GLASTONBURY, CONNECTICUT -- EDGARTOWN -- PROVINCETOWN -- NEWBURY -- SUPERANNUATED

June, 1832, I was appointed to South Glastonbury Circuit, which included all of Manchester Circuit except Manchester, that being set off as a station. Philo Hawks was my colleague. Having occupied the parsonage in South Glastonbury the previous year, we did not have to move.

This was in some respects an eventful year. One event of precious memory, was a visit from Dr. [Wilbur] Fisk, President of Wesleyan University. There was at that time a quite general awakening upon the subject of temperance ... Dr. Fisk was a powerful advocate for temperance, and the great leader of the reform in our church. I invited him to come and spend Fast-day and the following Sabbath with me, and lecture on temperance. He kindly and cheerfully accepted the invitation, and we had the never-to-be-forgotten pleasure of entertaining that great and good man at the parsonage. He preached for me Fast-day, lectured in the evening at Eastbury, preached again in South Glastonbury Sunday afternoon, and lectured in the evening.

But the most important event of this ever-memorable year, was the quickening and renewing baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the blessed results following it, which I received in my own soul. I had years before experienced the blessing of entire sanctification, but at that time was not in the enjoyment of it, and while for the sake of His own cause God had enabled me to preach with considerable liberty, yet I saw but little fruit, either in the quickening of believers or the conversion of sinners, and I felt a painful consciousness of my leanness of soul and, consequent unfitness for my work. In this state of mind I attended Hebron Camp-meeting with the full determination not to leave the ground without that baptism which I so much needed to prepare me to successfully preach a full salvation and lead the church on to higher ground, and bring sinners to Christ.

In a prayer meeting in a tent where the people of God were earnestly seeking the fullness, the Lord restored to me the joy of the great salvation with a clear evidence of the same. I rejoiced in the full possession of this rich experience without one moment's intermission. I went to my work with greatly increased love to God and the souls of men, and saw immediate and glorious fruit in the conversion of sinners and full salvation of believers. Holiness was the blessed theme in thought, in conversation, in prayer, in family visits, in the closet, in prayer and class meetings, and in the pulpit.

Among those whom I was made the instrument of leading into this boundless, bottomless ocean of love, was a young local preacher by the name of Orin Howard, a student in Yale College. This gave me great joy; believing as I did that no man was fully qualified to preach the gospel without this full baptism.

A glorious revival broke out immediately. Among the converts was a young married lady whose conversion was clear and triumphant. At the close of the service one Sunday afternoon, my wife sang that hymn beginning, "Come, humble sinner, &c. Mrs. Williams came from the further end of the house, the whole length of the aisle, shouting the praise of God for His pardoning mercy. Whether she was converted under my sermon or my wife's singing, I do not know; but the Lord will know where to put the stars.

During our two years stay in S. Glastonbury we received many kindnesses from that dear people. One of our most dearly cherished friends was Mrs. Dean, the mother of Rev. Sidney Dean of the Providence Conference. Her thoughtful kindness towards us was the more remarkable because she was a member of a sister church. A single instance deserves record.

One day a carriage drove up to the door of the parsonage about our dinner hour, and we had unexpected company of distinguished friends from New York. Mrs. Dean's house was in sight of the parsonage, and she saw the three or four visitors get out of the carriage. In a few minutes one of her boys came with a basket containing boiled peas, roast lamb, smoking hot, with cake and other good things, evidently prepared for her own family dinner. She well understood the sad dilemma that the pastor's wife would be likely to be in under such circumstances, and so took the dinner from her own table for the relief of her friend, and the heart of that friend will never cease to remember and bless her for it. South Glastonbury was my last circuit, my appointments after this being stations.

I preached this year in S. Glastonbury, 29 times; Scotland, 15; Warwick, 12; Eastbury, 5; Hill Town, 6; Stafford, 4; Eastbury North, 5; Bolton, 1; Toland, 2; Hodge Town, 4; Middle District, 1; South District, 1; House Street, 2; Nipsic, 3; Mattison Hill, 5; Chatham, 3; Bolton, 2; Weymouth, Massachusetts, 1; Springfield, 2; Centerville, Rhode Island, 1; -- in all, 104 times.

The Conference this year (1833), held its session in Boston. On Monday I was called out of the Conference room and met at the door a messenger, who had been sent with the sad tidings of the death of our dear little Rebekah, two years old. I went into the Conference and asked leave of absence. Some objection being made, I told them my child was dead, and they immediately voted me leave.

