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**TIMOTHY MERRITT -- HEADLIGHT OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT**  
**Compiled, Edited And Written By Duane V. Maxey**

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01 -- INTRODUCTION

Let me first state that this publication is a compilation about Timothy Merritt, using data taken from various files in the HDM Digital Library. I have edited some of the material, and I have also written into the compilation some new thoughts of my own. Secondly, I would inform the reader that I have not tried to set the data in the compilation in chronological order. The material does include two sketches of Timothy Merritt in which facts are set forth chronologically, but some portions of the compilation in this file actually fit into an earlier time of Merritt's life than portions that preceded them. Still, it is my hope that those who study the

data in this compilation will be able to get the important facts and events of his life in order in their minds. Now, let me embark upon introductory material about the man himself: "TIMOTHY MERRITT -- HEADLIGHT OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT."

Phoebe Palmer is widely known among those in the Holiness Movement and she is sometimes referred to as "The Mother of the Holiness Movement." Timothy Merritt is not so widely known by Holiness People today, but, had it not been for Merritt's spiritual impact upon Sarah Lankford, sister of Phoebe Palmer, it is possible that Phoebe Palmer might never have experienced Second Blessing Holiness. Indeed, so great was the influence of Timothy Merritt upon the beginning of the Holiness Movement that William McDonald, early leader in the Natl. Association For the Promotion of Holiness, said:

"This holiness movement began in Boston. TIMOTHY MERRITT WAS THE HEADLIGHT OF THIS MOVEMENT as a specialty. He established the holiness meeting at New York. Wilbur Fisk was sanctified, and lay five hours under the power of the Holy Ghost, under a sermon preached by Timothy Merritt, at Eastham, Mass. Bro. Gorham came in as an associate, and was one of the grandest." -- From "Illustrated History of the Douglas Campmeeting" by Edward Davies, hdm2354 (Caps Mine)

Timothy Merritt, of the New England Conference, M. E. Church, was born at Barkhamstead, Connecticut in October, 1775, and died at Lynn, Massachusetts in 1845. He was converted in 1792, entered the traveling connection in 1796. -- Matthew Simpson's Cyclopeda of Methodism, hdm0397.

I will present a more detailed sketch of Merritt's life later in this compilation, but next, let me present one of the most important facts that qualifies him to be called "The Headlight of the Holiness Movement." One year after Timothy Merritt's superannuation from the M. E. Itinerancy in 1838, he founded "The Guide To Christian Perfection" in 1839. Later, the name of this publication was changed to "The Guide To Holiness." Merritt's book, "Christian Manual, A Treatise on Christian Perfection," published 1825, pre-dated his founding of "The Guide To Christian Perfection" by some 14 years -- and, this earlier book, as I will show later, also had a great influence for Holiness -- but, judging from William McDonald's statement above, it seems that Merritt's founding of "The Guide" is that which most qualifies him to be called "The Headlight Of The Holiness Movement."

Including John Wesley himself, a number of other great men of God heralded the message of Second Blessing Holiness before Timothy Merritt did so. In England, one could mention John and Charles Wesley, John Pawson and Adam Clarke. In America, one could mention Richard Whatcoat, Robert Shadford, William Watters (First American-Born Circuit Rider, Benjamin Abbott, and Freeborn Garrettson. All of these Heralds of Holiness who preceded Timothy Merritt were great men of God and mighty advocates of entire sanctification.

In America, perhaps Robert Shadford was the mightiest Holiness evangelist to precede Merritt. He volunteered to go to America from England in 1772, and did so in 1773, accompanied by Thomas Rankin. Shadford "was one of the most Spirit-filled, powerful, and effective missionaries sent by John Wesley to America. The revivals that took place under his

ministry on our continent were truly Pentecostal in nature, and had a mighty impact on the character and development of early Methodism. Other early Methodist leaders in the New World are better known today: Coke, Asbury, McKendree, etc., but perhaps none witnessed such deep and powerful movings of God's Spirit in their work as that seen by Shadford during American ministry. Through his efforts in America, "great numbers embraced religion; some professed sanctification, and the Societies were comfortably established in the Gospel of their salvation." -- From "Robert Shadford, Mighty Methodist Missionary To America" by Duane V. Maxey, hdm0214 (The reader of this file is also invited to read: "A Memoir Of George Shadford" also by Duane V. Maxey, hdm0669.)

Shadford's Holiness Ministry in America ended close to the time of Timothy Merritt's birth in 1775. Nevertheless, though his Holiness Ministry may have begun about 20 years after Shadford's departure back to England, spiritually, Timothy Merritt was "cut out of the same bolt of cloth" as Shadford, and his impact for Second Blessing Holiness in America may have greatly exceeded that of his zealous, sanctified predecessor. Let us now embark upon this compilation: "Timothy Merritt -- Headlight Of The Holiness Movement."

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## 02 -- IN 1835, MERRITT HELPED SARAH LANKFORD INTO HEART HOLINESS

Sarah Lankford was the sister of Phoebe Palmer. In his book, "Forty Witnesses," (hdm0401) S. Olin Garrison records the testimony of Sarah Lankford concerning this:

Early in May, 1835, an impression was felt so much like unhallowed emotion that it caused extreme pain. I then resolved to have a more positive assurance of inward purity. I immediately entered into covenant with God to withdraw my mind from every object that might divert me from this point, and to leave no means unused which He might appoint. Every motive, purpose and practice was required to undergo a renewed investigation. I cried, "O fill me with the Holy Ghost!" All was calm. I had none of the expected emotions. I arose from my knees fully determined to reckon myself dead to sin if I had not a joyous emotion in forty years, when the enemy immediately suggested, "You have no more evidence now than before; you might have believed long since; who ever heard of believing and continuing to believe without evidence?"

Immediately the Spirit replied, "Blessed are they that have not seen yet believe." "Presumption" was the constant cry of the enemy. But the "sword of the Spirit" prevailed, though the contest was very severe. To "draw back" I knew was death, and I resolved to endure the conflict while mortal life should last, even if no other evidence was given. Just after forming this resolution the promise came with more power than ever, "blessed is she that believeth, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." For seven days Satan tauntingly suggested, "You believe because you will believe."

Just at that time I met Rev. Timothy Merritt, who said, "Sister, you know something of holiness by experience; do you not?" I was startled, and about to reply, "I am hardly prepared to answer that question," but after a moment's hesitation said, "I have dared to reckon myself dead indeed unto sin, but it is constantly suggested that it may be presumption, with so little

evidence." Said Brother Merritt, "Never fear presumption in believing God; presumption lies in daring to doubt." All fear now vanished. The baptism of the Holy Ghost came in its glorious fullness; it seemed as a baptism of love almost to the overwhelming of the physical frame, accompanied with an inexpressible consciousness of purity, a consciousness only understood by those who have received it.

Since that blessed day, May 21, 1835, I think there has not been one hour in which my soul has not been sweetly resting in the precious atonement. Though the witness of the Spirit has not been withdrawn for an hour, yet there have been instances when sudden temptation has assumed so much the appearance of sinful emotion as to cause keen pain; but I have been invariably enabled almost instantly to appropriate that blood which cleanseth from all sin. These acts of faith have generally been immediately succeeded by a most joyous assurance. Since I have been enabled to abide in Christ I believe the language of my heart has been:

"No cross, no suffering, I decline,  
Only let my whole heart be Thine."

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### 03 -- PHOEBE PALMER'S ACCOUNT OF HER SISTER'S SANCTIFICATION

In her book, "Faith and Its Effects," (hdm2401) Phoebe Palmer also records how her sister, Sarah Lankford, was helped into heart holiness by Timothy Merritt:

You ask if I ever knew any one so long defamed at this point as you have been. Yes; I have known some who have been eminent examples in faith, in purity, and in doctrine, who, in like manner with yourself, have been called to endure the trial of their faith. One of these is my sister in the flesh, [Sarah Lankford] who in the enjoyment of this blessing was in Christ before me, and whose example and prayers have been very helpful in all my heavenward way. Her experience has been written, from which I will quote briefly.

