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## **THOMAS WARE**

**A Compilation by Duane V. Maxey  
From the HDM Library**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

As mhalb-49.jpg, a picture of Thomas Ware accompanies this compilation, which consists of the following material: "Thomas Ware" from hdm0090, "Early M. E. Church Preachers," compiled and edited by Duane V. Maxey; "Thomas Ware" from hdm0699, "Centenary Cameos" By Osie P. Fitzgerald; and finally, a paragraph about Thomas Ware from hdm0856, the "Cyclopedia of Methodism" (W-Listings) by Matthew Simpson.

The story alone, of the remarkable way in which Thomas Ware was converted, makes this compilation worth the reading. So remarkable were the circumstances surrounding his conversion that never since first reading it have I forgotten the basic facts of that story. Read it for yourself, and be blessed. -- DVM

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### **Part 1**

#### **THOMAS WARE**

From hdm0090, "Early M. E. Church Preachers,"  
Compiled and Edited By Duane V. Maxey

Thomas Ware was born December 19, 1758 in Greenwich, Gloucester County, N. J. Through the influence and ministry of Caleb Pedicord he was converted; had an interview with Asbury, and was sent to a circuit in 1783. Thus, in Thomas Ware, the itinerancy made one of its most important acquisitions that year. He was a man of admirable character, an able and faithful laborer, who lived far into the 19th Century [the 1800s], and left the best written autobiography yet produced by the Early American Methodist ministry. Not a few of the noblest Methodist evangelists, of the 18th Century, whose names were fast passing into oblivion, through the paucity

of early M. E. records, have been rescued, for all time, to the history of the Church, by his affectionate and skillful delineations.

Ware had the inestimable advantage of a pious parentage. His father, especially, he says, was a Methodist before the Methodists were known in that part of the country; the only person there "who professed to know that his sins were forgiven." "His whole deportment tended," He adds, "to fix in me a habit of serious reflection on the subject of religion, and his triumphant death made an impression on my mind that time could not obliterate." His mother educated him strictly in the faith of Calvinism.

At the breaking out of the Revolutionary War he responded to the call of his country, and entered the army. Though he had not yet made profession of a religious life, he began his new career with manly and even devout sentiments. "Some of my reflections," he says, after he had entered the field, "I can never forget while memory lasts. The cause I held to be just. On this point I had no misgivings. But whether we should be able to sustain our ground appeared to me a much more doubtful question. There must be, I was sure, much hard fighting and many valuable lives sacrificed to gain the boon of our independence, if we should succeed at last. And what will they gain, thought I, who shall fall in the struggle? The thanks of their country? No; they will be forgotten. But then the principles for which we were contending appeared to me worth risking life for. With the views I entertained of the justness of our cause in the sight of heaven I could not doubt, and resolved for one on liberty or death."

[In the preceding, he seems to re-echo the sentiment of Patrick Henry -- an interesting thought when we consider that later on Ware was present on the occasion when Patrick Henry's sister was converted. -- DVM]

"'But there is a hereafter,' was suggested to my mind. True, thought I, but I will do the best I can, and trust in God. And so it was, that as a soldier in the army, I was more devout than when at home; and I prayed until a confidence sprang up within me that I should return to my home and friends in safety, or not be cut off without time to make my peace with God." He was resolutely temperate in the camp, pouring upon the ground the strong drink given with his rations. He continued in the service till dismissed, as an invalid, suffering from "camp fever," which "cost him several years of the prime of his life."

He had leisure now for deeper reflections. "My physical powers," he says, "were paralyzed by protracted affliction, and my conscience, though greatly darkened, had yet some influence to restrain me from licentious freedom in wickedness. But how easily is man blinded by the deceitfulness of sin? When reason, always proud, silences conscience by a too hasty decision against its dictates, what is man? A steed broken loose, bounding over hill and dale, gamboling in the wilderness, and on the barren waste. Thus was it with me, fool that I was. But the horrifying profaneness of scoffing infidels, with whom I came in contact, so shocked my feelings that I sped my way back, or rather turned aside, and sought an asylum from my woes in gloomy solitude. I was now for several months little better than a maniac. I delighted in nothing so much as being alone. To wander in retired places, and indulge in the reveries of my own mind, or among the works of God, with which I was surrounded, sometimes cherishing the delightful thought that I had an

interest in the great Parent of all, and was an object of his pity, accorded most with my state of feeling. And on such occasions I was sometimes melted to tears."

It was while in this state of mind that he observed Pedicord riding into Mount Holly, as we have seen, singing a hymn which singularly accorded with his anxious feelings. He followed the itinerant a "great distance," fascinated by the pathos of his voice, and that night heard him preach.

Having been taught by his Calvinistic mother, the idea of a universal atonement whereby all can be saved was apparently a new discovery for Thomas Ware. "Soon," He writes, "was I convinced that all men were redeemed and might be saved, and saved now, from the guilt, practice, and love of sin. With this I was greatly affected, and could hardly refrain from exclaiming aloud, 'This is the best intelligence I ever heard.' When the meeting closed I hastened to my lodgings, retired to my room, fell upon my knees before God, and spent much of the night in penitential tears. Pedicord returned again to our village. I hastened to see him, and tell him all that was in my heart. He shed tears over me, and prayed. I was dissolved in tears. He prayed again. My soul was filled with unutterable delight. He now rejoiced over me as a son, 'an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ.' I felt and knew that I was made free. And, as I had been firm in my attachment to the cause of civil freedom, I hoped that I should be enabled to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made me free."