Dr. Fisk came to me, and taking me affectionately by the hand and with words of tenderest sympathy that sank deep into my bleeding heart, asked if it was the little one he held upon his knees when he visited us in S. Glastonbury. I told him it was. My Presiding Elder took me into the Bishop's room, and gave me my appointment, and then I went on my sorrowful journey to mingle my tears with those of the bereaved mother over the grave of another of those precious babes that had been lent us for a brief period, and was then taken from our fond embrace to the bosom of the loving Saviour, beyond the reach of sorrow, pain and death.

My appointment was to Edgartown, and Daniel Webb was my Presiding Elder. This was a very pleasant year. Never had we been received by a people with more hearty cordiality, and this continued through the year. But then came my first trial respecting my appointments. The Presiding Elder told me after the last Quarterly Conference that the request for me to stay another year, was nearly unanimous. They had given us a good support, and added a donation of \$100, which enabled me to go to the Conference at Webster, dressed in a new suit.

On my way, I called on Bro. Paine, in Fairhaven. Sister Paine asked me if I expected to be re-appointed to Edgartown. I told her I did. She saw that I was feeling very well about it, and she cautioned me against being too sanguine. Whether she had received some intimation of the intrigue that was going on for my removal, or had learned caution from experience, I knew not. However, I went to Conference in high spirits. The Presiding Elder told me on my arrival that the Bishop and counsel had held their first meeting, and that my name was down for Edgartown.

The next day all this was suddenly changed. Bro. Webb told me a paper had been sent into the cabinet, signed by seven members of the church, requesting my removal and the appointment of one who some ten years before had been stationed there. Bro. Webb was indignant, and said Bishop Hedding remarked when the paper was read, he wished those old town people knew their own minds.

Bro. Webb asked me what I would like to do; said I should go back to Edgartown if I wished. I replied that I would not. He then said I should have a better place, and fulfilled the promise. The church and congregation, with the exception of three individuals, desired and expected my return, and were much displeased with the turn things had taken. The three brethren who desired my removal had been plotting secretly, advised by the preacher who hoped to be my successor, most of the year, and nothing was known of it until I had left for Conference.

Then this same preacher came to help the three brethren to carry out the underhanded scheme which they supposed would give their favorite my place. To keep my wife in the dark and not let her know that he was guilty of so mean an act, he called at the parsonage and congratulated her on the prospect of our staying another year; told her he had been round among the people, and found a very general satisfaction with the preacher and his wife, and they expected we should be with them another year.

While this would-be Edgartown preacher was thus addressing honeyed words to my wife, the dissatisfied brethren were going through the church to get as many names as possible, and after all the urging and misrepresentation resorted to, they got only four. They said, "We expected Bro. Risley back." The plotters told them it was certain I should not return, and, "as you cannot have him, would you not like to have Bro. _____? Thus, by fraud, they seemingly carried their point; but in the end it turned out quite different from their wishes. They failed to get the man they wanted; the good Bishop having no disposition to reward them for treachery, sent them a very different man from the one they chose.

I preached this year in Edgartown, 122 times; Holmes Hole, 10; Chilmark, 5; Nantucket, 2; Centerville, Rhode Island, 1; -- in all, 140 times.

In June, 1834, I was stationed in Provincetown. This was one of the oldest and strongest churches in the Conference. It was a village of two thousand inhabitants. The sand hills came within a few rods of the shore, so that the village was two miles long and very narrow. There were no regular streets, and the small one-story houses stood in all positions, without order or regularity, and looked as though they might have dropped down from the clouds and stood where they happened to fall.

There was but one horse and wagon in the village. All transportation of heavy articles was by hand-carts and harrows. There were no manufactured roads, and all locomotion was on foot, wading through sand over shoe-tops; and though the harbor is one of the best in the country, there were no wharves. When passengers came by water the vessel came as near the shore as the depth of water would admit; they were then put into the long boat, that going still nearer, but not reaching the shore; the women and children were carried to dry land in the arms of the men. My family was thus landed, and I am almost ashamed to confess that they took me, their pastor, ashore in same way, not willing that he should go to the parsonage with wet feet.

The Methodist being the only evangelical church in the place, our congregation was large; comprising more than half the families of the village. A large proportion of the congregation was made up of young men, and when they returned from their fishing voyages they filled the galleries. Nearly all the marriages occurred in November, after they had sold their fish. On one evening I was summoned to officiate at two weddings. One "down along shore, and the other, up along shore." The weddings during this marrying month averaged about five a week. There were a number of conversions that year.

During the Conference year I preached in Provincetown, 76 times; N. Truro, 2; Wellfleet, 2; Church St., Boston, 1; -- in all, 83 times.

In June, 1835, the Conference held its session in Lynn. I was stationed in Newbury. This was part of the then village of Newburyport; it is now a part of the city. Rev. B. Otheman was the Presiding Elder. There was no parsonage, and no suitable house provided for the preacher's family, so we boarded with Bro. Shuff a few weeks, our goods the while remaining unpacked in his barn.

