

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Our New History Soon..	Page 1
General Conference meets..	1
Memberships	2
Ministerial Members of Gen. Conf.	2-3
Report on "Christian Home"	2
Excerpt from the Autobiography of William C. S. Pellowe	4-5-6
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OUR NEW HISTORY
SOON TO BE PUBLISHED

Did you note the picture of Rev. Verner Kilgren, in the February 19 Michigan Christian Advocate? As Chairman of the Michigan Area Historical Commission, he was inspecting the manuscript for the second volume of the history of "The Methodist Church in Michigan: The Twentieth Century", written by Dr. Douglas MacNaughton of Adrian College.

The typesetting and composition, or first stage of printing, have been done by the staff of the Michigan Christian Advocate. The printing will be completed by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company of Grand Rapids, the publishers of our first volume.

Our new history will be out soon, probably by the first of April! It will contain 647 pages, and about 100 illustrations. The pre-publication price is only \$6.50. Act now! The cost will be \$7.00 after publication. This is less per page than the first volume published nine years ago. It is most reasonable for a book of this size; check comparable books in your local bookstore for an eyeopener.

Ministers, long time members, individuals interested in history -- all should be planning to buy the new history. Don't forget to get a copy for your church library. Act now to save money. Send your order to:

Ford Caesar, 3116 N. Grand River Ave.
Lansing, Michigan 48906

Make your check out to "Michigan Methodist Historical Society". Add 60¢ for packaging and postage. The pre-publication price is \$6.50 (plus 60¢) for Volume II; for the two volumes it is \$10.00 (plus 60¢). Act now.

GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETS
NEXT MONTH IN PORTLAND, OREGON

This year 1976 is not only our bicentennial year and presidential election year, but also for Methodists, the year of General Conference. Our General Conference this year goes to the west coast to meet for the first time in Portland, Oregon, from April 27 to May 9.

Our Detroit Conference ministerial delegates, or members are Ray Lamb, Paul Blomquist, Woodie White, Robert Horton, Edward Duncan, James Bristah, Carl Price, John Grenfell Jr., and Kenneth Callis. These nine delegates include three district superintendents, one national executive, and five pastors (one a former D.S.). The pastorate has a new prominence in our delegation. And surprisingly we have one delegate from the Upper Peninsula! This is unusual.

Our lay delegates are Jane Schairer, Irene Norris, Janet Luciani, William Hitchcock, James Starr, Frieda Spafford (EUB), Harold Karls, Jean Sikkenga, and Mary Good. Jane is the Conference President of the United Methodist Women; Irene is a former president. William Hitchcock is our Conference Lay Leader; Harold Karls is a former president, and long term delegate. Janet Luciani was promoted by the youth, and is our first youth delegate to the General Conference! And note that we live in the day of Women's Liberation. Six of our nine lay delegates are of the female gender. This is a record.

As we approach the time of General Conference, let us pray for God's guidance and blessing on our conference representatives, and on the General Conference, that it may bring a new inspiration and creative leadership to our denomination, in this troubled and needy day.

MEMBERSHIPS

We remind you again that we need memberships to finance the Messenger, and support the work of the Friends. The regular membership is \$3 for one year, \$5 for two years. If you would like to do more for the cause, this is most welcome.

(Cont. Page 2)

Memberships (cont.)

A Sustaining Membership is #10, Contributing Membership is \$25, and Life Membership is \$100.

We prefer that checks be made out to "Friends of the Archives", and that they be sent to our Treasurer, Rev. Luren Strait, 216 Fifth St., Harrisville, MI. 48740. Thank you for your support.

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MINISTERIAL DELEGATES TO GENERAL CONFERENCE IN OUR CENTURY

It should at this time be interesting to think briefly about some of the ministers who have been elected to General Conference from the Detroit Conference (M.E., Methodist, U.M.C.) since 1900.

Our delegation in 1900 was composed of Joseph F. Berry, John Sweet, William H. Shier, Edward W. Ryan, Arthur Edwards, Charles W. Baldwin, William Daw, and Wilbur F. Sheridan; the reserves were Arthur Stalker and Joshua Stansfield.