He joined the Methodists, and fearlessly defended them among his associates. "It was strange," he says, to see with what amazement many listened while told them what the Lord had done for me. Some wept bitterly, confessed their ignorance of such a state, and pronounced me happy, while others thought me mad; and on the Methodists, not on me, laid all the blame of what they conceived to be my derangement." He was made a Class Leader, and, not long after, an Exhorter. He possessed lively faculties, readiness of speech, and a pathos which gave him "the eloquence of tears." His brethren admonished him that it was his duty to preach, but he shrunk from the thought.

About this time Asbury arrived at Pemberton, four miles from Mount Holly, and sent for him. The interview was so strikingly characteristic, of both the interlocutors, that it deserves to be cited.

"I had not been introduced to him," writes Ware, "nor did he know me. On entering his room he fixed his discriminating eye upon me, and seemed to be examining me from head to foot as I approached him. He reached me his hand, and said, 'This, I suppose, is Brother Ware; or, shall I say, Pedicord the younger.'

"I replied, 'My name is Ware, sir, and I claim some affinity to the Wesleyan family, and Mr. Pedicord as my spiritual father.' 'You then revere the father of the Methodists?' said he. 'I do,' I replied, 'greatly; the first time I heard his name mentioned it was said of him, by way of reproach, that he had brought shame upon the Christian world by preaching up free will. Free will, said I, and what would you have him preach? bound will? He might as well go with the Roman saint and preach to the fish, as preach to men without a will. From that time I resolved to hear the Methodists, against whom I had been so much prejudiced.'

"Sit down,' said Mr. Asbury, 'I have somewhat to say unto thee. Have all men since the fall been possessed of free will?' I replied that I considered they had since the promise made to Adam, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. 'Can man then turn himself and live?' said he. 'So thought Ezekiel,' I replied, 'when he said, "Turn yourselves and live;" ' remarking, as I understood it, that he can receive the testimony which God has given of his Son; and thus, through grace, receive power to become a child of God.

"Are all men accountable to God?' he still further inquired. I replied, 'The almighty Jesus says, "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his works shall be." ' 'On what do you found the doctrine of universal accountability?' he added. 'On the doctrine of universal grace: "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men," ' etc., was my reply.

"He then looked at me very sternly, and said: 'What is this I hear of you? It is said you have disturbed the peaceful inhabitants of Holly, by rudely entering into a house where a large number of young people were assembled for innocent amusement, and when welcomed by the company and politely invited to be seated, you refused, and proceeded to address them in such a way that some became alarmed and withdrew, and the rest soon followed.'

"To this I answered: 'My zeal in this affair may have carried me too far. But I knew them to be generally my friends and well-wishers, and felt to do as the man out of whom Christ cast a legion of devils was directed, namely, to go and show my friends how great things God had done for me. It is true, when I entered the room, some appeared delighted to see me, and heartily welcomed me; but those who knew me best appeared sad. And when invited to take a glass and be seated, I told them I must be excused, for I had not come to spend the evening with them, but to invite them to spend it with me. "You know me," I said, "and how delighted I have often been in your company, and with the amusements in which you have met to indulge. But I cannot now go with you. My conscience will not permit me to do so. But as none of your consciences, I am persuaded, forbid your going with me, I have come to invite you to go with me and hear the excellent Mr. Pedicord preach his farewell sermon. Pardon me, my friends, I am constrained to tell you, the Lord has done great things for me through the instrumentality of this good man."

"The circle was not very large. Not a word of, reply was made to what I said. Some were affected, and soon left after I withdrew. But I never knew that any one of the party was offended.' Asbury listened to this simple explanation of the matter attentively, but without relaxing the sternness of his look, or making any reply to it. He then branched off to another subject. 'Was it not bold and adventurous,' said he, 'for so young a Methodist to fill, for a whole week, without license or consultation, the appointments of such a preacher as George Mair?' I replied that Mr. Mair was suddenly called from the circuit by sickness in his family, and I saw that he was deeply afflicted, not only on account of the distress his family were suffering, but especially because of the disappointments it must occasion, on a part of the circuit, where there was a good work going on; that some of these appointments were new, and there was no one to hold, any meeting with the people whatever; that I was therefore induced, soon after he was gone, to resolve on going to some of these places and telling those, who might come out, the cause of the preacher's absence; and that if I was sometimes constrained to exhort these people, without a formal license, it was with fear

and trembling, and generally very short, unless when the tears of the people caused me to forget that I was on unauthorized ground.

"He still said nothing, either by way of reproof or commendation, more than the manner of his introducing the subjects might seem to imply. And being under an impression that his remarks were designed to mortify me, for my course in the matter of the ball, and in taking the circuit in the absence of Mr. Mair, I said, 'Mr. Asbury, if the person who informed you against me had told me of my errors I would have acknowledged them.' Here he stopped me by clasping me in his arms, and saying in an affectionate tone: 'You are altogether mistaken, my son; it was your friend Pedicord who told me of your pious deeds, and advised that you should be sent to Dover Circuit, saying that he would be responsible that no harm, but good, would result from it.'

"He then told me that I must go down to the peninsula, and take the Dover Circuit, which had but one preacher on it; that I could tell the people, if I pleased, that I did not come in the capacity of a preacher, but only to assist in keeping up the appointments until another could be sent; and that he would give me a testimonial to introduce me; but if they did not cordially receive me, he said I might return, and he would see me compensated for my time and expenses. Here I was caught, and how could I decline? If, when my zeal prompted me to take a circuit, in the absence of a preacher, for one week, I had found favor in the sight of the people, so as to occasion my being recommended to Asbury in this way, how could I refuse when he requested me to go and assist in keeping up the appointments on a circuit which needed aid, being now regularly licensed to exhort, until a preacher could be sent to it? So I told him, if he insisted on it, I would go and do the best I could; but I feared I should do more harm than good, and be unhappy in consequence of not being in my place."

