

The Methodist Pioneers
of California

SOUVENIR BOOKLET

of the

*Hundreth Anniversary
of Methodism
in California*

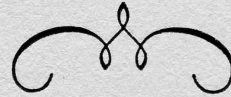
1847 - 1947



By

Rev. John W. Winkley

Methodist Pioneers of California, a
Souvenir Booklet of the Hundredth An-
niversary of Methodism in the State,
1847 - 1947. By Rev. John W. Winkley,
Member of the California Conference,
and Custodian of the Conference His-
torical Society. 980 Stannage Ave.,
Albany 6, California.



Introduction

(To Methodist Pioneers of California)

The gold seekers was not first in California.

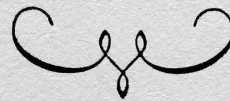
Before the days of '49 adventurous pioneers crossed prairie and mountain and desert. Among them were robust Methodists, "Bible totin'" Jedediah Smith, the Reeds of '46 who served the Donner party's fate, the Heacox and Anthony families of '47. Then with "the rush" come Taylor and Owen, and Boring and Fitzgerald, and Methodist history in the golden state was well begun.

As we approach the historic centennial years of 1947, 1949, and 1951 we need to read the story of pioneer years again, as told here by the Custodian of the Conference Historical Society. Incidentally this is the first attempt, so far as my information goes, to weave together the strands of the two Methodists during those years.

We greatly need an adequate presentation of the whole of California Methodism. Welcome this chapter of that larger story.

Leon L. Loofbourow

President of the Conference Historical Society



Methodist Pioneers of California

CHAPTER I

California had a long and interesting history before it became a part of the United States. In the Sixteenth Century came the Spanish explorers,—Cabrillo, Viscaïno, and others; and later appeared the English buccaneers—Sir Francis Drake, Thomas Cavendish, Woodes Rogers, George Shelvocke, etc., who made havoc of the golden galleons along the California coast.

In May 1540 Hernando de Alarcon sailed up the Gulf of California into the Colorado River and disembarked on the West shore opposite the mouth of the Gila River,—the first white man to set foot on the soil of the present state of California. In 1542 Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo explored the coast of California, discovering the bays of San Diego and Monterey, and giving the name "Sierra Nevada" to the great mountain range in the interior.

Not until 1769, however, did any Spanish settlers reach the soil of California. In that year the Franciscan Monk—Father Junipera Serra along with the civil governor Don Gaspar de Portola, made the settlement of San Diego and established the first of the Mission stations. During the next fifty years twenty-two missions were founded along the coast of California connected by the famous highway, "El Camino Real", which stretched from San Diego in the South to Sonoma in the North.

Around or near-by most of the Missions were organized "pueblos"—settlements of Spanish immigrants, and at strategic posts "presidios" were built, occupied by a small band of soldiers. Into the Mission compounds were gathered large colonies of the native Indians who were trained in Catholic worship and industrial arts. In time many of these Missions became very prosperous in grain, cattle, horses and sheep. Cow-hides and tallow were their chief exports. Dana's "Two Years before the Mast" gives a good picture of these halcyon days of California life.

Following the Mexican revolt from Spain in 1821, California became a Mexican province under Mexican governors, an unsatisfactory and irritating arrangement to the Californians. In 1834 secularization of the Missions was ordered by the Government by