After she had most solemnly and irrevocably resolved, in obedience to God, to "reckon herself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," she waited about one week before she received any sensible assurance of the fact, (to use your expressions,) "that she was thus dead, and thus alive." But she had counted the cost of living a life of faith, and was not to be moved from her steadfastness. While thus lingering with intense longings, the Spirit, through the medium of the written word, encouraged her faith greatly, by the continuous application of these words: "Blessed is she that believeth; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."

She continued, though buffeted and variously tempted, steadfast and unmovable, until one day, occasion requiring that she should call on the Rev. T. Merritt, she said something expressive of her interest on the subject of holiness. "You enjoy that blessing, do you not, sister?" said Mr. M, She was startled at the inquiry, for she had not yet thought of confessing it, and soon replied, "I have dared to reckon myself dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God,

through our Lord Jesus Christ; but I do not know but that it may be presumption." "Why, sister, presumption lies in doubting God, not in believing him," he returned.

She had now joined confession to her faith; it was not enough that with her heart she had believed, the order of God not being fully met, until she had made confession with her mouth; and now she was filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Throughout body, soul, and spirit, she felt the holy fire of divine love penetrating, as it were, her entire being. So great was the weight of glory which rested upon her for several days and nights in succession, that her mortal frame could not have long borne up under it, had not the Lord in a measure staid his hand. Ever since, her faith has been steady and active, inclining to ceaseless and well-directed efforts in promoting the cause of the Redeemer, rather than those fitful, and often misguided endeavors, which the habits of those present, whose efforts and faith are graduated by the state of their emotions. May our faith lead us to "go and do likewise."

Let me next present accounts of how Timothy Merritt began "The Guide To Christian Perfection" which was later named "The Guide To Holiness."

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#### 04 -- WALTER C. PALMER'S ACCOUNT OF HOW MERRITT BEGAN "THE GUIDE"

In 1835, Merritt led Phoebe (Worrall) Palmer's sister, Sarah (Worrall) Lankford, into heart holiness. In 1839, Sarah Lankford helped inspire Merritt to begin "The Guide." In George Hughes biography, "The Beloved Physician, Walter C. Palmer," hdm2176, the story is related thus:

Dr. Palmer, with his quick discerning eye, saw wide fields opened in this direction, in which he might reap abundantly for the Master. His eye was single in the matter. No mercenary motive actuated him to seize upon this powerful engine, the press.

A train of providential circumstances, which are interesting to review, led him to engage in this work. When Rev. Timothy Merritt was agent of the Methodist Book Concern in New York, he attended a love-feast at one time in the Mulberry Street (now St. Paul's) Church. Some very blessed testimonies were given. He remarked to Mrs. [Sarah] Lankford, at the close of the meeting, "How well it would be if these testimonies could be printed, and scattered abroad for the good of others!" to which Mrs. Lankford gave a hearty assent.

The thought thus inspired was a life-thought, and had a practical embodiment. On his return to Boston, at the expiration of his term, he entered upon the work of publishing a periodical called "The Guide to Christian Perfection." It is worthy of remark here, that the same gentle hand of Mrs. Lankford which God made instrumental in the establishment of the Tuesday Meeting, helped to open the great publishing interest in New York on the line of Christian Holiness, which has been blessed to so many thousands. Her words of encouragement to Rev. Timothy Merritt inspirited him and led him to go forward.

Subsequently the work was prosecuted by others, with more or less success, so that the magazine held on its way. At length it fell into the hands of Dr. Walter C. Palmer, by purchase, taking the name of the "Guide to Holiness, and Revival Miscellany." During the lifetime of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer, she edited the magazine, chiefly, and such was its popularity that at one time it reached a circulation of 36,000. The doctor did not actively engage in the publishing business, his sphere during the early part of his life being the medical profession and in later years holy evangelism, as we have seen. He kept his hand, however, upon the press, using his means, counseling and directing, but committing the active management to others.

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## 05 -- SOME FACTS ABOUT "THE GUIDE"

Most of the following is taken from my own compilation entitled, "The Legacy Of The Guide To Holiness," hdm0717.

From 1839 until past 1900, the "Guide to Perfection," later known as the "Guide to Holiness," was a greatly used and powerful holiness publication. In numerous holiness homes, it was no doubt eagerly anticipated, received with joy, read and re-read, cherished as a treasure, and prayerfully shared with those who were seeking the second work of grace. How many hundreds and thousands were helped into the second rest through the reading of this holiness paper only God can total, but judging from what information I have read, it was apparently an impressive number. Long before the first National Campmeeting for the Promotion of Holiness, the Guide was in circulation. Indeed, the Guide seems to have been one of the primary instruments used of God to bring into existence the Holiness Movement in America. Thus, it may have been Timothy Merritt's founding of this mighty Holiness paper and its following impact that prompted William McDonald to dub him "The Headlight" of the Holiness "Movement."

Yet, perhaps relatively few holiness people today know much, if anything, about the "Guide to Holiness." It is good when modern holiness people know nothing about "T.V. Guide," and it is no big loss if they know nothing about "Guideposts," but it is sad that so many of them know little or nothing about the "Guide to Holiness" -- especially in light of how great the legacy of the Guide has been to holiness on our continent.

The following comments by Dexter S. King, taken from one of his articles about the Guide, entitled, "Our Past and Our Future," verifies 1839 as the year in which Timothy Merritt began the Guide: "Here, beloved in the Lord, we close the labors and responsibilities of another year. And this consideration has led us to reflections on the past. It is now nine years since we commenced the publication of this work, designed, and, as we believed, well calculated to spread Scriptural Holiness in the church of God." This quotation from D. S. King appeared in Volume 13 of the Guide, dated "From January to July, 1848." 1848 minus nine years would place the beginning of publishing the Guide at 1839.

The reader might note here that Timothy Merritt's commencement of publishing "The Guide" occurring in 1839 was only about 6 years prior to his death in 1845. Merritt died at age

70, and thus he began "The Guide" at about age 64. The paragraph below, also from Dexter S. King's above-mentioned article, shows that he, D. S. King, became the editor of the Guide, following Merritt's having suffered a stroke that struck him before the first issue was published.

"It was far from our original purpose to assume editorial responsibilities. Other cares and other duties filled the hand and heart; but the joys of full salvation were sweet, so we were willing, yea, desirous to improve the facilities we then enjoyed for conducting famishing souls to the fountain of living waters. A periodical, devoted entirely to the subject of Sanctification, was unknown; the success of such an one was uncertain: some judicious brethren in the church thought the undertaking hazardous. But without a hope of pecuniary benefit, we resolved on an experiment for one year.

"A venerable father in the ministry, a ready and able writer, an ardent lover of the cause -- a man whose praise was in all the churches [It is quite evident that King refers here Timothy Merritt, the paper's Founder] -- was engaged as editor; but before the issue of the first number, a palsying hand was upon him, laying low the physical powers, and making awful waste of the mental, though to the praise of divine grace be it said, the spiritual man was preserved in his integrity and comeliness. Our friend had become unable to his undertaking, even in the preparation of the first number, and he was soon obliged to entirely abandon the service."

The following is taken from hdm2176, "The Beloved Physician, Walter C. Palmer," by George Hughes. It reveals some of the might impact of "The Guide To Holiness."

The Rev. Timothy Merritt, after leaving the editorship of the Christian Advocate of New York, commenced the publication of the Guide to Holiness [in 1839] which was the first periodical ever published on that subject, either in Europe or America. Some of the old pioneers still lingered in our midst, and Father Kent, of the New England Conference, wrote, when over eighty years; "I feel as if I wanted to get on some high eminence where my voice could be heard the world over, and cry to all the hosts of Israel, 'Ye have compassed this mountain long enough; it is time to go up and possess the land.'" This was the feeling of many. of the disciples of Jesus. A very general interest was awakened in many of the Churches.