I found a good house just over the line in Newburyport that I could have at a rent of \$80 a year. But the stewards had two objections to it; one was, that it was a better house than they wanted their preacher to occupy; or in other words, they were unwilling to pay more than \$30 a year for a parsonage. The other objection was that it was in Newburyport. There existed a jealousy between the two sections.

After suffering some time the inconvenience of living without a home, and the goods not yet out of the boxes, I advised with Bro. Sanborn, of Newburyport, as to what I had best do. He advised me to take the house, and we moved in. The official board never forgave me for living in so good a house, and that house in Newburyport; until finding that they would not pay salary enough to enable me to pay the rent, and for the sake of peace, I moved into a poor, inconvenient house, in Newbury.

But this did not end the trouble. They did not pay enough to support us in the cheaper house, and I was running in debt for part of the bread we ate. About the middle of the year I told the stewards I could not get along with less than \$400 for the year. I had received \$500 at Edgartown and \$600 at Provincetown, and could save nothing out of that, and now with rigid economy and some rather painful deprivations \$400 would barely serve to keep soul and body together, and then it did not seem right to go on running in debt without the possibility of paying.

After consulting together, they sent one of their number to tell me that they could not raise that amount. The messenger was unskillful and did his work clumsily; but whether or not the board intended that he should give me to understand that unless I could get along with less than \$400 I might leave, I do not know, but it seemed to me they did; and I hastily, and as I now think, unwisely, without taking time for the prayerful consideration which so weighty a question demanded, and without consultation with my Presiding Elder, told the brother that he might report to the board that I would not preach there any more. I would supply the pulpit by exchanges until the Presiding Elder came round and then resign the charge.

The Presiding Elder soon heard of the difficulty and wrote me a very good letter, telling me that I was appointed to the charge by the authorities of the church, and that I must stand to my post, and not appear to be disconcerted, though I had been ever so much wronged, and when he should come he thought the matter might be adjusted. But I had committed myself too far to go back. The Presiding Elder gave me another field of labor in Topsfield.

Our troubles did not come single. Our dear babe was taken sick and died, and we left the precious remains in Newbury. We moved to Topsfield in the middle of a very cold winter: my health had been poor some time, and at the next Conference I received a superannuated relation, which I held four years.

June, 1835, to April, 1836, I preached in Newbury, 31 times; Newburyport, 5; Poor House, 3; Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Conference, 1; Chester Camp Meeting 1; Ipswich, 2; Rochester, New Hampshire, 2; Barrington, New Hampshire, 1; Salisbury, 4; West Newbury, 3; Topsfield, 28; -- in all, 81 times.

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07 -- NEW WORK -- MISSION WORK

We moved from Topsfield to Lynn, and opened a boarding house. After a trial of a few months, finding it did not pay, we gave it up. Next I tried working at my trade, harness making; but found my health insufficient and abandoned it. From my first going to Lynn I was invited to preach nearly every Sabbath. Rev. J. Horton requested me to preach for him in the Common St. Church. I told him I was broken down in health, and my clothes were not fit to go into his grand pulpit. He would not listen to any objections and I yielded. After preaching nearly every Sabbath, for five or six months, and finding that I could not work at my trade Monday, after preaching Sunday, and being almost entirely dependent upon my daily labor for the support of my family, I thought it could not be my duty to preach.

After coming to this conclusion, Father Merritt, stationed at Wood End, called on me one Saturday and asked me to preach for him the next day. He was in advanced age and in feeble health, and I had preached for him several times before. But now I reluctantly refused his request. He seemed to feel grieved, and I felt as bad as he did. Sunday morning while whittling some sticks to kindle my fire, I cut my thumb so bad that I made no more harness for two weeks; I have never refused to preach since then.

In the spring of 1837, we moved to Beverly, where there were a few Methodists, who desired me to serve them, and I preached in the Town Hall. We were now in very straightened circumstances; but God in his kind providence opened a way for me to earn a support for my family. Being one day in the office of Zion's Herald, the publisher asked me if I would take an agency to procure subscribers for that paper. I told him I had no gift for such work, and did not think I should succeed if I undertook it. He said he believed I could do it, and urged me to try, and I finally consented.

I went to Hingham and several towns in that vicinity, and succeeded better than I had expected. I went to Lowell, and in two weeks obtained one hundred subscribers. Most of the members were working in the mills, and I could not have access to them in the daytime, and I was puzzled to know how I could get at them. Considering the matter, and feeling that I must see them and get them to take the paper, I hit upon a plan, which as far as I know was original. I spent a part of the day among the boarding houses, and through the kindness of the boarding mistress, got a list of the names of Methodists. In the evening I called and requested to see them. Quite a number gave their names each evening. By this time I felt sure that I could get subscribers for Zion's Herald and I enjoyed the work, for while it yielded a support, the circulation of so good a paper was a means of doing good.