Thus was Thomas Ware sent forth, in 1783, to begin his long and successful career. His reception on Dover Circuit was so cordial and hospitable, that he always recalled it with grateful interest. "I was made," he says, "to forget that I was among strangers. The simplicity, urbanity, and fervent piety of the Methodists were such that, after visiting a Society once, it seemed long before I was to return to it again. Some of the members were wealthy, and in the higher circles of life; but they were not ashamed to bear the cross. Among these there were some, particularly a number of females, distinguished for piety and zeal, such as I had never before witnessed. The lady of Counselor Bassett, and her two sisters, Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Ward, possessed an uncommon degree of the true missionary spirit, and greatly aided the young preachers, by whom, principally, the Lord was carrying on his work on that favored shore. To these might be added others, and especially the wife of Judge White, who was a mother in Israel. I had the happiness of receiving many young people into society. In Class-meetings I felt much at home, and frequently our rejoicing in the Lord was great. In my public exercises I was sometimes greatly embarrassed, when tears came to my relief, which was often the case; and there are few who can resist the eloquence of tears. In the mean time I prayed and read and wrote much. My Bible was my chief book. After having been blessed in attempting to preach, I ventured, formally, to take a text; but not until advised, by some whom I considered competent judges, that my gift was rather to preach than to exhort."

His amenity and talents procured him general respect but he sometimes encountered the trials which were then common to the itinerancy. He was invited to preach in a Protestant

Episcopal Church on his circuit. "I had gone through a part of the morning service," he writes, "and was still in the desk, where I gave out my text; but, before I had finished my introductory remarks, three men came marching into the church, in Indian file, and halted just before the desk. The foremost one announced himself as a vestryman, and ordered me out of the desk and the church, or, he said, he would compel me to go out. Finding I did not comply, he seized me by the collar and dragged me from the desk. On seeing this, a giant of a man, near by, seized him, in like manner, and, raising his huge fist, told him if he did not let me go he would knock him down." Ware's assailant took the warning, and retreated with his companions.

Thomas Ware made a good beginning on Dover Circuit, and his long ministerial life verified the promise of his first year.

The name of Mr. Thomas Ware appears in the Minutes of 1784, for the first time. Mr. Ware had spent half of the preceding Conference year in the work. In December of 1784, young Ware attended the Christmas Conference at which the M. E. Church was organized. He says: "It was the first I attended. There was quite a number of preachers present. Although there were but few on whose heads time had begun to snow, yet several of them appeared to be wayworn and weather-beaten into premature old age. I doubt whether there ever has been a Conference among us in which an equal number could be found, in proportion to the whole, so dead to the world, and so gifted and enterprising as were present at that of 1784. They had much to suffer at that early period of our history, and especially during the Revolutionary struggle."

At the Christmas Conference, Ware was stationed on Kent Circuit, in Maryland where, following the Conference, he resumed his labors on the Maryland Peninsula -- the garden of Methodism. "There were many," he says, "a very many, on this favored shore, who had been wakened and converted to God through the instrumentality of the Methodist preachers, and especially that of Joseph Cromwell, who, though he could not write his name, preached in the demonstration of the Spirit and with an authority that few could withstand. By his labors thousands, of all classes and conditions in society, had been brought into the fold, and were walking worthy of their profession." Other laborers besides Cromwell had reaped there the richest harvests -- the most historical evangelists of early Methodism. Ware received Coke there, as we have seen, both before and after the General Conference.

In 1785 Thomas Ware was prostrated by sickness, but was appointed to Salem Circuit, N. J., with Phoebus and Sparks -- a circuit whose territory is now supplied by scores of preachers. Here he had the satisfaction of laboring among his kindred, and among his converts were two of his own sisters. Methodism had found its way into this section before him, chiefly by Abbott's labors. The war which had just terminated had raged in the upper part of New Jersey; but here its effects were less felt. Ware reviewed at the close of his labors here with gratitude the two years which had passed since the organization of the Church. "Our harmony," he says, "continued the same as it was before, while our labor had been crowned with much greater success, in consequence of having the ordinances of God duly administered among us. In these two years we admitted thirty-four preachers, and had an accession of three thousand eight hundred and three members. We also greatly enlarged our borders, extending our labors to Georgia at the south, and the great valley of the Mississippi at the west."

In 1786 he was appointed to Long Island, but supplying his appointments, for a time, by local preachers, he extended his labors to other parts of the state. He went to New Rochelle, where the war had utterly extinguished the Methodist Society formed by Asbury. There was not now a single known Methodist east of the Hudson River above New York city. He reached Bedford, where a Mr. Eames introduced him to his wife as a Methodist preacher, and said, "You know I told you God would send the Methodist preachers among us, when I dreamed that I saw Mr. Wesley riding through the country with his Bible open in his hand."

After spending a short time with this family, during which he preached repeatedly and formed a class, he set out on his return to New Rochelle, but was overtaken by one of the most extraordinary snowstorms he ever witnessed. He was driven to the necessity of putting up at an inn, where he was detained for a week. The landlady was deeply impressed the first time he spoke to her on the subject of religion; but the innkeeper himself, though civil, appeared to be out of his reach. Both of them were very fond of singing; and as Ware's voice was good, they seemed much delighted with some spiritual songs which he sung for them.

On the third night of this tremendous storm, while sitting around the cheerful fire, listening to the howling of the wind, and the beating of snow and hail against the windows, he perceived that his host and hostess were pensive; so he sung them one of his favorite pieces, with which they were much affected. He then kneeled down to pray; and they, for the first time, fell upon their knees. After prayer he retired, leaving them both in tears. "After thirty years I was again," he says, "appointed to Long Island, where my host visited me. 'Father Ware,' he said, 'I am happy to see you once more. Have you forgotten the snowstorm which brought you and salvation to my house?' The family had been saved." Ware did good service during this year, not only on Long Island, but in much of the neighboring country.