Conventions were held by different denominations on the subject in 1842, in New York, Newark, and Newburg. As might be expected, opposition was aroused, and two Presbyterian ministers, Rev. Henry Belden and William Hill, were arraigned before their Presbytery and deposed; the moderator saying, "Brethren, we love your spirit and your experience, but we cannot abide your doctrines." The New York correspondent of the Western Christian Advocate wrote something like this: "Just now there is a considerable flurry or buzz on the subject of Christian Perfection, or in the more fashionable dialect, 'Holiness.' The author of the 'Way of Holiness' [Phoebe Palmer] stands at the head of [the movement in New York, and Prof. Upham in Maine."

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The following Life-Sketch of Timothy Merritt is taken from Abel Stevens' M. E. History, Volume 3 (hdm0226).

Timothy Merritt was "a prince and a great man in Israel." He was born in Barkhamstead, Conn., October, 1775, and trained in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" by devoted parents, who were early members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in that state. About the seventeenth year of his life he experienced the renewing grace of God. Religion entirely imbued his nature, and marked him, from that period to his death, as a consecrated man. One who first led him into the pulpit [Enoch Mudge], and who held with him during life the communion of a most intimate friendship, says:

"I became acquainted with him at his father's, in the town of Barkhamstead, in the northwestern part of the state of Connecticut, in the year 1794. I was introduced to him as a pious young man of great hope and promise to the infant Church in that place and vicinity. After attending the usual preaching and other exercises at Barkhamstead, on the forenoon of the Sabbath, he accompanied me about five or six miles to another appointment, and, probably for the first time, took a part in the public exercises of the sanctuary. He had before been in the habit of improving his gifts in private and social meetings.

"He entered the traveling connection in 1796, and was stationed on New London Circuit, on which I had traveled in 1794. This circuit, at that time, was about three hundred miles in extent. Here he was both acceptable and useful. The next year, 1797, he joined me in my labors on Penobscot Circuit, in the province of Maine. His presence to me was as the coming of Titus to Paul, (2 Cor. vii, 6.). We entered heart and hand into the arduous labors required of us in that new country, where we had to cross rivers by swimming our horses, ford passes, and through our way into new settlements by marked trees.

"The Lord gave him favor in the eyes of the people, and his heart was encouraged and his hands strengthened by a good revival, in which much people were added unto the Lord. Here our sympathies and Christian friendship were matured and strengthened as the friendship of David and Jonathan."

The next year, 1798, he was sent to Portland [Maine] Circuit, where he continued two years. In 1800 and 1801 he was on Bath and Union Circuit; and in 1802 on Bath Station. In 1803 he located, and continued in Maine about ten or eleven years, and then removed to the place of his nativity, [Connecticut] where he remained till 1817, when he again entered the Itinerancy.

The fourteen years of his location were years of great labor, toil, and hardship. He did not locate to leave the work, but that the infant Churches might be eased of the burden of supporting him and his growing family, and that they might have no excuse for not supporting their regular stationed preachers.

Besides the constant and arduous labors required for his own support, he filled appointments in different towns constantly on the Sabbath, and delivered occasional weekday lectures; as most of the stationed preachers were unordained, he had to visit the societies to administer the ordinances, and assist in organizing and regulating affairs necessary for the peace



and prosperity of the cause. Occasionally he attended quarterly-meetings for the presiding elders, from twenty to a hundred miles from home, taking appointments on his way. He went to them in canoes, and skated to them in winters, on the streams and rivers, ten, twelve, or fourteen miles.

When he re-entered the traveling connection, in 1817, he was stationed in Boston. He continued in important appointments down to 1831, when he was stationed at Malden, and devoted much of his time to the editorial duties of Zion's Herald. In 1832-1835 he was at New York, as assistant editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal. Thence he returned to the New England Conference, and was stationed at Lynn, South Street, where he continued two years. His health and physical energies failing, he received a superannuated relation to the Conference [in 1838], which continued till his life closed.

Merritt possessed rare intellectual vigor. His judgment was remarkably clear and discriminating, grasping the subjects of its investigation, in all their compass, and penetrating to their depths. He lacked fancy and imagination, but was thereby, perhaps, the better fitted for his favorite courses of thought -- the investigation and discussion of the great doctrinal truths of religion. His predilection for such subjects was not a curious propensity to speculation, but an interest to ascertain and demonstrate the relations of fundamental tenets to experimental and practical piety. This was the distinguishing characteristic of his preaching.

Like St. Paul, he delighted to discuss the "mystery of godliness," and illustrate its "greatness." Dangerous error shrunk in his presence. The doctrine of Christian perfection was his favorite theme, and he was a living example of it. "Holiness to the Lord was his constant motto," says his friend, Enoch Mudge; "he was emphatically a man of a single eye, a man of one work. He literally forsook all to follow Christ and seek the salvation of his fellow-men.

"Both his mental and physical system were formed for the work. He had a muscular energy which was fitted for labor and fatigue. I remember his saying to me one morning, after having performed what to me and others would have been a fatiguing journey, 'I feel as fresh to start, if it were needful, on a journey of a thousand miles, as I did when I started on this.' His mind was of a thoughtful and serious turn, and of great activity. He was constantly grasping for new subjects of inquiry and new scenes of usefulness. In prayer he was grave, solemn, and fervent. In public devotions I have sometimes seen him when he appeared as if alone with his God. An undue familiarity of expression never fell from his lips in prayer; he truly sanctified the Lord God in his heart, and honored him with his lips.

"When his physical energy gave way, his active mind felt the shock and totterings of the earthly tabernacle. This was the time for the more beautiful development of Christian resignation and submission. He wrestled to sustain himself under the repeated shocks of a species of paralysis which weakened his constitution and rendered it unfit for public labor, by clouding and bewildering his mind. But here patience had her perfect work. A calm submission spread a sacred halo over the closing scenes of life. Even here we had a chastened and melancholy pleasure in noticing the superiority of the mental and spiritual energies, which occasionally gleamed out over his physical imbecility and prostration. We saw a noble temple in ruins, but the divine Shekinah had not forsaken it."

He did extraordinary service for Methodism. His preaching and devout life promoted it; he was continually writing for it, and some of his publications ranked high in its early literature; he was a champion in its anti-slavery contests; he was active in its efforts for missions and education. No man of his day had more prominence in the Eastern Churches, for either the excellence of his life or the importance of his services. He died at Lynn, Mass., in 1845.

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#### 07 -- MATTHEW SIMPSON'S SKETCH OF TIMOTHY MERRITT

The following brief sketch is from Matthew Simpson's Cyclopedia of Methodism, hdm0397.

MERRITT, Timothy, of the New England Conference, M. E. Church, was born at Barkhamstead, Conn., in October, 1775, and died at Lynn, Mass., in 1845. He was converted in 1792, entered the traveling connection in 1796, and was stationed on the New London circuit, which at that time was about 300 miles in extent. His next circuit was in the new Penobscot country, Maine, which was hardly yet opened out of the forest. He located in 1803 in order to relieve the churches from the burden of supporting himself and his growing family, and continued located for fourteen years, but labored actively as a preacher, while earning his own living during the whole time. He returned to the traveling work in 1817, and filled important appointments till 1832, when he became for four years assistant editor of *The Christian Advocate and Journal*, at New York. In 1831, while stationed at Malden, Mass., he devoted a part of his time to the editorship of *Zion's Herald*. He was appointed to the South Street church, Lynn, Mass., in 1836, where he served for two years, after which, in 1838, he took a superannuated relation. He was a strong polemic writer in defense of the doctrines and polity of the church, and was a faithful preacher.

