

HISTORY

— OF THE —

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

— OF THE —

CITY OF LANCASTER, PA.,

— FROM —

1807 to 1893.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF EARLIER EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH
METHODISM IN LANCASTER.

— ALSO AN —

APPENDIX

CONTAINING A SKETCH OF ST. PAUL'S M. E. CHURCH, BY THE
PASTOR, AND "CONESTOGA'S" NOTES ON THE
CONFERENCE OF 1855.

— BY —

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1893.

FORMER CONFERENCES.

THE SESSIONS OF 1855 AND 1883.

“CONESTOGA” RELATES SOME INTERESTING REMINISCENCES
OF THE SESSIONS OF THE FORMER METHODIST
CONFERENCES HELD IN THIS CITY.

From the *Examiner* of March 18th, 1889.

HARRISBURG, March 16th, 1889.

You have the old Philadelphia M. E. Conference with you again—the third time within thirty-four years. The first time it met in Lancaster was in March, 1855, at the old Duke street church, and I can vividly recall, after the lapse of a third of a century, some of its principal members and incidents. The then venerable Bishop Beverly Waugh, of Maryland, presided, and he was assisted by the then venerable Bishop Levi Scott, of Delaware. Waugh was a saintly-looking man, and did not belie his looks. He was tall, straight, with an abundance of snow white hair, which stood straight up on his head, something like the pictures of General Jackson, with which all are familiar. He had an almost angelic countenance, and, although all grace and benignity, as a presiding officer he possessed a dignity and firmness with which no one could trifle. He was

plain, practical, and intensely real in all his utterances, and his sermons were wonderful for their simplicity, their searching power, and at times sublimity of eloquence. Grand old man! Years ago he was transplanted from the church militant to the church triumphant, and a fit companion in the heavenly courts is he of such men as John and Charles Wesley, of John Bunyan, of George Whitefield, of John Summerfield, and the other great Methodist worthies of the past.

LEVI SCOTT,

who, nearly fifty years ago, was pastor of the old Duke street church,* was a squarely-built man, with a magnificent, broad, projecting forehead, and his head was covered by light brown hair. Oh, how gentle, how persuasive, how fatherly he was, and a preacher of extraordinary power. He was a scholar as well as a minister, and was the first principal of the old Grammar school of Dickinson College at Carlisle when it came under the control of the Methodist church in 1883. What a delightful companion in the social circle, and how he was revered by preacher as well as parishioners. Fit companion in the church above is he with Asbury, Coke, Whatcoat, Roberts, Emory, Hedding, Hamline, Soule, Bascom, Andrews, Ames, Janes, Simpson and other

*This is an error. Levi Scott was Presiding Elder, and took especial interest in the church in the time of its financial distress, but never was pastor of Duke street church.

eminent men in the episcopacy, whose good works do follow, and whose influence will be felt as long as the Methodist church has an existence.

THE POSITION OF SECRETARY,

now so worthily filled by the gifted pastor of Duke Street Church, the Rev. J. R. Taylor Gray, was filled by the Rev. Pennell Coombe, a former pastor of the same church. He was a bold, aggressive man, an enthusiast in the temperance cause, but had a heart of womanly tenderness. Coombe, I have always thought, would have made a great lawyer or editor. He was fond of disputation, and any one whom he met in print or on the forum was sure to find a foe-man worthy of his steel. I knew him well, and it does me good to pay this slight tribute to his memory.

THE MEMBERS

were some of the great lights of Methodism a generation ago. Such men, for instance, as John P. Durbin, Francis Hodgson, Joseph Castle, Anthony Atwood, John S. Inskip, William H. Elliott, William Barnes, Allen John, John F. Curtis, Henry Colclazer, John A. Roche, George R. Crooks, William Bishop, (then pastor of Duke Street), John W. Mecaskoy, William Cooper, John Lednum, David W. Bartine (who succeeded Mr. Bishop), Thomas J. Thompson, Ignatius T. Cooper, Noble Frame, Thomas A. Fernley, Alfred Cookman, Joseph Holdich, J. Talbot Gracey, Charlton T. Lewis, Goldsmith D. Currow,

Henry F. Hurn (who died while pastor of Duke street), Christian Walters and George W. Brindle (afterward of the Iowa Conference).