We find Ware the next year, 1787, sounding the alarm amid the Holston Mountains, and down among the frontier settlements of Tennessee. Many were his adventures, his perils, and victories there. He suffered from want of the common necessities of life, from the severity of the winter and mountain storms, from savage Indians, and scarcely less savage white settlers. He wandered often, lost in the forests of the mountains, slept in the woods, preached in log-cabins or the open air, for there were as yet no chapels, however humble, in regions which were hundreds of miles in extent; but he and his few fellow-itinerants were there fortifying the frontier camp of Methodism, whence it was to commence its advance, as "an army with banners," over all the immense valley of the Mississippi, and its way to the Rocky Mountains and to the shores of the Pacific.

"There were many," he says in this region, "both of those who had taken the Lord for their portion and these who as yet had not, who manifested a desire to have him the God of their children, and therefore presented them to be baptized. Of the latter class the hearts of the parents were usually touched when their children were dedicated to God in accordance with his own institution. Sometimes the scene was truly affecting, when the thought was impressed upon the minds of parents that their children, according to the declaration of the Saviour, belonged to the kingdom of heaven, while they did not. I cannot but regret that I did not keep a record of the number of these lambs of Christ's flock which I have held in my arms and dedicated to him. I doubt if any traveling preacher could produce a more extended list. For a time I attempted this task; but

in Holston, Clinch, French Broad, and New River, there were so many children presented for baptism that I found it difficult, and gave it up."

In 1789 Ware accompanied Asbury back over the Blue Ridge into North Carolina, and attended a Conference, at McKnight's Church, on the 11th of April. It was one of the most interesting sessions he had ever witnessed. Great grace rested on both preacher and people, and much good resulted. Thus we find him in another remote section of the continent. By the Conference he was appointed to Caswell Circuit, N. C.

At the close of the session he set out for his field of labor, poorly clad and nearly penniless, "but happy in God." In the Holston country there had been but little money, and clothing was very dear. His coat was worn through at the elbows, and he had not a whole under garment left; and as for boots, he had none. "But," he says, "my health was good, and I was finely mounted. I could have sold my horse for sufficient to purchase another to answer my purpose, and clothe myself decently; but he had borne me safely through so many dangers, and once, at least, by his instinctive sagacity, rescued me from perishing, that I had resolved that nothing but death should separate us. This, however, soon occurred; for in a few days this noble animal, my sole property in the world at that time, sickened and died. So there I was, an entire stranger, several hundred miles from home, without horse, decent clothing, or funds. But I was not without friends. A good brother with whom I stayed gave me a horse for four weeks on trial, and I determined to go to Newberg and try my credit for clothing."

The Methodist itinerants were, however, men of absolute faith, and expected God to provide for them. Ware passed on and called at the house of a gentleman by the name of Howe, who, though not a Methodist, was friendly to the denomination. His inquiries about the western country led to the disclosure of the preacher's destitute condition, with which he was touched. He pressed the itinerant to spend a few days with him, but the latter told him time was a talent with which God had intrusted him, and as it was all he could call his own, he must hasten on to his work.

"Earthly treasures I had none," writes the suffering evangelist, "and had abandoned all means of acquiring them. But a heavenly inheritance I hoped, with increasing zeal and activity, to seek throughout my life. I then informed him of my business to Newbern, where I knew no person. After I had mounted and left this gentleman he called me back, saying he had a store in Newbern, and wished me to hand a letter which he gave me to his clerk. Little did I think, at the time, that it contained directions to his clerk to let me have what I might want out of the store to the amount of twenty-five dollars, for which he would never afterward allow me to pay him a single cent. Thus did the Lord provide!"

He labored mightily on this circuit, and here again he found the urgent necessity of the sacraments among the people, and administered them to the eager crowds with the deepest emotion. Not a few affecting scenes occurred in these solemnities. In one place he says, "In the time of the Revolutionary War their ministers had left them, and they had long been without the form of religion. At their request I went to preach to them and baptize their children, and I found them ripe for the Gospel. The sight of so many children brought to be dedicated to God in baptism, for there were scores of them, deeply interested me. I addressed the parents, who were much



affected, and their cries so increased my sensibility that, for a time, my power of speech was wholly suspended. I could not, by any exertion I could make, articulate the name of the child. This was observed, and occasioned great excitement of feeling among the people. But when I had so recovered as to be able to proceed, many were melted into tears. After the meeting was concluded many followed me to the house where I went to lodge.

"At night, although no appointment had been given out, the house was filled with people, and I could not decline preaching to them. In the midst of my discourse the mother of the family got down upon her knees, and such was her state of feeling that, in that attitude, she made her way to the table, where I was standing, and begged me to pray for her. In a few moments the whole congregation was in commotion. I continued to pray and exhort till midnight. The work advanced, and in six weeks we had in this place a Society of eighty members, mostly heads of families. This event I have always deemed a divine sanction of infant baptism. If I ever witnessed a work of God among any people I witnessed it here, and it evidently commenced with the baptizing of infant children."

His second year in this part of the country was on a district comprising eight circuits, some of which extended into Virginia. His word was in demonstration and power throughout his vast field. "At one of our quarterly meetings on New River," he writes, "a religious concern was waked up in many, which pervaded a large district of country, and suspended for many weeks almost all worldly concerns. In one family, where I passed many happy days, there were thirty who claimed to be born again, twelve of whom were whites, the fruits of that meeting. This was the family of Gen. Bryan, who was a barrister at law, a professed deist. The general was awakened and converted at this meeting. He became a distinguished patron of Methodism, and died happy, lifting his arm in token of victory when his tongue failed to articulate words."