Methodist Pioneers of California

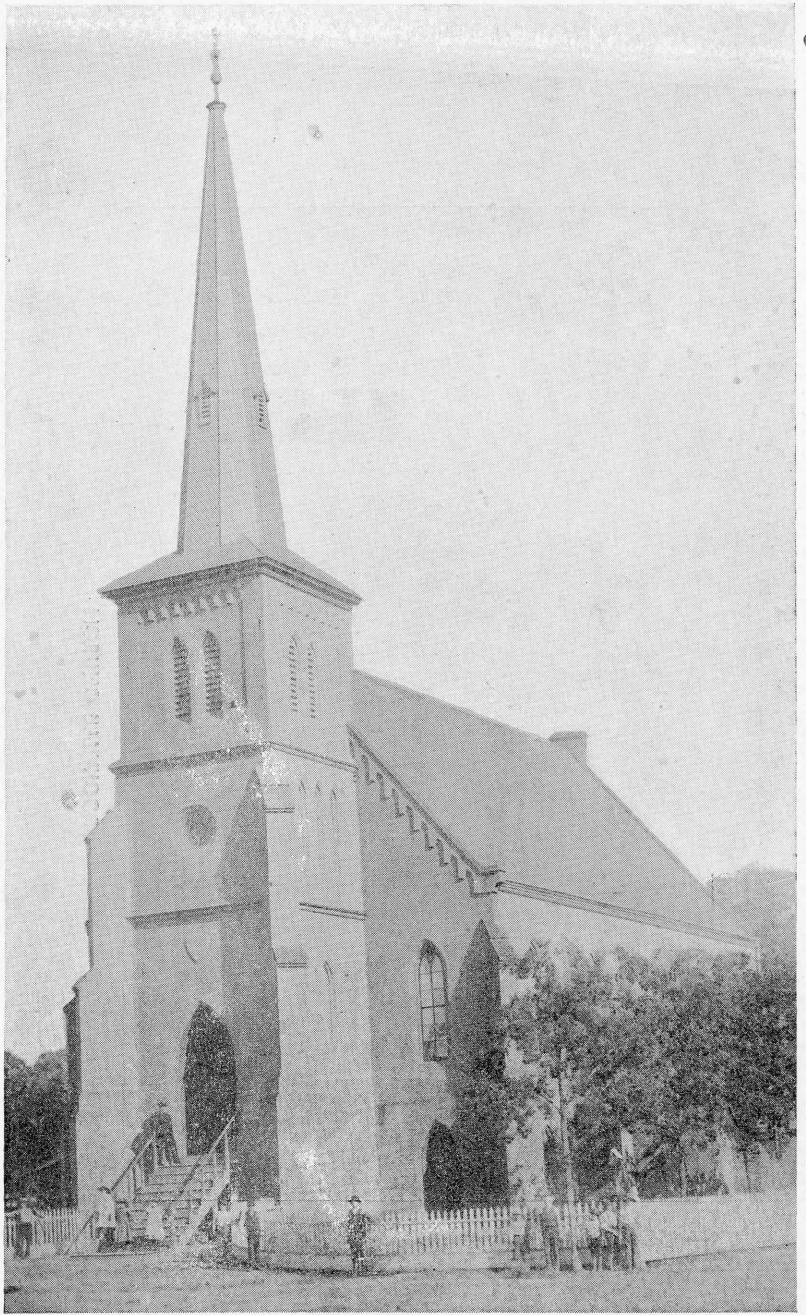
CHAPTER II

At least one Methodist family antedated the year 1847 in California, for Adna A. Hecox, from Michigan, arrived at Sutter's Fort on October 1, 1846. The family rested there for a few weeks, then went on to the Santa Clara Valley which they reached on November 1st. It was during this Fall that Col. Fremont had enlisted all able-bodied American settlers for his campaign into Southern California. A Col. Sanchez of the enemy took this opportunity to arouse the Spanish against the Americans of whom about 175 were then living in the Santa Clara valley. For mutual protection these settlers gathered in an old, barn-like barracks in the vilage of Santa Clara where they suffered from disease, cold and hunger, until rescued by the Marines from the U.S. Fleet in San Francisco harbor under Capt. Marston. Col. Sanchez was defeated in a desultory skirmish and compelled to surrender.

While the American settlers camped in the cold, damp barracks, an epidemic of typhoid fever raged among them and many died. Adna Hecox, as a local preacher of the Methodist Church, though in feeble health himself, conducted the funeral services. At the funeral of the daughter of Silas Hitchcock, he preached a sermon on the text, "Remember how short my time is". This was probably the first Protestant sermon given in the State of California. Hecox held Sunday Services there until he moved to Santa Cruz in February 15, 1847, and in his new location continued to preach whenever the opportunity afforded.