AMONG THE VISITORS

were John McClintock, one of the greatest of scholars of this or any other country; Dallas D. Lore, who years before had been pastor of Duke Street, had then but returned from the superintendency of missions in South America, and was prominent in clerical circles in New York; James B. Finley, of Ohio, a pioneer preacher, and a contemporary of Asbury and Peter Cartwright; Thomas E. Bond, then editor of the New York *Christian Advocate* and the father of the present Judge Bond, of the U. S. Circuit Court of Virginia, and James McCarter. Not one of these men is living to-day,* and only a few of those mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Lewis left the ministry, became a lawyer, and to-day is in the front rank of the legal profession in New York city. Gracey went as a missionary to India, and I think is now connected with a Conference in Northern New York. Lewis and Gracey were among the youngest members of the Conference then, the former a Chester county boy, the latter from Bucks county, and both giving promise of a brilliant future in the Methodist fold. The names of the others living are "familiar as household words," to the people of the Methodist faith especially.

* McCarter is still living, see list of pastors in this book.

INTERESTING INCIDENTS.

My recollection is that the Rev. Dr. Durbin preached the Sunday morning sermon. He was one of the greatest pulpit orators this country ever produced. He was the first Methodist President of Dickinson College, and during his charge of that institution he made a trip through Europe and the Holy Land. His manner in the pulpit is most difficult to describe. He began his sermons in a sleepy, almost careless tone, and his voice was anything but pleasant. This was only temporary, for suddenly his eyes would begin to roll, and then the man changed entirely. Such eloquence, such masterly presentation of Scriptural truths, such swaying of the feelings of an audience few men beside Durbin possessed. Many an old Methodist preacher and layman will recall the matchless oratory of the great and only Durbin. At one of the anniversaries an address was made which excited the heartiest Methodistic amens and shouts. The speaker was the Rev. G. F. Krötel, then the young and gifted pastor of Trinity Lutheran church, now a resident of New York city, and one of the leading men of the Lutheran denomination in the United States. Many Lancastrians will remember his impassioned, thrilling eloquence. The last morning of the conference, just before the appointments were announced, the prayer was offered by the Rev. Dr. Castle, and his grand, soul-stirring appeal still lingers on the tablet of my memory. But I must hasten on.

THE CONFERENCE OF 1883

was held in the Court House, and was presided over by the now senior Bishop of the Church, the Rev. Thomas Bowman, D. D., LL. D., of St. Louis. He is one of the finest of preachers and platform speakers. He is a native of Pennsylvania. A pleasant incident in this connection was told to the writer by the Rev. James Neill, of Philadelphia, also once a pastor of Duke street. Both started in the ministry more than fifty years ago, and both were warm friends and companions. On one occasion Mr. Neill preached the Annual Conference sermon. At the close, Mr. Bowman, who was enraptured by the sermon, throwing his arms around Neill's neck, said: "Oh, Jimmy, if I could only preach like you." They did not meet for many years, not until Mr. Bowman had become a Bishop, and then Mr. Neill had the pleasure of hearing his old companion. At the close of the sermon, Mr. Neill met the Bishop, and embracing him said: "Oh, Tommy, if I could only be a Bishop like you." Among the distinguished clergymen present were the Rev. Charles H. Fowler, then Missionary Secretary, now one of the Bishops, and the Rev. J. M. Buckley, then, as now, editor of the *New York Christian Advocate*. Among the reporters was the late Thomas M. Coleman, "Nameloc," of the *Philadelphia Ledger*, and who was taken for a Bishop by many ladies because of his fine personal appearance.

DUKE STREET MEMBERS.*

Let me recall some of the members of the Duke Street Church when the Conference met there in 1855. There were Bonam Samson, William Murray, William Allen, Benjamin F. Shenk, James Dysart, Henry Stock, George Sanderson, *James Black*, *Robert M. Morrow*, *Samuel M. Myers*, James Geitner, Robert Strachan, *Lewis Haldy*, Henry Shubert, Dr. John Wayland (who subsequently became to New York what Evans is to Paris), Carpenter McCleary, Henry Glossner, John Trissler, Thomas Bakes, *John Amer*, Henry Smith, *Charles N. Amer*, James Potts and *Dr. William Compton*. I cannot think of all, nor of the many good sisters. The Grim Monster has played sad havoc among the members of the Duke Street Church of a generation ago, but their memories are embalmed in many precious hearts. CONESTOGA.

* Those whose names are in italics still survive in 1898.