This quarterly meeting was indeed a memorable occasion. "On Saturday many people attended, and great power was manifested during the public exercises. On Sunday morning the love-feast was appointed to commence at eight o'clock. By seven the house was nearly full, and many were prostrate on the floor, and the surrounding grove was made vocal by the prayers and hymns of multitudes as they were approaching the place. When the house was filled, those who could not get in were engaged in some religious exercise without, and numbers were slain under the trees. A son of Col. Taylor, of Tar River, went about among the people, praising God, and telling them what the Lord had done for his soul; and wherever he came they were melted into tears. His appearance was sufficient to disarm the most stouthearted of them.

"As to preaching, it was out of the question; nor did there appear to be any need of it, for all seemed to yield to the gracious influence, and with melting hearts to say, 'This is the work of God.' Something like this had been witnessed under the ministry of Boardman, King, and others. All who were the real friends of experimental religion agreed that it behooved us to let the Lord work in his own way."

Ware won the hearts of the people by his natural amiability, as well as by his Christian devotion, and thereby encountered some temptations. He made his escape homeward from North Carolina in haste from one of these perils that might have changed the whole tenor of his remaining life. A little before he was called to bid a final adieu to this state, he was confined, by

indisposition, at the house of a very aged couple, who had no children. They had lived in good repute as Christians, and declared themselves such until the baptizing in the woods. On that memorable day they were brought to see themselves sinners, without any well-grounded hope. They were the first who offered themselves for membership in the new Society, and they continued to adorn their profession by well-ordered lives.

They had given him many demonstrations of their affectionate regard, but until this visit he had not known the extent of it. Being in possession of a farm and mill, with other property, and advanced in life, they desired him to write their will. He objected as not understanding the form which might be requisite. They said the document would be simple, and might be easily drawn. It was to provide, that, on condition of his remaining with them through their short stay in this world, all they had should be his. "This, he says, "presented a strong inducement to exchange a life of poverty and toil for one of affluence and ease. Had I accepted the offer, my history would doubtless have been very different from what it is. But I could not do it with a good conscience, so I bid them and North Carolina adieu forever, and returned to see my friends in New Jersey."

He had now been absent from the North about six years, amid scenes of severe privation and romantic adventure. Having reached the Philadelphia Conference of 1791, and received an appointment in Delaware, he reviewed with devout gratitude the prosperity of the Church since its Episcopal organization. "Great," he affirms, "had been its harmony and success. It had received in these years an accession of sixty-seven traveling preachers, and sixty-four thousand and thirty-nine members. In almost every part of the United States the enemies of the Lord were overcome by thousands, for the work was of God, and who can contend with the King of kings, while the instruments he has chosen to carry on his work are faithful?"

In 1792 Thomas Ware was sent to Staten Island. After spending a part of 1792 on Staten Island Circuit, then reaching far into New Jersey, he was appointed presiding elder on the Susquehanna District, Pennsylvania. During his ministry, Ware was to serve as Presiding Elder on various districts, for sixteen years, a longer time, in regular succession, than it had fallen to the lot of any other man.

The Susquehanna District was a vast and rugged field, comprising six large circuits. Between two of these circuits, Flanders and Wyoming, he says "the way on the Susquehanna was dreary enough; and from thence to Tioga all but impassable, especially in winter. The first time I attempted this tour in the winter, when I came to the mountain through which the river passes, the road being full of ice, it was impossible to keep it; so I had no alternative but to turn back and take the ice in the river. I was afterward told that it was believed no person had ever passed the dangerous defile in this way before. In several places there were chasms in the ice of several feet in width running nearly across the river, occasioned by the waters falling until the ice, resting upon the ridges of rocks underneath, was broken. Over these my horse had to leap. But a greater danger arose from the wearing of the ice by the current below, so that in some places it was plainly to be seen. Protected by a kind Providence, however, I passed safely through. At this time none seemed to care for those poor people in the wilderness except the Methodists."

And yet the self-sacrificing evangelists who were bringing to them the Gospel, had to bear not only the hardships of the wilderness, but no little hostility and persecution. They broke their

way effectively, how ever, into all those mountainous regions, and have left their shining trails almost everywhere among them.

In 1793 Ware took charge of Garrettson's great field, or, at least, the northern part of it, then called the Albany District. "It was," he writes, "immensely large, and the country principally new. Accommodations for the preachers were, for the most part, poor, and the means of their support extremely limited."

While passing through one of the circuits, soon after he came on the district, he called at the preacher's house, who happened at that time to be at home. It was near noon, and he, of course, must dine there. The poor itinerant had a wife and seven children; and their bill of fare was one blackberry pie, with rye crust, without either butter or lard to shorten it. After they had dined, and Ware was about to depart, he put a few dollars into the hands of his suffering brother, who, on receiving them, sat down and wept so heartily that Ware could not avoid weeping with him.

"The Lord was with us," he adds, "in a very glorious manner, at some of our quarterly meetings, during the first quarter; and there appeared to be a general expectation that he would do still greater things for us throughout the vast field we had to cultivate. Here, as in Tennessee, there were multitudes of people wholly destitute of the Gospel, until it was brought to them by the Methodists."