But it was no child's play; it cost me real, earnest work to accomplish it. I did not content myself with getting the preacher to introduce me to his people in a prayer meeting, and receiving the names of two or three and then leaving, thinking that nothing could be accomplished there; but I got the names of all the members, and called on each personally. I spent a year in this work, traveling extensively in most of the New England States. In Providence I got fifty subscribers, and in New Bedford, sixty.

From May 1836 to September 1840, I preached in Fall River, twice; Lynn Common, 4 times South Street, 2; Wood End; Malden, 1; New Market, 1; Holmes Hole, 1; Edgartown, 1; S. Danvers, 16; Beverly, 32; Cochesset, 2; Needham, 2; Lowell, 2; Andover, 1; Gloucester, 2; Sandy Bay, 2; Billerica, 2; Salem, 3; Duxbury, 1; Lunenburg; 4; Northfield, 2; Williamsburg, 2; Boston, 2; Sudbury, 2; Southbridge, 2; Fitchburg, 12; Saxonville, 1; Westboro, 1; Lippit, 2; Coventry, 1; E. Greenwich, 2; Natick, 2; Woonsocket, 2; Pawtucket, 5; Georgiaville, 1; Olneyville, 1; Little Compton, 1; Aponogue, 2; Compton, 2; Providence, 2; Great Falls, 2; Rochester, 2; Enfield, 2; Eastbury, 1; Nipsic, 11; Norwich, 2; Uncasville, 2; Greenville, 2; Plainfield, 3; Amsterdam, New York, 2; Troy, New York, 2; -- in all, 150 times.

After holding my connection with the New England Conference eighteen years, from 1822 to 1840, I served it by an act which for the last forty years I have bitterly regretted, regarding it as the great error of my life. This act was my withdrawal from the M. E. Church. I thought I had sufficient provocation; I had held the superannuated relation four years, and now it was changed to supernumerary. My family was large, and I needed a salary of \$400 to give them a comfortable support. Three hundred was the least I could get along with without great embarrassment, and I told my Presiding Elder so.

When my appointment was read off it was to a place where there was no reasonable prospect of my receiving more than \$200. But it would have been better to have gone to the charge and make the best of it for one year; and if I had gone with a heart burdened with love for sinners and an intense longing to save them, and with the faith that expects success, I might have seen it so improved as to desire a re-appointment. This was the only instance in which in a matter of great importance I went contrary to the advice of my excellent wife, and it was the greatest mistake I ever made.

From September, 1840, to September, 1841, I preached ... in Smithfield, Rhode Island -- in Lime Rock, 40 times; Albion, 57; [plus] funerals, 2; Cumberland Hill, 4; Lonsdale, 2; Mansville, 1; -- in all, 106 times.

From September, 1841 to May 1848, we resided in Providence. I preached in Fountain St., 11 times; N. Main St., 7; Bethel, 1; Roger Williams, 1; Pawtucket St., 2; Central Falls, 15; Spragueville, 5; Symonsville, 3; Pawtucket, 2; Olneyville, 2; Haddam, Connecticut, 2; East Hartford, Connecticut, 1; Three Rivers, Massachusetts, 2; Princeton, 1; Chicopee, 1; Dodgeville, 5; -- in all 63 times.

In May, 1848, we moved to Augusta, Maine I preached in Crague's Schoolhouse, 4 times Rockwood's Schoolhouse, 2; [plus] 1 funeral; Sidney, 2; in all, 9 times.

In 1842, I united with the Wesleyans. My connection with that Church was, in general, pleasant; but it was not the dear old Church home, and I soon returned to the Methodist Episcopal Church. While residing in Augusta, I felt a longing for the dear old itinerant work in which I spent my youth and early manhood so happily. This longing was so intense, that it occupied my thoughts by day and my dreams by night; and was in my heart and on my lips when bowed in the closet, and around the family altar, and the constant cry of my soul was, "Lord, help me! Lord, open some door for me again to labor in the itinerant field!"

This prayer was soon answered, and in the good Providence of God a field of labor was assigned me. Taking up Zion's Herald, one day, I read a communication from Rev. H. Moulton, who six months before had been stationed in New England Village, Massachusetts, saying he was going to leave, and there would be an opening for some unemployed preacher. I went immediately to Worcester, and saw Rev. J. Hascall, Presiding Elder, and he appointed me to the charge. The church here was embarrassed with a debt on the chapel, and I begged \$1200 for them; and the debt, with the exception of a few hundred dollars, was paid.

During the twenty months, from October, 1848, to May, 1850, I preached in New England Village, 128 times; Worcester, 3; Milbury, 4; Boylston, 2; Leicester, 2; Blackstone, 2; Farnumsville, 2; E. Hartford, 1.