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#### 08 -- MORE INVOLVING TIMOTHY MERRITT FROM STEVENS' M. E. HISTORIES

The following excerpts are taken from Abel Stevens M. E. History, Vol. 4, hdm0244.

The session lasted two days, Wednesday and Thursday. Ten preachers were present: Timothy Merritt, John Broadhead, Robert Yallely, Aaron Humphrey, Roger Searle, Joshua Taylor, Jesse Stoneman, Enoch Mudge, and John Finnegan; Asbury made the tenth. On Wednesday "we were closely engaged all day," writes Lee, "much united in love and in the work of the ministry; we had some good accounts, from different places, of a gracious revival of religion." Timothy Merritt cheered them with news of the triumphs of the truth along the banks of the Penobscot; Enoch Mudge, who had been appointed to Pleasant River, had spent much time with him, and they jointly extended the circuit many new settlements; the word sped its way, and one hundred and fifty-three souls had been gathered into the new societies, besides hundreds of converts, who either entered other communions, or as yet none. Kennebec Circuit had heretofore yielded no returns, but now reported one hundred and five. On Bath Circuit about seventy had been added to the little flock. Such were some of the "good accounts" of which Lee speaks.

Nearly one thousand Methodists had been raised up in the province, though but about four years had passed since Philip Wager was appointed as the first Methodist preacher to labor exclusively within its limits...

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In 1798 Joshua Soule was received at the next Conference, and appointed, with Timothy Merritt, to Portland Circuit. Merritt, still young and vigorous, was a congenial mind, thirsting alike for knowledge and holiness, and their reciprocal influence could not but be mutually profitable, so far as their continual travels and labors would admit. After staying one year more in Maine, during which he traveled a circuit on Union River, he passed to Massachusetts, and was appointed in 1801, 1802, and 1803, respectively, to Sandwich, Needham, and Nantucket. In 1804 he returned to his native state, and traveled two years as presiding elder of the district of Maine. This was the only district in the province at that period; he had, therefore, the oversight of the entire Methodist interest of that large section of New England.

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#### Enoch Mudge Had Great Success With Merritt

"The Conference for 1797 was held in Wilbraham. The distance was so great, and the calls for labor so many, that I continued in the work at Penobscot. I was stationed at Pleasant River, to open a new circuit in that region. The calls, however, being many and great for preaching in the vicinity of Penobscot River, I opened many new fields of labor, in connection with the Penobscot circuit, and, Timothy Merritt being stationed there, we continued our labors together on this circuit, much enlarged, so that it was afterwards divided into several circuits and stations.

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## Enoch Mudge Was Both Merritt's Co-laborer and An Elected Legislator

The church at Orrington will ever owe a grateful obligation to that good Providence which identified the name and saintly memory of Enoch Mudge with its early fortunes.

It was during his residence in that town that he was honored with an election to the legislature of Massachusetts. The ecclesiastical system of Massachusetts was still onerous on the, dissenting religious bodies. The "standing order" was recognized as a sort of state church. Civil prosecutions were even resorted to, for obtaining tithes for the support of that religious party. Methodists, still living, had their cattle seized and sold at auction, and were themselves thrown into prison, for their refusal to support a creed at which their religious convictions revolted. The dissenting denominations joined in a general movement of opposition to this anti-Christian and anti-republican oppression.

With a view to the promotion of their object, Mr. Mudge was elected a member of the legislature, as were many other ministers of the Gospel, of all dissenting denominations. The speaker's table was loaded with petitions, and the result was, the passage of what has since been called the RELIGIOUS FREEDOM BILL. In 1815-16, he was again honored with an election to the legislature. In the latter year he concluded to remove from Maine, with a view, he writes,

"To recover my health, or rather to leave my family in a situation which I deemed more favorable for their comfort, in case of my decease, which appeared to be likely to take place at no distant period. The winter after moving to Lynn, I was more confined, and under the care of a physician, whose prescriptions, by the divine blessing, were rendered peculiarly beneficial; so that, by the time of the next Conference, I was able to take an appointment in Boston, where, by careful attention for two years (1817-18), although the duties of the station were arduous, I was much recruited in health. The Lord revived his work, and Brother Timothy Merritt and myself labored in much harmony, peace, and comfort."

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The following excerpts are taken from Abel Stevens History, Vol. 3, hdm0226:

Enoch Mudge, Timothy Merritt, and Joshua Taylor -- Mudge writes:

"This," he writes, "was a most important crisis in my life. I was a youth in my eighteenth year, leaving my father's house, from which I had not been absent a week at a time in the course of my life. The Methodists were a denomination little known, generally opposed and disputed in every place they approached. Never had a preacher of this order been raised in New England before. All eyes were opened for good or for evil. Hopes, fears, and reproaches were alive on the subject. My friends felt and prayed much for me but my own mind was keenly sensible of the importance of the undertaking. Anxiety and incessant application to duty brought on a distressing pain in my head, and finally threw me into a fever within two weeks after leaving home. The Lord was gracious, and kept my mind in a state of resignation and peace. I felt that it was a chastening for reluctance to duty, and strove to be more entirely devoted to the work. I was very sick for a short time, but got out as soon as possible. It had been reported that I was dead,

and one man, who felt an interest in my case, came to the house to make arrangements for my funeral. When I set out on my circuit again I was hardly able to sit on my horse, and suffered much through weakness and distress occasioned by riding. I met with much better acceptance than I feared. With feelings of unutterable gratitude, I returned at the close of the year to my father's house in peace, health, and gladness of heart, to see my friends and attend Conference. Never did my parents appear so dear. Never did the quiet and retired scenes of home appear so precious. But I had no home now. I felt I was but a visitor. It would be as useless as impossible to try to describe my emotions. With a heart ready to burst with yearning for home, and the early attachments of my first Christian friendship, I left for my new appointment on New London Circuit, which required about three hundred miles travel to compass it. I attended Conference at Wilbraham, September 8, 1794, and went thence, in company with Jesse Lee, to New London, and commenced my labors. Here was a very laborious field for three preachers. The senior preacher, Wilson Lee, was taken sick, and called off from his labors." We have seen his mission thence to Southold, L. I. "I had," continues Mudge, "daily renewed cause of gratitude for the abundant goodness of God to such a feeble, utterly unworthy instrument as he graciously deigned to use for the good of precious souls. Riding, visiting, preaching, class and prayer-meetings, took up the time every day in the week. After the second quarter was past, which I felt was profitable to me, and I hope to many others, I went to supply the place of a preacher who had left Litchfield Circuit, Mass., and after going once around, I passed to Granville, Conn. This was an extensive field, and required much labor. Here I had the happiness of having Joshua Taylor as a fellow-laborer. I derived instruction and profit by a brotherly intercourse with him. On this circuit, also, I first became acquainted with Timothy Merritt, before he was a preacher. His piety and devotedness to God and the cause of religion gave an earnest of his future usefulness. He began to preach the next year. Our next Conference was held at New London. Here I received deacon's orders, and was appointed to Readfield Circuit, in the then Province of Maine. Long rides and bad roads, crossing rivers without ferry-boats, buffeting storms, breaking paths, sleeping in open cabins and log huts, coarse and scanty fare, all served to call out the energies of the mind and body. I assure you this was a pleasant task, and a soul-satisfying scene of labor, because the people were hungry for the word. O my blessed Master, may I hope to meet many in thy kingdom who then first heard and embraced the word of truth! Preaching places multiplied, our borders were enlarged, the Church increased, God prospered his cause.