There were many small settlements without any religious provisions whatever till the itinerants reached them. They flew from one to another, preaching continually, and in our day we see the results of their labors and sufferings in prosperous Churches, studding all the "parts of four states" which, says Ware, were "embraced in my district." He had a corps of indomitable men under his command, such as Hezekiah C. Wooster, Elijah Woolsey, Aaron Hunt, James Coleman, Shadrach Bostwick, John Finnegan, and many others -- men who could not fail to awaken a sensation of public interest, favorable or hostile, wherever they appeared. Through incredible labors and sufferings they were now laying the broad foundations of Methodism along most of the extent of the Hudson.

"Here," writes Ware, "I experienced, for the first time in my life, what Milton means by 'joint-racking rheums.'" "Although most of the preachers on the district were young in years, or the ministry, or both, and a heavy tide of opposition bore down upon us, yet under the direction of our divine Guide we were enabled to stem the torrent; and at the end of each year we found that we had gained a little, and had acquired some more strength and skill to use the weapons of our spiritual warfare. At some of our quarterly meetings the sacred influence was so evidently present that it neutralized all opposition, and we seemed, as the boatman descending the Mohawk in time of flood, to have nothing to do but to guide the helm."

We have already noticed the extraordinary rise of Methodism in the Wyoming, Cumberland, and Tioga regions, and the outspread of the Hudson River District, by Garrettson and Ware's itinerants, to those then remote fields -- the labors of Anning Owen, Nathaniel B. Mills, and William Colbert. Ware's trials among the Tioga wilds were fully shared by his associates.

As we have seen, during the ecclesiastical year 1793-94, Thomas Ware was on a district which comprehended several New England appointments. He refers to the species of trials I have described as frequent in the Eastern States at that time. "It was common," he remarks, "for the Methodist preachers, when they preached in new places, and often in their regular appointments; to be attacked by some disputant on the subject of doctrines, sometimes by ministers, but more frequently by students in divinity or loquacious and controversial laymen. And so far as my experience on this district extended, I discovered much rancor and bitterness mingled with these disputes. I am obliged to say that, during the three years of my labors in this section, I found not so much as one friendly clergyman. There may have been such; but all with whom I conversed, or whose sentiments I knew, were violent in their opposition to us; and the rough manner in which I was usually treated by them, rendered me unwilling to come in contact with them. But when it so happened that we must try our strength, I found no difficulty in defending the cause I had espoused, for a foe despised has a great advantage. And when a man has a system which is clearly scriptural, he needs only a little plain common sense and self-possession to maintain his ground, though a host of learned theologians should unite against him. In Granville and Pittsfield the current of opposition was very strong against us."

Hope Hull had labored in this region under Ware, and evidently understood the best way of managing these troubles. Ware says, "I knew and almost envied him his talents. I thought, indeed, if I possessed his qualifications I could be instrumental in saving thousands where, with my own, I could gain one."

In 1796 Thomas Ware was sent to the Philadelphia District, which extended from Wilmington, Del., to the Seneca Lake, N. Y. "A glorious religious excitement," he writes, "commenced on Strasburgh and Chester Circuits, which spread through the whole peninsula, exceeding anything I have ever witnessed. This revival embraced all classes, governor, judges, lawyers, and statesmen, old and young, rich and poor, including many of the African race, who adorned their profession by a well-ordered life, and some of them by a triumphant death. For Strasburgh Circuit I felt a particular interest, as it had now become the place of my residence. Many of the children of the early Methodists were nearly grown up, and but few of them professed religion, and some who had long prayed for a revival had become almost discouraged. Such was the state of things on this circuit when I prevailed on Bishop Asbury to appoint Dr. Chandler to it, as the most likely, in my estimation, to be useful in stirring up the people.

"Dr. Chandler, at the time I obtained his consent to travel, was reading medicine with Dr. Rush. He had been for some time a licensed preacher. He was gifted, enterprising, and every way well qualified for the itinerant work; and in that capacity I thought he would be most likely to be useful. I had a very particular friendship for him, as I had long known him and his habits, which I believed were such as would render him eminently successful in the work of saving souls, if he would give himself up wholly to the service of the Church. I accordingly communicated with him on the subject, but he pleaded his engagements with Dr. Rush as a barrier against his going out into the field.

"I accordingly waited on the venerable Rush, and expressed to him my views respecting the duty of Chandler, who perfectly agreed with me in the matter, and cheerfully released him from his engagements, and he entered with all his soul into the work."

"At the commencement of the second quarter," continues Ware, "Dr. Chandler began covenanting with the people. He obtained a pledge from them to abstain wholly from the use of ardent spirits, and to meet him at the throne of grace three times a day, namely, at sunrise, at noon, and at the going down of the sun, to pray for a revival of the work of God on the circuit, and especially that he would visit them and give them some token for good at their next quarterly meeting. As the time of the meeting approached he pressed them to come out without fail, and expressed a belief that the Lord would do great things for us.

"Soon after he commenced this course there were evident indications that the work was beginning to revive, and many, with the preacher, began to predict that something great would be done at the quarterly meeting. On Saturday many people attended. I opened the meeting by singing, and then attempted to pray; but in two minutes my voice was drowned in the general cry throughout the house, which continued all that day and night, and indeed for the greater part of three days. A great number professed to be converted, who stood fast and adorned their profession; but the best of all was, many who had lost their first love repented, and did their first works, and God restored them to his favor.

"Cecil Circuit had been added to the Philadelphia District. The quarterly meeting on this circuit was at hand, and I urged Dr. Chandler to attend it. He came with a number of the warmhearted members from his circuit. Some twenty or thirty professed to receive an evidence of the remission of their sins, and united with the Church. From this the fire began to spread to the South, and soon the whole peninsula was in a flame of revival. At the North also the influence was felt. Sparks were kindled in Middletown, Northumberland, Wilkesbarre, and quite up in the Genesee and Lake country in Western New York.