In June, 1850, we moved to Natick, Massachusetts. From June, 1850, to 1858, I preached in Natick, 10 times; Holliston, 4; Rockbottom, 2; East Cambridge, 1; Charlestown, 1; Westboro, 1.

In 1858, we again moved to Providence. Bro. Titus, Presiding Elder of Providence District, appointed me to the charge of the South (now St. Paul's) Church. There were a number converted. At a later day he gave me the charge of the Church in Pascoag, I found it much divided: two brethren had not spoken to each other for a long time. I had the happiness to see this breach closed. I saw that this estrangement stood in the way of success in the work of the Lord, and it caused me great anxiety.

At a communion service, before proceeding to administer the Lord's supper, I expressed my solicitude respecting it, and with a feeling that brought tears in my eyes, implored them before coming to the table, in memory of that Saviour whose wonderful love was so great as to make Him willing to die for us, and concerning whom it was said, "If He so loved us, we ought also to love one another"; and who replied in answer to the inquiry, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive? "Till seven times? I say, not till seven times, but until seventy times seven"; -- that they would now forgive and love one another. They instantly stood before the altar with clasped hands. It was an affecting scene, that filled many eyes with tears of joy.

From 1858, to 1862, I preached in South Providence, 18; Pascoag, 13; Allenville, 3; Providence Bethel, 1; Sandwich, Massachusetts, 1; Provinctown, 3; Truro, 1; Cobasset, 1; N. Bridgewater, 1; -- in all, 43 times.

In 1862, we moved to Boston. From February, 1862, to December, 1863, I preached in Boston, Hanover St., 3 times; Revere St., 1; East Boston, 3; Newburyport., 4; Jamaica Plain, 8;

Cambridge, 1; W. Roxbury, 1; Weston, 3; Topsfield, 4; Stoneham, 6; Woburn, 3; Georgiaville, Rhode Island, 1; -- in all, 38 times.

In 1863, I visited some relatives in New York, who were members of a Presbyterian church. They told me they paid their pastor \$5,000 a year and supported a mission operated in a chapel larger than their church edifice; that the mission Sunday School was one of the largest in the city; numbering 700; and that they paid the missionary, \$1,500 a year. It seemed to me that something like this ought to be done by every church, to save the masses in cities; and I returned with my heart and head full of this impression.

I reflected that a very large proportion of the people are outside of, and are not reached by the churches. The regular pastors have their hands full within, and cannot go outside of their own congregations; so that when every pastor in the city has done his whole duty, -- looked well and faithfully after the spiritual interests of the families of his congregation, -- full half of all the people are left out, unprovided and uncared for. And these tens of thousands thus neglected are generally the poor, who are virtually shut out of the house of God by having a tax imposed upon all the seats, in the form of pew rent, which they are not able to pay; so that supposing they had the disposition to enter these houses of worship, it would be impossible for them to do so.

These neglected ones will not come to us; we must go to them; must go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in. There are some, -- the sick, mothers confined by the care of infants, who cannot come to the chapel. The messenger of good tidings must carry the gospel to the homes of the poor, and tell the story of the cross to those who cannot, and to those who will not, come to us in the house of God. The work of the missionary is equally necessary and equally important as that of the pastor of a church; and if it requires the labors of one hundred pastors in Boston, to look after the half of the people gathered in their congregations, then there should be a hundred missionaries to care for the other half of the people. But there is not more than one-third of that number employed by all denominations; and the Methodists have not one in the field.

Taking this view of the situation, it seemed to me that such a work would be pleasing to that Jesus, the proof of whose Messiahship rested partly upon the fact that He preached the gospel to the poor, and that it would be peculiarly fitting that a minister of that denomination whose highest glory was that they followed that illustrious example, should engage in this work; and I longed and prayed that a door might be opened for me to enter upon it, and my mind was deeply impressed with the conviction that it would be my duty to do so, if the Lord should see fit to open my way.

But I could not see how it was going to be brought about. I had no thought that I could be a missionary in any other way, than to be employed by some society. I had no hope in this direction from my own church, for two reasons: one that I was not now a member of the Conference, and the other, that I was no longer a young man. However, the impression followed me day and night for months, and I made it a subject of earnest prayer, and advised respecting it with ministers and members of different denominations.

I was at this time a member of Tremont street Church. I consulted with Bro. Studley, the pastor; Dr. Webb, of the Congregational Church, Drs. Lothrop and Robbins, Rev. Messrs. Tilden and Cruft, and Mr. Waterston, and others. Dr. Lothrop gave me hearty God-speed; said more than half of the missionaries employed by the society of which he was an officer, were Methodist local preachers, and he thought they were better adapted for such work than any others, and he would gladly employ me should an opening occur.