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#### Merritt Was One Of The Mighty Men In Maine

Enoch Mudge and Joshua Hall brought them refreshing reports from Maine. The former had witnessed the rapid spread of the gospel along the banks of the Kennebec, where an additional circuit had been formed; the latter had been proclaiming it on both sides of the Penobscot, and had seen "the arm of the Lord made bare." They could both tell of hard fare, terrible winters, long journeys amid driving storms, and comfortless lodgings in log-cabins, through which the snow beat upon their beds; but also of divine consolations which had sanctified every suffering, and victories of the truth multiplying through the land. Lemuel Smith relieved the reports of declension from Massachusetts and Connecticut by news of an extensive revival on Granville Circuit, where nearly one hundred souls had been gathered into the Church

since their last session. Lawrence McCoombs reported severe combats and serious losses on New London Circuit, but was undaunted in his characteristic courage and sanguine hopes. Cyrus Stebbins brought the mournful intelligence that one of their number had fallen in the field since they last met, the youthful and devoted Zadok Priest. Asbury ordained seven deacons and five elders; three itinerants, compelled, probably, by sickness or want, took leave of their itinerant brethren and retired to the local ranks; but others, mightier men -- Timothy Merritt, John Broadhead, Elijah Woolsey, etc. -- stepped into their places, and the New England Methodist ministry presented a more imposing aspect of strength than had yet distinguished it.

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#### 09 -- MERRITT OPPOSED ORANGE SCOTT'S SCHISM

In 1837 the agitation of Orange Scott was occurring with those who severed from the M. E. Church to form the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Today, most Holiness folks would probably say that Orange Scott and his followers were in the right, because their agitation was in protest of Slavery -- a controversy which split the entire M. E. Church about 8 years later. However, Bishop Elijah Hedding opposed Scott's movement, and Timothy Merritt stood with Hedding on this issue -- as is confirmed by the following excerpt taken from "The Life and Times of Elijah Hedding," by Davis W. Clark, hdm0616.

It is due to Bishop Hedding to remark that he had made an effort during the year to adjust this unpleasant matter [The Orange Scott-Led Schism which formed the Wesleyan Methodist Church], so as not to be under the necessity of bringing it to the attention of the conference at all. The result of that effort will be best seen by the subjoined attestation or mutual friends, who were present:--

"The undersigned, members of the New England Conference, were present at a conversation which took place between Bishop Hedding and Rev. O. Scott some time in the month of September or October last, in Lynn, relative to certain statements contained in a letter of August 31, 1836, and published in Zion's Watchman, addressed by Rev. O. Scott to Bishop Hedding. In that conversation brother Scott admitted that a number of his statements were incorrect, (we should think seven or eight,) and he promised to correct them in a way which he presumed would give satisfaction. But we are of the opinion he has not done it, but rather made things worse in his second communication.

"1. Brother Scott says, 'Your zeal, however, to put down the abolitionists, and stop the discussion of the slave question, has been to me not only a matter of regret, but of surprise.'

"The bishop showed that he had made no effort to put down abolitionists, or stop the discussion of the slave question, but only to restrain certain brethren from what he deemed imprudent and unprofitable proceedings on that subject. Brother Scott admitted he was incorrect in this particular.

"2. The Pastoral Address alluded to in the letter does not 'attempt to silence' the discussion, but only to prevent brethren from performing acts in the discussion which the authors

of the Address believe to be improper. Brother Scott could not produce any evidence to the contrary.

"3. The letter attributes to the bishop the manifestation of 'a spirit of disdain' toward two hundred Methodist ministers, and more than three thousand Church members. This brother Scott admitted was without foundation.

"4. Brother Scott admitted that what he had said respecting the removal of a presiding elder was not strictly correct. Also, that the bishop has a right to remove a presiding elder for 'no cause,' was a mistake.

"5. The letter states that the bishop said, respecting the report on abolition, that 'there were some parts in it to which he should object.' The bishop said, 'There might be some things in it which he could not properly put to vote.' Brother Scott assented to this.

"6. What was written relating to the sanction of the Counter Appeal, he admitted was not strictly correct.

"7. There are several passages in the letter which represent the bishop as acting improperly, in allowing the minority to speak and consume time, which ought not to have been written; for members in the minority had a right to speak, as well as those in the majority. Brother Scott could make no very satisfactory reply.

"8. In another letter, published in said watchman of September 21, he says: 'Our president took, it is believed, an imprudent, if not an illegal course, in order to prevent that report from being acted on.' -- But the bishop told the conference several times over 'that we would take time at the close to attend to that report, and that the last evening he advised them to adjourn till the next day, and examine the report deliberately -- that he was willing to stay three days for it, if necessary.' Brother Scott ought to have published all this, if he published anything. Brother Scott admitted the above to be true.

"9. Brother Scott represents to the public, 'that he presumes a majority of the conference think the bishop oppressed them;' and yet, at the close, the conference gave the bishop a vote of thanks by a unanimous vote; and he said in our presence at Lynn, be presumed he voted for it.'

"On the statements relating to the powers of a bishop, in regulating the business of a conference, Bishop Hedding said he had no controversy with him, as it was with both of them a matter of opinion.

"In our opinion, the letter addressed to Bishop Hedding is not only incorrect in point of facts, but is greatly wanting in ministerial courtesy, such as should be manifested between equal, and especially be shown by a junior toward a senior -- a superintendent and a father in our Israel.

Finally, of all the men we have ever known, either in civil or ecclesiastical office, Bishop Hedding is the last who ought to be held up to the world as an oppressor and a tyrant.

(Signed)  
"Timothy Merritt,  
"Daniel Fillmore,  
"T. C. Pierce,  
"Lynn, May 26, 1837."

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## 10 -- MERRITT'S INVOLVEMENTS WITH JOSHUA SOULE

The following excerpts are taken from "The Life Of Joshua Soule" by Horace M. Du Bose, hdm0625 -- and the second paragraph of the first one below shows that Timothy Merritt was present at the organization of the Main Conference in 1798 -- just two years after he joined the M. E. Itinerancy in 1796:

In the year 1797-98 the Province of Maine was separated from the remainder of New England and erected into a district, with Joshua Taylor as presiding elder. There were but six circuits in this district; and of the chief, Readfield, Taylor was made senior pastor in addition to his duties as "president elder," with Robert Yalalee assistant or junior pastor. It was during this year that Joshua Soule completed his probation and became a member in full standing of the Avon congregation. In August, 1798, was held in the Readfield church the first Methodist Conference ever convened in the territory now embraced within the State of Maine. The Readfield church also enjoyed the distinction of being the first house of worship built by the Methodists in the province. It was a pretentious structure for the times and locality, and particularly so, considered as the property of the pikestaff followers of Asbury.

A Methodist Conference being a doubly novel occasion in the province, it was expected that the attendance upon it would be great. Five days previous to the sitting Bishop Asbury, traveling thither in company with Jesse Lee, prophesied that it would "probably draw the people from far and near." The expectation was not to be disappointed. "From one thousand to eighteen hundred souls," writes Asbury in his Journal, attended public preaching and ordination." A new or temporary gallery had been constructed in the church. This was so crowded with eager listeners that the timbers began to creak and threatened a collapse. An incipient panic was started, but was checked without serious consequences. Nine preachers sat with Asbury in this Conference. Jesse Lee was also present, but only as Bishop Asbury's traveling companion. Enoch Mudge, Timothy Merritt, and Joshua Taylor were the leaders of the rank. The district had, however, but recently lost by transfer Nicholas Snethen, long prominent as one of Asbury's associates and later still more prominent as one of the founders of the Methodist Protestant Church. The pastors reported a total of nearly one thousand members gathered in the Province, and this in the short space of five years, from a sparse and widely scattered population, in the face of all but insuperable difficulties and opposition. The O'Kelly defection in Virginia and the Hammitt controversy in South Carolina had cost the Connection a large total of members, but the marked success of the preachers in New England had helped to supply the loss. The whole of New England could now show a total of nearly five thousand members. It was not without reason that the soul of the heroic Lee rejoiced at what it was permitted him to see at the Readfield Conference.



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### Merritt Attended The New York Conference From Maine In 1799

There was no Conference held in New England for the year 1799, the appointments for the Eastern States being made at the Conference held in New York City, beginning June 19. In the previous year only seven sittings had been appointed for the entire connection, and for this year the number had been reduced to six.