"In 1800 I was appointed to a district on the peninsula. There were in this district ten circuits, twenty traveling preachers, and about nine thousand members. This I deemed one of the most important charges I ever filled. The scenes which I witnessed at Smyrna, Dover, Milford, Centerville, Easton, and many other places, I have not ability to describe. During the times of revival in these places thousands of all ranks were drawn to the meetings, and spent days together in acts of devotion, apparently forgetful of their temporal concerns. In this way the work continued to extend until it became general. Here, as in Tennessee, I hesitated not to call at any house when I wanted refreshment or a night's entertainment. The candle of the Lord shone brilliantly about my path, and my cup was oftentimes full to overflowing."

At a Conference held this year at Smyrna, Del., he says, "there were persons present from almost all parts of the Eastern Shore, who witnessed the general excitement and gracious influence from the beginning to the end of the Conference, during which time hundreds were converted to God. These returned home, revived in their spirits, and wondering at what they had seen, and heard, and felt; and through the instrumentality of some of these the fires of revival were kindled up in their neighborhoods before the preachers arrived. At the close of this Conference one hundred persons were received on trial in the Church."

Ware had charge of Bassett's protracted meeting, and "there were few of the principal houses in Dover in which there were not some converted during it; and more than once the whole

night was employed, both in the church and private houses, in prayer for penitents, and in rejoicing with those who had obtained an evidence of pardon, or were reclaimed from their backslidings." So profound was the interest all over his district, that he says, "we knew not what to do with the thousands who attended the quarterly meetings. Sometimes we were forced to resort to the woods, and even to hold our love-feasts in the grove. Our membership increased rapidly." He spent the remainder of the period [1796 - 1804] in arduous labors on the Philadelphia and Jersey Districts.

Thomas Ware, worn by protracted labors in the hardest fields of the Church, continued to travel down to 1809. Part of the time he was in New Jersey District, comprehending the whole state, and part in Philadelphia, where his health failed, and compelled him to retire till 1811. In that year he was again at work at Lancaster, till the General Conference of 1812. At that Conference he was to the Book Concern, where, during four years, he did valuable service for the publishing interests of the Church -- 1812-1816.

From 1816 to 1825 Thomas Ware was again abroad as an itinerant, but in the latter year was compelled by age to retreat into the "ineffective ranks," after forty years of service in almost all parts of the country accessible in his times. He died March 11, 1842 in Salem New Jersey.

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## Part 2

### THOMAS WARE

From hdm0699, "Centenary Cameos"

By Osie P. Fitzgerald

He was of Scotch-English blood, and inherited a happy physical and moral constitution. He had the sagacity to see where to take hold and the tenacity to hold on. He was shrewd and sturdy, saintly and thrifty -- having his hope fixed on heaven, and yet taking earthly matters by the most convenient handle. In him spirituality and common sense were not divorced, but blended felicitously and advantageously to the Church and the world.

He was born at Greenwich, New Jersey, December 19, 1758. His mother, who was a Presbyterian, taught him to pray. She also instructed him in the larger and shorter catechisms; and thus the solid granite of fundamental gospel truth was laid at the foundation of his beliefs and his life, though, as will be seen, he replaced some of the stones with others taken from the Arminian quarry.

A double shadow rested on his early life -- His father died, leaving him, with seven other young children, to be provided for by his sad-hearted but loving and toilsome mother. To the sorrow for her dead that bowed her down was added the darkness of spiritual gloom. The wily adversary led her to fear that she was not one of the elect, hoping thus to drive a grief-stricken, struggling soul to despair. Thus the devil tries to make his own lie come true, knowing that when hope is lost all is lost; that when faith utterly loses its grasp the soul sinks down into inaction, and into the abyss of despair. She feared that "what she had taken for saving grace was nothing more than common grace," a distinction then familiar to the ears of the people, but of which little, is heard now. The suicide of a neighbor whose mind had been driven to desperation by similar

doubts intensified the good lady's gloom, who was horror-stricken at the thought that she may have been "passed by" in God's election of such as were to be saved. Gloom is contagious; the mother's melancholy infected the son. The awful possibility -- not to say certainty -- of endless perdition made him shudder, and wish he had never been born. With such a conception of God, life was almost insupportable to the youth. To him there was no brightness in the sunshine nor beauty in the Jersey hills, among which he wandered sad and solitary. When two of the youngest of the children died, the fear that they too might have been of the nonelect struck his sensitive heart with a new terror. Like mephitic vapor, the harsh dogma of an age that was passing away hid from his eyes the sun that was shining for all, and struck his young spirit with spiritual paralysis and despair. While in this state of mind he enlisted as a soldier of the Revolutionary War on the patriot side. During his short period of military service his mental distress did not abate, and when he was discharged he was still groping in darkness. At this critical juncture in his life a Methodist preacher came along -- Caleb B. Pedicord, a man of singular sweetness of spirit and winning address, whose singing charmed the ear and whose preaching melted the heart of even the hardest sinners -- a man whose name marks a luminous spot wherever it appears on the historic page of early Methodism in America. The troubled young soldier went to hear Pedicord preach. The sermon was to him like sunrise after a long, dark, and stormy night. "Soon was I convinced," he says, "that all men were redeemed and might be saved, and saved now, from the guilt, practice, and love of sin. With this I was greatly affected, and could hardly refrain from exclaiming aloud, 'This is the best intelligence I ever heard!'" The sun had indeed risen, and soon his soul was flooded with the effulgence of perfect day. On Pedicord's next round the zealous preacher greeted him warmly, and after a few words of inquiry knelt with him and prayed for him with strong cries and tears. The answer came quickly and with power. The soul of the young man was filled with unutterable peace. The mighty change was certified to his now grateful and loving heart by the witness of the Holy Spirit, and he rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Old things had passed away, and all things had become new. He was a new creature in a new world of spiritual blessedness; he knew it, and he told it to all around. Pedicord, who seems to have cherished a peculiar affection for the young man from the first, was scarcely less ecstatic than his convert. Together they made the Jersey hills echo with their rejoicings. He had thought of reentering the service of his country as a soldier, but now his thoughts took another direction. Glowing with zeal and exulting in the love of God, he could not refrain from proclaiming the present, free, and full salvation he had found. He was diffident of his ability, but a combination of concurrent circumstances seemed to thrust him into the work of the ministry. Such was the effectiveness of his powerful exhortations that the people who heard him felt that God had indeed touched his lips with prophetic fire.