The venerable Robert Waterston, who had been a Scotch Presbyterian, gave me much encouragement. Rev. Tilden, after hearing the story of my feelings and impressions respecting the mission work, said to me, "If I were situated as you are and felt as you do, I would not wait to be employed by a society, I would go to work, and if it is seen that you are doing good you will be sustained."

These words made a deep and lasting impression upon my mind. They suggested a course of action, entirely new to me. I paused and hesitated. I did not wish to pursue a course that might be considered irregular or unauthorized. Here was a dilemma. My most serious convictions led me to believe that it was my duty to labor as a missionary among the poor in Boston. God had called and the church had authorized me to preach the gospel, and why should I hesitate if the Divine Master should see fit to open a way for me, even if that way should not be in the old beaten track, but a way which I had not previously known.

It appeared to me that the great question to be settled was, whether it was God's way, and the course in which I should have His approving smiles. Not being provided with work by the Church, it seemed to me that I was at liberty, yea, more, -- that it was a solemn duty which I could not neglect without guilt, to enter any door which a kind Providence might open to me, and I resolved that I would wait and pray, and enter any field that the Lord of the harvest might prepare for me.

I spent the month of December, 1868, in planning and preparing for the work. On the first day of January, 1864, I commenced visiting from house to house, and continued it to the end of the month. Being a Methodist preacher, it might be supposed that I would do my work methodically. This was my method of operation:

Going into a street, I called at every door, inquired for every family, and when I found a family not connected with any church, and no pastor to look after their spiritual interests, or a child not connected with any Sunday School, I took the name and number of the house in my memorandum. After going through the month in this way, calling on more than seven hundred families, and figuring up the result, I found I had on my visiting directory, the names and residences of 224 Protestant families, and some seventy or eighty children who had not been reached by the churches. I received encouragement to go on from various quarters. Rev. Mr. Cruft has been a fast friend from the beginning, giving good counsel and kind words of cheer. My pastor, Bro. Studley, encouraged and assisted me by wise suggestions respecting the proper organization of the work.

Up to this time, the important question as to how the mission was to be supported had not been answered; but I was trying to trust in the Lord that in some way it would be done. The idea suggested by Rev. Tilden, of engaging in the work without the certainty of support, was new to me;

and at first thought struck me unfavorably, and especially when the only method of raising funds which the friends of the mission could offer, was by voluntary subscriptions to be collected by the missionary.

As, however, there did not seem to be any other way for me to carry out my conviction of duty, I resolved to go forward. Up to February 1, I had received no pecuniary compensation; but now those brethren who had encouraged me to enter the work said it was time to see whether or not I was to be sustained. They did not require me to beg the money indiscriminately as preachers sometimes do for church purposes, but gave me the names of friends of missions. I hesitated, felt a shrinking from this mode of operations. But then it occurred to me that in one of our principal stations, the pastor was expected to collect the parish taxes in order to save the percentage that would otherwise be paid a collector; and that when I was a traveling preacher, the stewards expected the pastor to do most of the begging, and that he almost invariably had more or less to do with collecting the funds out of which his salary was paid.

Going round with the list of names given me, I met in almost every case a favorable response; and in many instances, a cordiality and heartiness of approval which deeply affected me, and sometimes drew tears from my eyes. One gentleman to whom I apologized for personally collecting the funds, said, I had the hardest part of the work; it was easier for them to give the money than it would be to do the work I was doing. Several told me if I got into a strait for money before the end of the year, I must come again, and I should be welcomed twice every year if I found it necessary. One said, "You are doing a good work, and I will back you up. Several gave me to understand that they considered when they made me their almoner to distribute their charity among the deserving poor for their temporal and spiritual good, that they and not I were the party laid under obligation.

Dr. Dio Lewis sent me an invitation with a free pass, to visit his famous school for young ladies in Lexington. Responding to his kind invitation, he seated me beside him at dinner, and questioned me respecting the work I was doing. I related to him my plan of operations, and ventured to say that I sometimes entertained the hope that I was doing as much good as the regular pastors. In reply he expressed his hearty approval in language so strong that I dare not repeat it; but he said he thought I was doing much more good than they.

A wealthy lady residing on Beacon Hill, having seen my annual report, sent me ten dollars in a note, saying she desired to aid the work. The next year she made more particular inquiries respecting the mission, and came personally in her carriage and gave ten dollars, with kind words of cheer. Thus these noble men and women of wealth of all denominations, not only gave their money freely, but accompanied their gifts with such delicacy of manner, and words of hearty approval as made me feel that their kindly expressed interest in the work was as much to be prized as the money they contributed.