Joseph Berry headed the delegation again in 1904 and was elected bishop; he died in 1931 and was buried in the Mt. Clemens Cemetery. John Sweet was the presiding elder of the Saginaw District. Sweet (1844-1916) was elected again in 1904 and 1908. He was administrator of the conference endowment funds, and treasurer of the Chelsea Home in its early years. William Shier (1832-1917) was elected four times to General Conference. He was very prominent at Bay View, where he served as trustee, treasurer, and manager, and as president for 20 years!

Edward W. Ryan (1837-1916) was the presiding elder of the Ann Arbor District. Earlier he had served with distinction in West Virginia, and had been presiding elder of the Wheeling District. Charles Baldwin (1859-1920) was the presiding elder of the Port Huron District. He was one of the organizers of the Chelsea Home, a trustee of Albion College, president of the Detroit Deaconess Home, the treasurer of the Superannuated Preachers' Aid Society. Bishop Reed remembered him with affection as a preacher in his boyhood church.

Arthur Edwards (1837-1901) was the editor of the Northwestern Christian Advocate in Chicago, where he had served since 1864. William Daw (1848-1924) was one of our Cornish preachers, a graduate of Northwestern University and Garrett Biblical Institute,

(cont. Page 3)

"REPORT ON CHRISTIAN HOME"

(This report was adopted by the Michigan Conference of the United Brethren in Christ, at their Conference in 1900, which met at Bengal in Clinton County, October 11-25. The message seems worth thinking about again)

'The grand purpose of the Gospel was and is to save humanity.

To accomplish this purpose two instrumentalities are used, namely, the Church and the Home. These agencies should harmonize. The influence of the one should be consistent with that of the other.

A Christian Home should be one of the true and pure influences. The habits and observations of youth are those that cling to us longest. The memory of a pure home influence has saved many a lad and lassie when thrown into the maelstrom of the world. The influence of the patient, prayerful, painstaking mother, with her gentle persuasion and her desire to instil into her children the principle of an upright and Christian life are not forgotten in mature years.

The truly great men of the age have in nearly every instance come from Christian homes.

It is a question whether a home is Christian, which does not maintain daily devotions and provide pure, clean reading matter.

It should be our object to increase the number of consecrated Christian homes, and we therefore appeal to you, Christian fathers and mothers to be careful of the home surroundings and home influences. We appeal to the ministry and all Christian workers to make a greater effort to bring the home life of our members up to a higher standard of living and devotion. Let us strive for ideals in the Christian home, being careful of our own conduct and influence.

C. E. Broadhead, Committee"

(The United Brethren in Christ Church in Michigan was small and confined largely to the western side of the state. Pastor's salaries ranged from \$145 to \$600. There were two districts, Grand Rapids and Petoskey. The former with 14 charges had 993 members; the latter with 14 charges had 833 members. Our new history will contain the 1900 appointments of all the antecedent branches of our Church, with membership and salaries of the charges.)

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Ministerial Delegates to General Conference in our Century (continued)

and in 1900 he was chancellor and field agent of Albion College. He served large churches in Detroit, and was presiding elder or district superintendent of the Saginaw and Ann Arbor Districts, during his career. Wilbur F. Sheridan was the pastor at Pontiac in 1900. Can anyone tell more about him?

Arthur Stalker (1860-1930) was the pastor at Sault Ste. Marie in 1900. He was to become famous as the successful pastor of Ann Arbor First Church for 25 years, 1905-30, and this followed a five year university pastorate in Madison, Wis. Joshua Stansfield in 1900 was the pastor of Madison Avenue Church in Bay City. Stalker, we must add, was a member of the General Conferences of 1908, 1912, and 1916.

In addition to Berry and Sweet, the 1904 delegation contained such eminent men as George Elliott, Edward S. Ninde, C. T. Allen, and James Jacklin. George Elliott (1851-1930) in 1904 was the pastor of Central Church, Detroit. He served in the Upper Iowa, Baltimore, and Philadelphia Conferences, before coming to Detroit in 1900. Eight times he was a delegate to General Conference, serving in 1896 (from the Philadelphia Conference), in 1904, 1908, 1912, 1916, 1920, 1924, and 1928! He headed our delegation in 1912, 1916, and 1920; three times he was the second elected. He was the distinguished editor of the Methodist Review from 1920 to 1930.