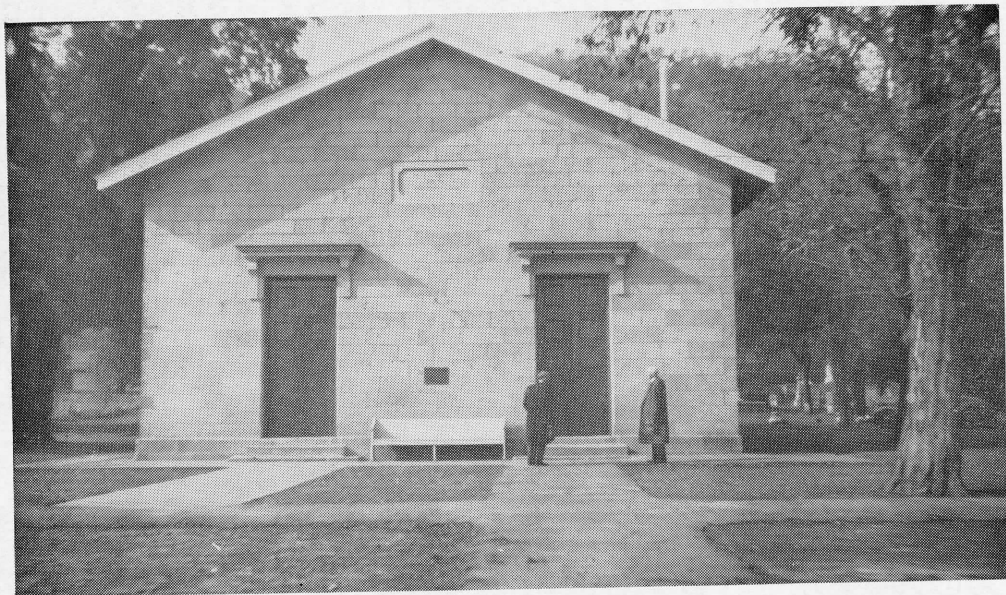
A Methodist Mission had been started in Oregon in 1834 under the Rev. Jason Lee, and about this time the General Society found it necessary to send a new superintendent there to look after the work. In the year of 1846 the Board of Missions appointed Rev. William Roberts of New Jersey to this post and gave him an assistant,—the Rev. James H. Wilbur.

They sailed from New York in the Fall of that year on the bark "Whitten" of which a Methodist, Captain Gilson, was in charge. They came around "the Horn" in a passage that lasted 148 days and arrived in San Francisco Bay on April 24th, 1847. The Mission Board had requested Roberts to investigate the opportunity for mission work in California so this field was added to his area.



METHODIST CHURCH—IONE
Built 1862-66. Rev. E. J. Jones on steps (top) 1885.

2



ROCKVILLE CHURCH

The following day, April 25th, was Sunday, and Roberts held a religious service on board ship early in the morning and later preached in the dining room of a hotel on shore in the village of Yerba Buena. At the close of the service a sailor dropped a \$5.00 gold piece into a hat, and took up an offering for the preacher, remarking that "it was a ——— good sermon". Wilbur was much perplexed about the setting of this religious service, remarking that Roberts had preached "where Satan had his seat." But they soon grew accustomed to preaching services in hotels, on street corners and even in saloons .

Soon after this, Roberts organized a "Methodist Class" of six members and Wilbur started a little Sunday School. These were the first religious organizations among Protestants formed in California. The "Class", while dormant for awhile, yet survived to become the old Powell Street Church and now known as "First Church", is located at Clay and Larkin. Much argument has occurred over the point whether this "Class" constituted the beginning of a Church, which would give Methodism the priority in Protestant Church organization in California. The matter is debatable, though it may be said that in Methodist usage the formation of a "Class" has always been considered the initial part of a church organization and its history reckoned from that date.

Following these events, Roberts and Wilbur visited Sonoma, calling on Methodist families. But their visit was halted suddenly when Mr. Wilbur was thrown from a horse and severely hurt. They returned to San Francisco, and Roberts went to Monterey where he preached in the office of Rev. Walter Colton, the American "Alcade" of the town. Going back to San Francisco by land, he was greatly impressed by the beauty of the country along his route. Later the bark, "Whitten" went to Monterey, taking along Wilbur, who preached for Capt. Montgomery on board the U. S. Portsmouth at anchor in the Bay. Capt. Montgomery gave him \$48.00 for the Mission work, money that he said he had saved up for some such work. This was probably the first missionary gift for Protestant work in California. After a month or two Roberts and Wilbur sailed for the Columbia River region and the settlements in Willamette Valley.