There were two reasons for this. It had been felt by the preachers, and the feeling had been plainly expressed, that an unnecessary number of Conference meetings were being appointed. There being no Conference boundary lines then as now, the proximity of some of these meetings to one another resulted in much confusion. Besides this, Bishop Asbury was now alone in the superintendency, and his strength was at the lowest ebb. On May 26, less than a month before the opening of the Conference in New York, he wrote: "I have had great dejection of mind and awful calculations of what may be and what may never be. I have now groaned along three hundred miles from Baltimore." Again, on June 2, he wrote: "Dr. Anderson, Drs. Ridgely and Neadham considered my case; they advised a total suspension of preaching, fearing a consumption or a dropsy in the breast." But the way in which he "suspended" was to hold the Conference in Philadelphia four days thereafter and then push on to New York to preach and do double work in that sitting. Marvelous man!

I have searched in vain for some evidence that Joshua Soule attended the Conference which received him on trial. It is possible that of the ten preachers in the Maine District only Joshua Taylor, the presiding elder, and Timothy Merritt took the long journey to New York. It was not unusual for the presiding elder only to report in person where the work of an isolated field was to be considered at a distant sitting. It was a still more common procedure for the presiding elder to represent applicants for admission on trial; so that if Soule was really absent from the Conference in New York when his case was acted upon, he was in the succession of many precedents. Bishop Andrew, his colleague and close associate of after years, was not present at the Conference session in South Carolina which indorsed his application and gave him a place among the itinerants. The examinations of those days did not lay so much stress on literary preparation as on the tongue of good report under which the candidate's character and his zeal in evangelism came, and the presiding elder was his sponsor.

\* \* \*

### Merritt Appointed Preacher In Charge Of The Maine District

The Portland Circuit was this year the head station of the Maine District, as it had been in the previous year. To it Joshua Soule, the acolyte, was assigned as junior preacher, with Timothy Merritt as preacher in charge. This wilderness curacy was something unusual in extent, being five hundred miles in circumference and containing twenty-seven monthly appointments. Sometimes the two itinerants traveled together; but generally they moved in opposite directions, or else with a fortnight and a long reach of roadway between them. A few merchants and land

Owners, lumbermen, shipbuilders, fishermen, crofters, and laborers made up the people whom they found in their wide field. The old-new town of Portland, containing then not above two thousand people, and many villages gave a leaven of politeness and provincial culture to the whole. It was, socially speaking, the most important pastorate in the entire district, and, next to the Readfield Circuit, contained the largest Methodist population. It became to the rustic young evangelist from Sandy Valley at once a charge to be instructed in spiritual things and a schoolmaster to be used in passing himself through the rudiments of self-development and training.

No detailed record of this or other of Joshua Soule's years in Maine has been preserved. Unlike McKendree and Asbury, he kept no journal, nor did he leave other available documents. Bishop McTyeire, who twenty-five or more years ago set about to write the memoirs of his great colleague, abandoned the work because of the paucity of material at hand. But a new time has come, opening up to the biographer of the father of the Methodist Constitution not only new sources of information concerning the earlier years of his subject, but also aiding to new interpretations of his services rendered in the crucial and historic years of the Church's life. The story of these earlier years as I am putting it together from point to point has been winnowed from the pages of many authors or else made to appear through a study of the experiences and situations of several of the Bishop's contemporaries. However, but for the crown of distinguished service pressed upon his brow in later years, the story of his earlier sacrifices might have been as hopelessly lost as were those of others who labored in the same field. Dr. Stevens in his history expresses regret "that from the deficiency of the contemporary records of the Church names which should be precious in its memory must remain in its annals like those fixed stars of our firmament the remoteness of which occasions alike our ignorance of their conditions and their steadfastness of position and brilliance."

Like Taylor, Merritt was a young man, and had been but recently ordained a deacon. Thus it had been Soule's fortune to be in the close fellowship of only young men -- Mudge, Stebbins, Taylor, and Merritt. As to that, however, it could hardly have been otherwise. Nine out of every ten of the preachers of this period were men under forty.

The congeniality of Merritt and Soule was great. They mutually thirsted for holiness and knowledge. As described by one who knew him through many years, Merritt was possessed of a rare intellectual vigor. "His judgment was remarkably clear and discriminating, grasping the subjects of its investigation in all their compass and penetrating to their depths." He lacked fancy and imagination, and in this was not an uncongenial fellow-thinker with his junior, who was from the beginning most severely practical and logical. No man of his day had more prominence and influence in New England Methodism than Merritt. At a later period of his life he became one of the editors of Zion's Herald (Boston), and at a still later date was assistant editor of the New York Advocate and Journal. He, too, lived to see his youthful associate attain enduring distinction as a leader and lawgiver in Methodism. It is thus from the recorded memories of the few of Bishop Soule's early comrades who lived to see his greatness that we are enabled to retrieve enough material to reconstruct even the outlines of the story of his beginning.

The result of the joint labors of Merritt and Soule on the Portland Circuit for the year 1799 was a fair increase in the membership. There had also been some growth in the eastern

circuits, and a new work had been formed in the district. It is not now possible to tell how much the real increase in the Portland Circuit had been cut down by emigration eastward and the detachments made to form this new circuit. The successes of those years is not to be gauged by the figures found in statistical tables. The seeds of future harvests were sowed by men who must needs leave to far-off successors the full reaping. The reaping came in a time ordained of God; the manner of sowing was not less of his ordering. There were at the beginning many to hinder. These hindrances usually took a controversial turn of more or less bitterness. Sometimes they were trivial of nature. But whether one or the other, the polemics always found "the itinerating peddlers" equal to the issue.

A high authority in New England Methodist history describes a typical revival season in Maine in which Merritt was the chief human instrumentality. Its signs were those which marked the Jarratt and Shadford meetings in Virginia about the beginning of the Revolutionary War. The fire burned from house to house and from Community to community. The hymns sung through the wildwoods of Maine were not different in word or spirit from those sung in the assemblies of Virginia. The miracle of the Methodism of the eighteenth century was its victories in New England. With New England, Methodism received Joshua Soule.

From 1799, when he was with Timothy Merritt on Portland Circuit, to the end of his quadrennium on the Portland District -- nearly fourteen years -- Joshua Soule was closely identified with the city of Portland, and came to be one of its best-known and most influential citizens. During his later lifetime the popular mind thought of his New England history only in connection with the metropolis of his native State.

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Merritt Favored Conferences Appointing Their Presiding Elders -- This Was Opposed By Bishop McKendree

A few days previous to the episcopal election, though the Journal contains no note of the fact, Messrs. Merritt and Waugh revived in a motion submitted to the house the presiding elder question which had been voted down by so slender a majority in the General Conference of 1812, and which had also been rejected in the session of 1816. The Journal nowhere contains a statement of the form in which the Merritt and Waugh motion was put, but the information has been secured from an extraneous and reliable source. Bishop Paine, in his "Life and Times of Bishop McKendree," supplies the missing record, quoting it from an unpublished manuscript by Bishop Capers, who was himself a member of the General Conference of 1820 and an active participant in the debates on this motion.

This manuscript says: "Early in the second week of the General Conference of 1820 T. Merritt, of New England, seconded by B. Waugh, of Baltimore, moved so to amend the Discipline that the answer to the first question in Section 5 of Chapter 1., 'By whom are the presiding elders to be chosen?' to read as follows: 'Answer. By the Conferences.'"