Edward S. Ninde in 1904 was the pastor of Ann Arbor First Church; in 1906 he transferred to the Des Moines Conference. Charles T. Allen in 1904 was completing his seventh year as pastor at Ypsilanti. James Jacklin (1847-1948) was the associate editor of the Michigan Christian Advocate from 1890 to 1914, when he became corresponding secretary for the Chelsea Home. He retired in 1925 at the age of 78. He was a member of the General Conferences of 1904 and 1908.

The Detroit Conference had several ministers by the name of Allen in this period. Charles Allen went to General Conference in 1904. For the General Conference of 1908, C. E. Allen was the second man elected. This was Clarence E. Allen, pastor of Court Street Church, Flint. For the General Conference of 1912, C. B. Allen was elected; he had been a reserve in 1908. Charles B. Allen (1870-1953) was the Superintendent of the Detroit District. In 1916 he joined with Merton S. Rice in the pastorate of Metropolitan Church, Detroit; Rice was the "preacher" and Allen the "pastor" and administrator. After mandatory retirement in 1942, he yet served on the staff until 1951. He had a prominent place in Detroit Methodism for 53 years.

Two men, William J. Balmer and A. R. Johns, were elected to the General Conferences of 1908 and 1912. William J. Balmer (1855-1940), a native of Canada, was pastor of the Church at Hancock in 1908, and Superintendent of the Port Huron District in 1912. He wound up his ministry as superintendent of the Chelsea Home from 1927 to 1934. Johns also has been a common name in our Conference. A. Raymond Johns was the pastor at Wyandotte in 1908; he was the pastor at Court Street, Flint. He transferred to the Michigan Conference in 1915.

Frederick D. Leete was the second minister elected to the General Conference of 1912. Frederick DeLand Leete (1866-195) was the son of Rev. Menzo Leete and a grandson of Rev. Alexander Leete, who is buried in our Azalia Cemetery. He joined the Northern New York Conference in 1888, and transferred from the Central New York Conference in 1906 to become the pastor of Central Church, Detroit, where he was serving in 1912. At the General Conference of 1912, he was elected bishop!

In 1916, a new name which would become famous appeared on the list, that of Merton S. Rice. He was elected again in 1920, and headed the delegation in 1924, 1928, and 1932. He generously declined to serve in 1936. For the special Uniting Conference of 1939, our delegation consisted of Merton Rice, Marshall R. Reed, and Frank L. Fitch. With distinction M. S. Rice served 30 years at North Woodward (later Metropolitan) Church, and built up one of the greatest churches of Methodism.

Looking back at the early years of this century, it seems that the Detroit Conference had a goodly number of truly great men to send to General Conference!

Excerpts from A PILGRIM IN MICHIGAN
The Life-Story of William C. S. Pellowe

(In our January Messenger, we gave an excerpt from Dr. Pellowe's autobiography, telling of his arrival in Port Huron, August 21, 1910; the help given him by his old friend, Rev. William Richards, pastor at Ruby; and the beginning of his ministry on the Peck Circuit. We continue with a further excerpt from this enlightening account)

"On Sunday, evening, December 10, in the year 1911, I stood in the pulpit of the Methodist Church in the village of Peck, Sanilac County, Michigan, and held up for all the congregation to see a large, new, gold-cased watch. The day before, . . . had been my twenty-first birthday and in the afternoon a committee of some five persons had come to the house where the pastor roomed and boarded, and presented him with this self-same watch. They told him they represented the three churches on the Peck Circuit -- Roseburg, Speaker, and Peck -- that the people in these churches held him in high esteem and had made up a subscription list to buy him this gold watch for his twenty-first birthday.

So at each of the three services on that Sunday, I had proudly taken the watch out of my vest pocket, which lay beneath the folds of my Prince Albert coat, and showed it to the congregations. (The committee had told me the people had not seen it.) Then I thanked the congregations for this thoughtful gift, which would allow me to dispense with the silver-cased watch bought in my early youth in England. I quoted St. Paul's words, "When I became a man I put away childish things." Looking back, I think the use of the quotation was what today we would term "a bit corny", but the people seemed to enjoy my remarks..this watch I wore constantly until presented with a wrist watch at First Church, Port Huron, forty-one years later.