In the Spring of 1847, Rev. Elihu Anthony, a local preacher who had served churches in the State of Indiana, started west with his wife and child and his wife's sister Jane Van Anda from a

temporary location in Iowa. They joined a caravan headed for Oregon, but at Fort Hall, with fifteen other families, turned aside to the California trail. Their hardships and sufferings were severe, and at length their provisions became exhausted. Then one evening in a desolate camp, while eating almost their last bit of food, Jane Van Anda caught sight of an animal on a ledge of rocks above her and exclaimed, "What is that?" There in the wilds was a big, fat sheep, probably lost from some other caravan passing that way. Anthony's rifle barked quickly, and the meat of this sheep sustained them until they reached Sutter's Fort in October. After a brief rest there they continued to San Jose.

Here Anthony renewed his old trade of a blacksmith, but on Sundays held preaching services. About this time Capt. Gilson on the bark "Whitten" returned to San Francisco, from Oregon, and heard of Anthony's preaching in San Jose. Gilson induced Anthony to come to San Francisco and preach. Whereupon Anthony drove his ox-team there, camped on Portsmouth Square, and held services in the new school-house just erected there by Samuel Brannan. Brannan, though a Mormon Elder at the time, attended some of the services. Anthony found the "Class" organized by Roberts, though without leadership.

Later Anthony visited Monterey and he also was invited to preach to a congregation assembled for him by the "Alcade",—Rev. Walter Colton. Colton said he felt that he should not mix Protestant preaching with his office as a civil "Alcade".

About the first of January, 1848, Anthony moved his family to Santa Cruz, where he found the other Methodist families: A. A. Hecox, B. A. Case, Silas Hitchcock, Mr Reed, Mrs. Dunleavy, Mrs. Mathews, and Mrs. Lynn. He formed them into a "class" which then elected him as pastor. This was the beginning of the Santa Cruz Methodist Church, the second Methodist Church in the State,—perhaps also the second Protestant church.

In this month happened an epochal event at Coloma, which vastly changed the course of history in California.

Methodist Pioneers of California

CHAPTER III

In January 24th, (some insist the date was Jan. 19th) 1848, gold was discovered by James Marshall in the tail-race of Sutter's new lumber mill at Coloma on the South Fork of the American River, about forty miles east of Sacramento. Captain Sutter tried to keep the matter a secret, but the news soon spread far and wide. At first people scoffed at the story, but as more and more of the precious metal was brought to market, the fever took hold of the populace and the vast majority of them rushed to the mines. Town and farm were forsaken and business halted.

Elihu Anthony, however, stuck to his shop in Santa Cruz, but began to make picks and shovels for the miners at 3 ounces of gold per shovel, or \$50.00 in money. Yet he did not resist the gold urge very long for in the early Summer of that year he took his family to San Francisco where he left them and joined a company of men going to the mines. This group located a claim near Big Bar on the Mokelumne River, where the modern "Motherlode Highway" crosses that stream. Their gold venture was a success, but the observance of the Sabbath created a controversy. Most of the men wanted to keep on with their work, since, as they said, there was nothing else to do in that wilderness. But Anthony refused to change his habits or convictions.

On that first Sabbath Anthony prepared the meals for the men, but spent the day himself in rest and reading the Bible under the shade of a tree. He would not share any part of their gold diggings for the day either. On Monday he asked to be allowed to work by himself for a time. He had noticed a large boulder unmoved in the pit where they had worked the day before and believed that gold would be found under it. The men laughed at his idea that any gold would be found there, but told him he might go on with his plan.

Anthony secured a stout limb of a tree and pried the boulder off its patch of gravel and took out several hundred dollars worth of gold. He took this to camp and had it spread out on the dinner table when the men came in at noon. He had more gold than all the men had taken on the Sabbath. It was a sweet triumph,

but gold or no gold, he insisted on holding to his principles. Anthony worked here during the Summer and Fall, but when the Winter rains shut down the work on the River bars, he returned with his family to Santa Cruz.