When on the seventeenth day the motion was tabled "until tomorrow," as above related, it was that the mover of the postponement, Ezekiel Cooper, might bring forward a substitute that

would, as he supposed, "be accommodating to both parties." Both Bishop Capers and Bishop Emory, who were on opposite sides in this discussion, agree in their later writings that it was generally understood that Bishop George was the author of this paper. As recorded in the Journal it reads: "Resolved, etc., that the bishop or the president of such Annual Conference shall ascertain the number of presiding elders wanted, and shall nominate three times the number, out of which nomination the Conference shall, without debate, elect by ballot the presiding elders." It will be seen that this was the old demand of 1812 and 1816 slightly modified; but being a modification and receding materially from the unvarnished radicalism of the Merritt-Waugh motion, it was believed that it would "accommodate." The situation which it created was both interesting and serious.

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### Merritt Opposed Soule, Apparently After Believing The Latter Preached Antinomianism

[Bear in mind that the following was written by Horace M. Du Bose, who sympathized with Joshua Soule in the matter.]

The barbs of criticism which pricked the sensibilities of the silent and self-contained ecclesiastic were occasionally transformed into the sword edge of a determined judgment. At the session of the South Carolina Conference held at Augusta, Georgia, January 11, 1827, Bishop Soule preached "a very popular sermon" on "The Perfect Law of Liberty," and at the request of the Conference the same was printed. Ever-watchful eyes were following his daily acts and words. It soon began to be charged in a more or less public way that the teaching of this sermon was unsound in some of its main points, particularly as to the duty of Christians to observe the Sabbath. The names of Wilbur Fisk and John Emory were prominently connected with these charges, and it has been frankly averred that their purpose was to remove Soule from the episcopacy. It may be doubted that they cherished so extreme a purpose, but that they desired to see him reprimanded or otherwise seriously disciplined there can be no doubt. These charges gaining currency, the Southern and Western Conferences, particularly the former, came to the Bishop's defense in a determined way. The South Carolinians, led by Dr. Capers, threw down a challenge to the Bishop's accusers. The Mississippi Conference, where the Bishop presided and preached, probably repeating the South Carolina discourse, in the following autumn gave it out that the Bishop's orthodoxy went without question. At the General Conference the matter took shape in the hands of his critics. A member of the New England Conference had been expelled for heterodox teaching -- teachings not different from those sought to be fixed upon Soule. The expelled New Englander appealed to the General Conference. The case was discussed by Fisk, Emory, and others, and the brilliant orations of Fisk were seen by Soule's friends to be an unconcealed purpose to bring the sermon of the Bishop before an inquisitorial board of the Conference. The New England case being affirmed, a resolution was offered by L. McCoombs and T. Merritt (the latter Soule's old-time colleague) to the effect that the General Conference go at once into an investigation of the charge of heresy brought against the Bishop.

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In "The Life and Times of George Peck," written by himself, hdm0443, we have his account of Merritt's belief that Joshua Soule had preached false doctrine -- and, from Peck's comments I am inclined to think that Merritt felt that Soule had preached Antinomianism:

A somewhat unpleasant matter came before the General Conference in connection with Bishop Soule. Joshua Randall had been arraigned by the New England Conference for preaching false doctrine, and had been expelled. The doctrinal error for which he was tried consisted in his affirming that the moral law is abrogated by the Gospel. He appealed to the General Conference; the appeal had been tried, and the action of the New England Conference was affirmed. Bishop Soule had published a sermon on "The Law," in which, as some of the eastern delegates alleged, he had taught the same heresy. Lawrence McCombs and Timothy Merritt introduced a resolution to take up the Bishop's sermon, and, after a heated debate, succeeded in getting it referred to the Committee on the Episcopacy. The committee examined the discourse, and reported that it did not contain the errors which had been charged. In the debates which took place in the Committee, and also in the General Conference, Dr. Wilbur Fisk managed the argument, and made some strong points against the Bishop, but failed to convict him. Those who had introduced the question in regard to Mr. Soule's orthodoxy were not dissatisfied with the result, inasmuch as the action of the General Conference was of such a nature as to condemn the doctrine, while it exonerated the Bishop from the charge of teaching it.

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## 12 -- MERRITT'S PRESIDING ELDER PROPOSAL DEFEATED BY MCKENDREE

The following is taken from "William McKendree, A Biographical Study" by E. E. Hoss, hdm0575. I relates more about Merritt's favoring that Conference, not Bishops, appoint Presiding Elders, and it shows how Bishop McKendree prevailed over Timothy Merritt and Beverly Waugh in the matter:

Before Soule could be ordained -- that is to say, on Tuesday, May 16 -- Timothy Merritt and Beverly Waugh called up a resolution which they had previously introduced, providing for the election of the presiding elders by the Annual Conferences. The same old straw was to have another threshing, and a most vigorous one. A debate of great ability followed. It lasted for two whole days. Twenty-one speakers took part in it. Few converts, if any, were made by either side. After some parliamentary fencing by Ezekiel Cooper, it was finally moved by William Capers and Nathan Bangs that a special committee of six, three from each side, should be appointed to confer with the bishops and see whether something could not be devised that would be satisfactory to all parties. The motion prevailed.

The committee was composed of Ezekiel Cooper, John Emory, Nathan Bangs, Samuel G. Roszell, Joshua Wells, and William Capers. They met the bishops, but accomplished nothing by the interview, for the bishops themselves were divided. McKendree stood squarely against the innovation as involving an infraction of the Constitution. Roberts seemed to agree with him, but was not quite ready to assert himself. George, who had in him elements both of weakness and of stubbornness, would say nothing, though he knew perfectly well what he was going to do. This

interview took place on the late afternoon or evening of Tuesday, May 18th. The committee adjourned to meet again early on the morning of the 19th. Roszell, Wells, Bangs, and Capers kept the engagement, but Emory and Cooper, for some reason or other, failed to appear, and as a result of their absence no action was then taken. When the Conference adjourned at noon, however, Bishop George requested the committee to meet him in the gallery of the church and revealed the fact that he was in favor of what he called certain "accommodating" resolutions. Roszell was in no very good humor and interrogated the bishop quite narrowly. But after a free talk the three Constitutionals, Capers, Wells, and Roszell, consented in a moment of weakness and as a peace measure to report the following resolutions, embodying substantially Bishop George's own views:

[Resolved, That, whenever in any Annual Conference there shall be a vacancy or vacancies in the office of presiding elder, in consequence of his period of service of four years having expired, or the bishop wishing to remove any presiding elder, or by death, resignation, or otherwise, the bishop or president of the Conference, having ascertained the number wanted from any of these causes, shall nominate three times the number, out of which the Conference shall elect by ballot, without debate, the number wanted; provided that when there are more than one wanted not more than three at a time shall be nominated nor more than one at a time shall be elected; provided, also, that in case of any vacancy or vacancies in the office of presiding elder in the interval of any Annual Conference the bishops shall have authority to fill such vacancy or vacancies until the ensuing Annual Conference.]

[Resolved, That the presiding elders be, and they hereby are, made the advisory council of the bishop or bishops or president of the Conference in stationing the preachers.]

[Ezekiel Cooper,]  
[Stephen G. Roszell,]  
[N. Bangs,]  
[J. Wells,]  
[J. Emory,]  
[William Capers]

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13 -- MERRITT'S BOOK, "CHRISTIAN MANUAL"

Gene Long, in his publication, "A Holiness Biography," hdm2206, records the following:

MERRITT, Timothy - - Christian Manual, A Treatise on Christian Perfection - - published by N.Y.: N. Bangs & J. Emory, 1825.

Thus we can see that Timothy Merritt's strong, printed advocacy of Christian Perfection pre-dated his founding of "The Guide To Christian Perfection" by 14 years. John Allen Wood made the following quotations from Merritt's "Christian Manual" in his book, Perfect Love, hdm0181:

3. Rev. Timothy Merritt says: "The word of God plainly declares that those who are born again, even in the lowest sense, do not continue in sin that they can not live any longer therein." -- Christian Manual.

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3. Rev. Timothy Merritt says: "If Christians would not backslide, and bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ, they must go on to perfection. There is no medium between going forward and drawing back. As soon as any one ceases to press forward, he declines in spiritual life." -- Christian Manual.