. . . Revival services were part of the built-in program of every church in those days. The people expected them to be held. Often people from other churches attended. . . The ones I held on my circuit did not result in great numbers of conversions, but they did build up the life of the church as the people received extra instruction in the Bible and Christian doctrines. . .

At Peck we had the situation of not having any men in the membership of the church. The men were willing for their wives to join the church, and would attend the services, but were adamant against themselves joining. It seemed to be a left-over mood from the tough living of the lumbering days. The church was for "women and children". We couldn't even get a man to pass the collection plates; for that we had to use eight to ten year old boys. One of the great changes we have seen in our fifty years in the ministry is the readiness of people today to join the church when properly presented to them and their willingness to take instruction to that end, and the magnificent work being done by the men of the churches. No longer is there the prejudice that the church is "just a woman's job".

During that fifteen months I had taken my first ride in an automobile, that of the village doctor's. There were only three or four owners of cars in the village at that date. The words were such that the doctor put his car up on blocks when winter came and kept a string of four horses to do his winter and spring driving. The roads in the spring were often harder to travel over than the winter ones, for with the spring thaw the mud would often be twelve to eighteen inches deep, making travel very laborious. More than once, I got stuck in a mud hole.

Most homes were heated with a big coal burner in the living room and a wood burning cook stove in the kitchen. Furnaces with central heating were just beginning to make their appearance. Heat in upstairs bedrooms was unknown. At best the stove pipe from the downstairs heater might run through the room, but this meant nothing when zero

A PILGRIM IN MICHIGAN (cont.)

weather hit the countryside. I wore at that time a partial upper denture, which I always put in a cup of water before going to bed. Several times when staying overnight at a farm house, I would wake in the morning to find my teeth encased in a solid block of ice, and had to thaw them out in the kitchen before I could wear them.

What a fellowship I enjoyed in the homes of the people! . . . In and out of their homes I wove my pastoral pattern of calls, visiting, eating, praying, and planning the work of the church. Yes, pastoral work was a joy in those days with no radio or TV to bleat and annoy. People were pleased to have the preacher drop in and give them a reasonable excuse to quit work and just talk.

During that fifteen months I had started on the Course of Study required of all candidates for the Methodist ministry. This consisted of the study of four to six books each year for five years, the admission year and four following years. A written sermon also had to be submitted each year. You studied the books at home by yourself and in those days there were no series of printed helps and directions. You dug at it alone, and travel conditions were such you did not think of getting with fellow students to help one another with discussion.

Those of us on the Port Huron District who were taking the course went twice a year to Bad Axe to sit for the written examinations. In April we were examined in one half of the year's course, and in August for the other half.

Thus in April, 1911, I drove from Peck the nine miles to Groswell and put up my horse and buggy in the barn of the Methodist preacher, who at that time was Rev. Fred H. Townsend. Then I got on the afternoon train going north. On the train was Rev. Will Richards, then in his Fourth Year of Studies. He had got on at some station near Port Huron. At Carsonville, Rev. Ernest Carless of Applegate and Rev. William Combellack of Port Sanilac boarded the train. At Bad Axe we were entertained overnight in the homes of church members. At nine o'clock the next morning we went to the Methodist Church, where we were joined by three or four other young ministers of the district who lived within driving distance. The pastor, Rev. Julius S. West, took us to the examination room and seated us at separate tables. Then he handed us the examination questions which had been mailed to him by the Examiners of the several books. After writing out the answers as best we could, the papers were collected by Rev. J. West who mailed them to the Registrar of the Board of Examiners, for remailing to the respective Examiners. At that time the Chairman of the Board was Rev. Howard A. Field, and Rev. D. C. Challis was the Registrar. We repeated this trip in August of that year.