The year of 1848 was a chaotic time in California. People were rushing here and there and new towns or gold camps were springing up in many places in all the Sierra region. In one of these new camps called "Hangtown",—later renamed "Placerville", C. O. Hosford, a Methodist local preacher was mining for gold, but on Sundays conducting religious services. He formed no organization, but gathered a congregation which continued to flourish until a church was organized later. That Autumn Hosford went to San Francisco where he found the Methodist Class, and began preaching for them in a house of a Mr. West. Mr. Robert's Class was re-organized and increased to thirteen members. In the following Spring, 1849, Hosford married a Miss Glover belonging to this group and the couple moved to Oregon to make their home.

John Trubody, a staunch Methodist layman, crossed the plains from Missouri to California with his wife and two sons in the Summer of 1847. He found work at once in building a flour mill for Capt. Sutter at Brighton three miles East of Sutter's Fort. That Winter he moved to San Francisco, but learning of the gold discovery at Coloma in January he returned to Sutter's Fort by river boat, and hired one of Sutter's teams and wagons to haul his family to the mining town of Mormon Island which stood near the junction of the North & South Forks of the American River. Here he mined with fair success for a month, then went prospecting along Weber Creek above Coloma, and later on the North Fork. Finding no promising location, he returned to Mormon Island and in partnership with Theodore Schlosser mined a small island in the river which netted them about \$10,000.00 in gold. The arrival of the Fall rains drove him and his family back to San Francisco, where he bought a fifty "vara" lot on Powell Street, (137½ by 137½ feet) for \$7,500.00. In a few months he sold one quarter of this lot for \$40,000.00 and on the other part at the corner of Washington & Powell streets built a brick house with a basement for a grocery store. This was the foundation of his prosperity in after years. He joined the Methodist Class at once and remained through all his life an active layman of the Church.

In the Spring of 1849, on May 10th, the Rev. Asa White, a local preacher of the Methodist Church arrived in San Francisco and immediately set up a "blue tent" on a lot on Powell Street and gathered the Methodist folk for preaching services. These services were continued regularly from that time until Rev. William Taylor took over the work in the Fall of that year.

Sometime in the Spring of 1849 Rev. William Roberts returned to California for an official visit, after an absence of two years. In the meantime the General Conference of the Church had authorized the formation of the "Oregon & California Mission Conference", designating Roberts as Superintendent. In San Francisco he found a Rev. T. Dwight Hunt of Congregational connection, but holding Union services as a "City Chaplain." In a spirit of cooperation for the time being, he preached for Mr. Hunt, and attempted no further Methodist organization.

From San Francisco Roberts made a visit to the mines, taking with him Elihu Anthony and J. H. Dye. They crossed the Straits near Benicia of today and traveled by horse-back to the vicinity of later Woodland, where they rested over the Sabbath. Roberts took a text and preached as vigorously, it is related, to his two companions as though to a multitude. On the next Sunday they were in Coloma where Roberts preached again and denounced the sin of gambling so common among the miners. In the offering was a sum of \$20.00 from one of the chief gamblers, and a note saying—"to that man from Oregon who was not afraid to speak out what he believes to be true".

Rev. C. V. Anthony, Church Historian, relates that Roberts organized a church here at this time and appointed Elihu Anthony as pastor. It is not clear how much of an organization was effected. If a church was fully organized, that would make this Coloma Church the first Methodist Church to be completely formed in California. However, some old Coloma Quarterly Conference Minutes appear to indicate that the Church was organized in 1851. Yet C. V. Anthony was a brother of Elihu, and married a daughter of Silas Bennet, who was the class leader at Coloma at that time. This should have given him first hand information. In the late Fall of 1849 Elihu Anthony and Silas Bennett moved their families back to Santa Cruz.

Silas F. Bennett, mentioned here, was another staunch Methodist

layman, who crossed the plains with his family in 1848 and spent the Winter in Sacramento working for Capt. Sutter. Here he held frequent religious services. In the Spring of 1849 he went to Coloma to work on Sutter's mill which had never been finished. Throughout his life he took an active part in the work of his church.

Rev. William Roberts returned to Oregon in the late Summer of that year, 1849, and held a session of the "Oregon and California" Mission Conference on September 5, at the Oregon Institute in Salem. He had received information from the Board of Missions that they were sending two pastors to California to take over missionary work there. By Robert's appointment, the Rev. William Taylor was to be stationed in San Francisco, and the Rev. Isaac Owen in Sacramento with Coloma and Stockton also under his supervision. San Jose and Santa Cruz were left "to be supplied".