When in 1783 Mr. Asbury visited the Mount Holly Circuit he sent for the young exhorter, and after giving him a characteristically searching examination, that keen-sighted captain of the Lord's host sent him to the Dover Circuit, where a preacher was needed. When he went to the Conference which was held in Baltimore the next year, the modest young preacher was so impressed with the learning and greatness of that body that he was disposed to abandon the idea of becoming a preacher, at least until he had increased his acquisitions and grown in strength; but the need for more preachers was urgent, and his timidity was overruled. Giving himself prayerfully and wholly to the great work, he was freshly endued with power from on high for the discharge of its arduous and sacred functions. No truer heart ever followed the path of itinerant toil and sacrifice; no steadier hand ever held aloft the banner of Methodism in America. "He is a man of God," said a rude and wicked man at whose house he had staid one night. "How do you know

that?" was asked. "Ah!" said the man, "when he reproved me for my sins I felt the devil shake in me." His preaching was often attended with the power that made the devil shake.

He was present at the Holston Conference in 1788, at which, while waiting for the coming of the bishop, a protracted meeting was held, in which a great number of souls were converted -- among them General Russell and his wife, the latter a sister of Patrick Henry. He traveled and preached in the Holston country, on the Caswell Circuit in North Carolina, in the Mecklenburg country, and on the New River Circuit. Everywhere revivals of religion attended his labors. At one of his quarterly-meetings on the New River Circuit a revival broke out that swept all the adjacent country. Thirty persons, twelve of them white, were converted on one plantation; the work spread in all directions, and for weeks together ordinary business was almost forgotten. The whole population was stirred with religious excitement. In Mecklenburg similar scenes took place -- strong men falling prostrate, scoffers trembling and bowing in penitence, and joyful converse -- shouting aloud the praises of God. All classes were equally affected, and all were made to feel that it was the work of the Lord.

His fealty to his Master and his love for his work were put to a decisive test while he was in North Carolina. A wealthy couple, aged and childless, proposed to him to give him all their property on condition that he would stay with them and take care of them during the remainder of their short stay on earth. He declined the tempting offer. "I could not do it with a good conscience," he simply said; and that ended the matter.

The honor of being the first man to propose a delegated General Conference is claimed for him, though the actual paternity of that measure is ascribed to another man, whom this and future generations will delight to honor. At the General Conference of 1812 he was elected Book Agent, his probity, good sense, and methodical habits indicating to his brethren his adaptation to the office. At the end of four years he went back to the pastorate -- whether from choice or because it was thought somebody else would make a better Book Agent, we do not know. It matters not; it is no disgrace to any preacher that he does better work as a pastor than in any other place. Now and then a preacher seems to be called to make books or edit a newspaper -- every preacher i called to save souls, and that is his chief function as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the end for which publishing houses, religious newspapers, and all the machinery of the Church exists.

He traveled and preached, his labors being everywhere blessed of the Lord. Unable longer to endure the hardships of the active itinerancy, he ceased to travel in 1825, but was zealous and fruitful to the last. The exposure to which he was subjected amid the rigors of a hard winter in the hills of East Tennessee increased the infirmities of age, but nothing abated the strength of his faith or the brightness of his hope. He died at Salem, New Jersey, March 11, 1842, his last moments cheered by the love of the blessed Christ whose voice had spoken peace to his soul among the same hills when he was a boy.

A broad-shouldered, strong-framed man, with a slight tendency to corpulence; arrayed in plain but well-fitting garments of the old Methodist style; a face resolute but most amiable in expression, the lips seeming to be ready to pronounce the benediction that beams from the kindly, thoughtful eyes; the nose short and wide; the forehead high and well arched; the iron-gray hair parted to the right of the noble head, and slightly curling as it falls upon his temples -- Thomas



Ware, sturdy, pure, and true, stands in his place among the hero-saints that fought and won the battle for Methodism in America.

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Part 3

A PARAGRAPH ABOUT THOMAS WARE

From hdm0856, the "Cyclopedia of Methodism" (W-Listings)

By Matthew Simpson

WARE, Thomas -- Of the Philadelphia Conference, was born at Greenwich, N. J., December 19, 1758, and died at Salem, N. J., March 11, 1842. He united with the Methodist society, and at Mr. Asbury's solicitation commenced his public ministry. He was present at the famous Christmas Conference in Baltimore when the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized, and was a deeply-interested observer of all that took place. In 1785 he received a regular appointment, and in 1787 volunteered to go to East Tennessee, where he traveled extensively through both Tennessee and North Carolina, and was instrumental in the conversion of a large number of persons, among whom were General Russell and his wife, the latter being a Sister of Patrick Henry. He returned to the East in 1791, and, after other appointments, was placed in charge of a district on the Peninsula, where his labors were unusually blessed. At the General Conference in 1812 he was elected book agent, and after holding this office four years he returned to the pastorate, and continued in the itineracy until 1825.

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THE END