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In another of his books, "Purity and Maturity," hdm0182, J. A. Wood again quotes from Merritt's "Christian Manual":

Rev. Timothy Merritt, in his "Manual on Christian Perfection," replies to the idea of a gradual sanctification, obtained by growth in grace, little by little, as follows:-- "The work may be accomplished in one day, or one hour, and yet be a gradual or progressive work. A long time is not necessary in order to a gradual work of this kind. The gradations may be as follows:--

"1. Light is imparted to the soul.

"2. Conviction is fastened upon the conscience.

"3. A desire springs up to be delivered from all sin.

"4. He confesses and prays for deliverance.

"5. He is convinced that he cannot cleanse his own heart, and therefore casts himself upon the mercy of God for this.

"6. The work is wrought in him. Now, it is evident that these several actions may be performed in a short time."

If this process be correct, as given by the sainted Merritt, and we maintain that it is; how clear that the soul is not being sanctified or purified at all during what is called the gradual process, or during the first five items stated. Obtaining light, receiving conviction, hungering after purity, and confession and prayer, are in no sense the work of sanctifying the soul. They may each exist, and the soul remain unsanctified.

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The following testimony by an unnamed Holiness Witness shows the great influence of Merritt's "Christian Manual". It is taken from "A Modern Pentecost" by Adam Wallace,

hdm0325, "Embracing a Record of the Sixteenth National Campmeeting for the Promotion of Holiness Held at Landisville, Pa., July 23rd to August 7th, 1873.

"Years ago I read Timothy Merritt's book on holiness. I had no one to inquire of as to how I might obtain this great blessing; but I wrestled in prayer before God at my home, until he filled my soul with perfect love. I went to my pastor and told him what I felt. He asked me: 'Do you feel any more rising of anger or pride?' I said, 'No.' Then said he, 'You have the blessing, and the witness of it will come.' It did come, sure enough. Sometimes the flame burnt low, but I nursed it up. I had to testify all alone, and doing so I never lost this pledge of love. I can now rejoice in the salvation of all my children, and the raising up of a great cloud of witnesses to the grace that saves from all sin."

\* \* \*

From "The Blessing of Perfect Love" by Dexter S. King, hdm0290, comes the following -- obviously another reference to Merritt's "Christian Manual":

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The conviction for this blessing far exceeded that for justification, though I felt no guilt or condemnation. My sympathetic powers were acute; a tender spirit of weeping often melted my soul in prayer. I profited much by reading the Lives of Bramwell and Benjamin Abbot. Merritt's Address, in pamphlet form, on Christian Perfection, was made a great blessing to me, especially that part treating upon the dispensation of the Holy Ghost.

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This final testimony to the influence of Merritt's "Christian Manual" is taken from hdm1285, my own collection of Holiness Testimonies, titled, "How They Entered Canaan."

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Besides praying night and day for purity of heart, he read and studied on this, to the exclusion of almost every other theme. The Bible was his textbook. He examined, also, Wesley, Fletcher, Watson, Benson, and other Wesleyan authors, with Merritt's Manual, Mahan, and the Guide to Christian Perfection. One or another of those works was almost his constant companion.

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14 -- TIMOTHY MERRITT WAS OBVIOUSLY A SANCTIFIED MAN

Unfortunately, I found nothing in my research giving the account of Timothy Merritt's entire sanctification, but he was obviously a sanctified man. His life and writings both attest to this. And, J. A. Wood attested to it in the following, taken from his book, "Perfect Love," hdm0181:



193. How did this doctrine stand related to original American Methodism?

The same as it did to English Methodism. It was the grand theme preached, and urged upon believers by the leading minds of the American Methodist Church, and a large number of both preachers and people enjoyed the experience. No inconsiderable proportion of our early ministers enjoyed and professed this grace; among these were Bishop Coke, Bishop Asbury, Bishop George, Bishop McKendree, Bishop Hamline, Drs. Olin, Bangs, Fisk; Revs. Merritt, Garrettson, and a great multitude of mighty men of God.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 15 -- TIMOTHY MERRITT -- A SANCTIFIED SAINT, FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

John Edward Risley wrote an autobiographical book titled, "Some Experiences Of A Methodist Itinerant In A Ministry Of Half A Century, hdm0727. Since both Timothy Merritt and Risley worked in the New England area of the M. E. Church, I think it quite likely that his reference to "Father Merritt" was to Timothy Merritt -- Risley in the excerpt below being at the time a young man just beginning his ministry when Timothy Merritt was his old, weathered and experienced senior. It appears to me that the incidents related in the excerpt may have occurred after Merritt had begun "The Guide To Christian Perfection" and after he had had the stroke which made it impossible for him to act as its Editor. If this is not the case, then the events seem to have occurred at least some time after Merritt's superannuation in 1838:

"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."

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 16 -- TIMOTHY MERRITT'S HOME-GOING

Born in October of 1775 at Barkhamstead, Connecticut, Timothy Merritt was converted at about the age of 17 in 1792. His death occurred in 1845 at Lynn, Massachusetts. Thus, he lived approximately 70 years, served the Lord for some 53 of those years, and his ministry covered close to 50 years of his life.

The following, brief excerpt from "The Life and Times of Elijah Hedding," by Davis W. Clark, hdm0616, mentions the home-going of this great man of God:

"In the spring of 1845 he [Elijah Hedding] assisted Bishop Waugh at the session of the Baltimore Conference, which commenced on the twelfth of March. He also met the Troy Conference, at Schenectady, May 7th; assisted Bishop Waugh at the New York, immediately after; the Black River, at Mexicoville, July 9th; the Oneida, at Utica, July 30th; and the Genesee, at Buffalo, August 20th.

"During the spring of this year he [Elijah Hedding] was deeply affected by the death of three ministers -- with two of whom he had been long and intimately acquainted. The first of these was the Rev. James Covell, who died while the Troy Conference was in session. He had been pastor of the State Street Church, in Albany, and in that church Bishop Hedding preached his funeral sermon, to an immense audience, from 2 Tim. iv, 6-8. The second was the Rev. Samuel Cochran, at whose funeral he was called to preach, in Poughkeepsie, a few days after the occasion just mentioned. He had known Mr. Cochran from his youth, even before he was a preacher, and had been intimately acquainted with him during the whole period of his ministry, which commenced only three years later than his own. The very day Mr. Cochran's funeral had been attended, he received intelligence of the death of the Rev. Timothy Merritt -- an aged and excellent minister, and a long and well-trying friend of the bishop. His language, on the reception of this news, was: "These three brethren have just gone to heaven. Their warfare is over. I must fight a little longer. Lord, help me to conquer!"

\* \* \*

In bringing this compilation to a conclusion, I shall repeat an excerpt from hdm2354, "Illustrated History Of Douglas Camp Meeting," by Edward Davies, and include with it the words of a song or poem that followed it:

Bro. McDonald said: "This holiness movement began in Boston. Timothy Merritt was the headlight of this movement as a specialty. He established the holiness meeting at New York. Wilbur Fisk was sanctified, and lay five hours under the power of the Holy Ghost, under a sermon preached by Timothy Merritt, at Eastham, Mass. Bro. Gorham came in as an associate, and was one of the grandest."

"Their toils are past, their work is done,  
And they are fully blest:  
They fought the fight, the victory won,  
And entered into rest.

"Then let our sorrows cease to flow,

God has recalled His own;  
And let our hearts in every woe,  
Still say -- "Thy will be done."

\* \* \*

Yes, Timothy Merritt, "THE HEADLIGHT OF THE HOLINESS MOVEMENT," went to glory in 1845 -- but not before he left behind him a massive and mighty witness to 2nd Blessing Holiness, in spoken Words, in zealous, sacrificial, faithful Works, and in inspired, Holiness Writings that will no doubt help souls into the experience of entire sanctification until Jesus Comes Again!

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THE END