The subsequent history of the mission will reveal some of the opposition and trials which I encountered, and how a kind and wise Providence saw that I should need such encouragement to support me under them. Nor was my work unauthorized, for I had not only the authority conferred at my ordination, when the Bishop said: "Take thou authority to read the word of God and preach

the same;" but the Tremont street Church official board gave me the following endorsement and commendation:

"At a meeting of the Official Board of the Tremont St. M. E. Church, February 6, 1864, it was voted, That we approve the endeavors of Rev. J. E. Risley, to organize a Christian Mission in the southerly portion of Ward Eleven, and recommend him and his work to the patronage to the friends of morality and religion in his vicinity.

"Harum Merrill, Secretary.

"W. S. Studley, Pastor."

Pliny Nickerson headed the subscription with \$40 a year. About the middle of February, I began work in a large schoolroom on Washington street. We had Sunday School in the morning, beginning with forty scholars; and preaching in the afternoon and evening. The first afternoon and evening, Rev. J. A. M. Chapman preached for me to a crowd. The first of March, we moved into a hall on Concord street where a Sunday School numbering 170 was gathered.

God owned this work by the outpouring of His Spirit, and we were permitted to rejoice over the conversion of sinners. I had the sympathy and aid of nearly all the preachers in the city. Nearly all the stationed preachers of the city, and others, preached for me at different times: Dr. Cook, Revs. brethren Chapman, Haven, Studley, Dadmun, Tupper, and others.

July 1, 1865, I turned over the chapel work in Concord street, to others who had more money than I could command to carry it on, and spent the time until November, in purely mission work in the families of the poor. I then began to look about for an opening in some destitute neighborhood, where I might start another Sunday School and meeting. I found such a station in East street.

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08 -- CONCLUSION

We began operations the second time on the Point, in a hall. This place soon became too strait for us, and we rented a carpenter shop on East street, and laid out a few hundred dollars to put it in decent condition. This, our new mission chapel, was dedicated with very interesting services. The sermon was by Dr. True, and Revs. brethren Wood, Tupper, and Otheman, participated. The Lord still smiled upon us. The second Sunday night several rose for prayers, and two were converted. The good work went on until thirty were converted and reclaimed, and formed into a class; and a Sunday School gathered, numbering 150.

I was very happy in this work, and ready to tell the good news to every friend I met. My brethren congratulated me on my success. One brother said he thought I was doing my best work in my old age. In 1867, there was a precious revival in the Sunday School. One teacher and a number of scholars were converted, and formed the second class.

Of the eight years of my mission work, six were spent in chapel work, and all, in carrying bread and the gospel to the homes of the poor. Perhaps no part of the work is more important or beneficial than the last named. I found hundreds of families who had no church home, and no pastor to visit them, and scores of persons who had been members of churches in other places, but coming to Boston among strangers, they had not joined here, and were living without church privileges; and some of these were Methodists.

Among these hundreds of families has been a large part of my work. I have been their pastor and minister; have visited them in sickness and affliction, married them, baptized their children, relieved their wants, in seasons of destitution and distress, buried their dead, and carried to their homes that precious gospel of good tidings of mercy and salvation which they could not, by reason of sickness, or would not for want of a disposition, go to the church to hear.

There is an erroneous supposition entertained by many, respecting the necessity and importance of this kind of work among the poor in cities. The Congregationalists have 20 missionaries in the field in this city. They have districted the whole territory; call their society the City Missionary Society and seem to think that they are doing about all the work that needs to be done. They are doing a great and noble work, and are ahead of all other denominations in the amount of work performed, but they cannot do it all. There is the Provident Association, the Howard Benevolent Society, and other charitable associations. Each society seems to think they can reach every case. My experience has taught me that this is a mistake; that all the agencies employed are needed, and more. I have met many cases which have served to confirm me in this view. I will mention a few:

I was met one day by a friend, who asked me if I had heard of the sickness of Mr. _____. I called at the house; the first words of the sick man were, "My family will starve!" I assured him that his family should not starve nor suffer. I found he was a sober and industrious man, who took good care of his family when in health, but had nothing laid by for a wet day, and so being suddenly struck down by sickness, his family, consisting of a wife in poor health, and four young children, were in a state of destitution, and were in want of immediate relief. The City Missionary Society did not meet the case. The Provident Society could not meet the case. They do not go to the poor, but wait for the poor to go to them. I went with my basket to provision stores and got it well filled; spoke to neighbors and friends of the case; money and provisions were sent in, and they were made comfortable, until he was well.

Going my rounds one of the coldest winter days, I found a family who were trying to keep house with a little, poor, hired furniture. Failing to pay the rent, every article of furniture, including the stove and the bed, had been taken away by the cruel owner, and they had lain upon the floor the night before, without sufficient bedding to keep them from suffering. Some poor neighbors had loaned them an old stove, but they had no fuel to put into it. Before I slept that night I carried them a bedstead, chairs, table, fuel, bed clothes, and provisions, and had the pleasure of seeing with my own eyes, and feeling the warmth of, a fire, and saw them comfortable.