According to the Certificate . . signed by D. C. Challis, Registrar, here are my grades for that first year in the Conference Course of Study:

Written sermon	85
English Branches	90
Wesley and his Century	95
A Manual of Christian Doctrine	90
A Plain Account of Christian Perfection	95
The Discipline	92
A Manual of Bible History	95

The Detroit Conference held its annual sessions in September in those days. Though I had arrived in Michigan during August 1910, I did not attend the Conference that year, partly because it was not necessary, but mainly to save expense. I stayed at the Ruby parsonage and on Conference Sunday preached in two of the circuit churches. When Rev. Richards returned from the Conference . . held that year in Central Church, Detroit, and gave a report . . one item he commented on was the new style of dress which some of the ministers had adopted, a cutaway frock coat with a white vest. In those days in England this was the standard garb for bartenders and head waiters in hotels, so

A PILGRIM IN MICHIGAN (cont.)

naturally it seemed rather odd and somewhat humor provoking to us who had come from that land.

The 1911 Conference was held at Garland Street Church in Flint, September 20-25, Dr. E. C. Dimond, pastor, and Bishop William F. Anderson the presiding bishop. To get to the seat of Conference, I took the stagecoach from Peck to Yale, a town about ten miles south of Peck. From there I rode a train into Port Huron, and then changed to the main line running to Flint.

That first Conference was a marvelous experience to me coming from the hinterland of the Thumb country. The church seemed immense; the big gatherings were impressive; the comings and goings of the District Superintendents and chairmen of Committees seemed mysterious; the music by a trained choir was "out of this world"; the reports seemed as important as government documents. The Bishop's hour held me spellbound. At 11:54 A.M. all business stopped; committees came trooping into the sanctuary from their various rooms, the D.S.'s stopped walking around and sat down in front pews, a hymn was sung vigorously as though it was the preachers' last chance to sing a hymn; then Bishop Anderson brought a message which lifted our thoughts above the mechanics of organization to the world of fellowship with God.

During that Conference week I met for the first time ministers with whom in years to come I made friendships and with whom I became working partners in many Conference activities such as Sydney D. Eva, Frank M. Field, Russell D. Hopkins, Ralph M. Pierce, Edward H. Wilcox, Eugene M. Moore, H. Addis Leeson, and Howard A. Field, and several others. Watching the Conference at work I saw the effectiveness of the better trained men; the men who had been at some college or seminary, and the thought began to seep into my mind that to become fully effective a minister as I wanted to be, I needed more training than was afforded by the Conference Course of Study.

To me, one of the high lights of the Conference was an address given on Thursday evening at the Anniversary Service of the Board of Missions and Church Extension. Rev. Rueben Crosby, one of the saints of the Conference . . . led in prayer, and Dr. Charles M. Boswell . . . delivered a powerful address on the theme, "America for Christ". His closing paragraphs dealt with America's part in outlawing war and setting up an era of peace. His final words were "then shall the red breasted robin build its nest in the cannon's mouth, and nevermore be disturbed".

I was captivated by this optimism. I repeated that sentence quite a few times in the next few months in sermons and talks . . . How little did we dream that within three short years a savage, unparalleled war would break out and the cannon would be booming along the Western Front, an epoch would come to a dark end, and Western civilization become entirely changed!

A few months after my appointment to Peck, I wrote to Dr. Balmer, the superintendent of the Port Huron District, to inquire of him if I had the right as an unordained minister to officiate at a marriage ceremony. In a letter dated December 8, 1910, Port Huron, he replied, "The State has legislated that all persons regularly appointed as pastors are granted this privilege, whether ordained or not. Hence you have this right. Your standing is that of a local preacher transferred from the Wesleyan Methodist Church to the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The last paragraph of this same letter was full of such brotherly affection and priceless advice that I have treasured the letter through the years, and will insert the paragraph here: "I feel a deep interest in your welfare and anything I can do to help you along I will be glad to do. Keep near to the Lord. Depend wholly on Him. Take good care of your health. Live near to the people. Look after their spiritual interests. Feed the flock of Christ. Don't be discouraged with difficulties, or human inconsistencies, but be trustful and true yourself, and the Heavenly Father will care for you and keep you in all your ways.

Your friend and brother, Wm. J. Balmer"