Visiting from house to house one day, I found a family of husband, wife, and three little children. Here I found destitution, not of food for the body, but of the bread of life. They were not in the enjoyment of experimental religion, and no minister had darkened their door for years. The

woman acknowledged her need of a Saviour. I asked her if the children had been baptized. She said no; and she supposed they could not be because the parents were not members of the church. It was their desire to have them baptized, and I appointed an hour the next Sunday to administer baptism. They honored me by giving the babe my name. When I called with the certificates I inquired of the mother about her religions state, and she said, "Husband and I have been talking it over, and I said to him, If you will seek the Lord I will; and he promised me he would."

During the eight years of my mission work I preached in Concord street Mission, 26 times; Warren St. Chapel, 1; Hanover St. Chapel, 2; Christian, 1; Washington Village, 1; City Hospital, 11; East Street, 76; Washington House, 3; Lenox St. Chapel, 5; Morgan Chapel, 1; Revere St., 5; N. Russell St., 1; Soldiers' Home, 3; Washington St. Church, 8; Washington St. Mission, 5; Dorchester St. Church, 1; Lyndon, Vermont, 1; Salem, Massachusetts, 4; Newtonville, 2; Brighton, 1; Brookline, 2; Cochituate, 4; East Somerville, 5; Charlestown Mission, 1; Somerville, 1; Georgiaville, Rhode Island, 2; South Providence, 1; in all, 174 times.

I gathered more than five hundred children into three mission Sunday Schools; made two thousand visits to families not connected with any church; baptized 76 children, and 23 adults; administered the Lord's Supper 91 times, held 372 prayer meetings; officiated at 23 funerals, and married 22 couples.

There has been collected for the support of the mission, \$10,215.00, from 476 persons ... 29 have died during the eight years: Edward Everett, Lee Claflin, C. C. Chadwick, W. Cumston, Rev. C. Cleaveland, R. Cummings, J. A. Dix, G. Eldridge, S. Fairbanks, S. Piper, R. Fletcher, J. A. Goddard, Mrs. H. Grew, A. Hurd, F. C. Head, S. Johnson, C. G. Loring, W. Ropes, Mrs. A. Lawrence, G. W. Messenger, J. Savage, J. M. Newell, D. N. Spooner, E. C. Stanwood, Mrs. G. H. Shaw, Col. Spooner, R. Waterston, Dr. Bellows, and C. B. Paine.

I have the autographs of the 476 patrons of the mission, and prize them as a rich treasure. Of the \$10,215.00 collected for the support of the mission, \$2,890.00 has been expended for the relief of the suffering poor; \$1,425.00 for rent, moving, repairing and fitting up of chapel, fuel, light, books for Sunday School, and \$5,900.00 for salary.

These eight years have been among the happiest, and I think, the most successful of my Christian ministry, I wish to record my fervent gratitude to God for the openings of His Providence, and the aid of His Spirit, and the supports of Divine grace, without which, no good could have been accomplished; and my grateful appreciation, of the kindness, generous aid, and hearty sympathy of the noble men and women who have stood by me, cheered me on, and staid up my hands in the work. May heaven's richest blessings be ever theirs to enjoy.

Coming to the end of a half century of my ministry, and casting a look back over those years, I see much to regret, but much to praise the Lord for. I praise Him that He put so great honor on me as to call me to the gospel ministry, and for the support and success which He has given me. I have always felt my unworthiness and unfitness for the work, and sorrow and shame before God for the imperfections and poverty of my work. I have never entered the pulpit without trembling with a sense of personal weakness and responsibility. But He has seen fit to own and bless my feeble labors; makes me the humble instrument of saving souls. I have traveled some of the largest

and poorest circuits; and have had as many of the better stations as I deserved. I have suffered some privations and hardships. I have suffered considerable embarrassment on account of inadequate support, and find myself now, at the age of threescore and ten, in poor health and without a dollar laid by for a wet day. But God has given me hundreds of spiritual children, many of whom have died well, and passed away to the better land, and others are on the way.

During the half century from 1821 to 1872, I preached 4,566 sermons in 295 cities, towns, villages, school districts, and neighborhoods, in eight states. If these congregations averaged 150 hearers, then I have had the privilege of speaking the Word of Life to 44,250 individuals. I think this estimate is not too high; for I have addressed thousands at camp-meetings, and have had congregations in churches numbering from 200 to 500. And in preaching in the same church two years, if the average number was 300, there would be likely to be 400 different hearers at that time.

What an opportunity! and how great the responsibility!

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THE END