With the arrival of Rev. William Taylor and Rev. Isaac Owen in September of 1849 a new era in Methodist work began in California.

This story is taken up in the next chapter.

Methodist Pioneers of California

CHAPTER IV

Bishop Waugh, under authority of the General Conference of 1848, and in conjunction with the Board of Missions, selected William Taylor of the Baltimore Conference and Isaac Owen of the Indiana Conference as missionaries to the distant territory of California. Taylor started for the West Coast by ship around "the Horn" and arrived in San Francisco on September 21st, 1849, while Owen crossed the plains by ox cart or wagon, and reached the vicinity of Grass Valley on September 22nd.

William Taylor, wife and daughter "Oceana", who was born en-route to California, arrived in San Francisco to find it a city of tents and a changing population. Mrs. Taylor was ill, and there was no available house in which they might live. For the first two Sundays Taylor preached in the Baptist Church for Rev. O. C. Wheeler and met the Methodist Class in the "Blue Tent" on Powell Street during the week. He found that lumber had already been shipped from Oregon and a church 25 by 40 feet was being built nearby.

The little Methodist Congregation, living in precarious quarters themselves, could think of no way in which they could house their pastor. At this juncture a kind hearted citizen offered Taylor a month's free use of a house which he was just finishing. This was accepted, and Taylor set about solving his own predicament. With a member of his congregation he crossed the Bay to the Redwoods in the Oakland Hills and cut lumber and shakes to build a house, 16 by 26 feet, two stories high. A house, like the one loaned to him, rented for \$500.00 per month. This dilemma he escaped by now owning a house of his own building. On his lot he made a garden, kept chickens and a cow to supplement his income, and to provide food, hard to obtain in the market at any price.

The Church was finished and dedicated on October 8th. Neighboring pastors, Rev. Alfred Williams, Presbyterian; Rev. T. Dwight Hunt, Congregational, and Rev. O. C. Wheeler, Baptist, assisted in the dedication service. On November 30th, Taylor completed the organization of his Church and held a Quarterly Conference. Class meeting was held on Sunday afternoons at 3 P.M., attended by

an enthusiastic group of thirty to sixty men and a few women. There were very few women in California as yet. Many Methodists were passing through the city on their way to the mines, and these stopped for fellowship with the Class.

On the first Sunday in December Taylor made a surprising announcement to his congregation: he proposed to preach on Portsmouth Square at 3 P.M. that afternoon. The people were startled and fearful of results. San Francisco was wild, wicked, lawless, and might mob him. Taylor tells the story of the event: "Taking my stand on a work-bench I sang— "Hear the Royal proclamation", etc. By the time the song was ended I was surrounded by about one thousand men. I had crossed the Rubicon and now came the tug of war. I said, —'Gentlemen, if our friends in the Atlantic States, with the views and feelings they entertained of California Society when I left there, had heard that there was to be preaching this afternoon on Portsmouth Square in San Francisco, they would have predicted disorder, confusion and riot; but we who are here believe very differently. One thing is certain, there is no man who loves to see those Stars and Stripes floating on the breeze (pointing to the waving flag of our Union) and who loves the institutions fostered under them; in a word, there is no true American but will observe order under the preaching of God's word anywhere, and maintain it if need be. We shall have order, Gentlemen". Then he launched into his sermon on the text: "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." For an hour they listened with profound attention, and that evening many of them crowded the little church to hear him again. Thus began the remarkable street preaching of William Taylor in San Francisco and later in the mining towns of the Sierra.

In the meantime Isaac Owen had arrived in California at Grass Valley and on Sunday, September 23rd, sticking his cane into the soft ground of their camp and hanging his hat thereon, he used this as a pulpit for a sermon to his traveling companions. Beside his family there was with Owen, his friend Rev. James Corwin, who on being denied a transfer from the Indiana Conference, "located" in that Conference and drove one of Owen's ox-teams across the plains. The party had reached Benicia before Owen learned that he had been appointed to Sacramento. Their oxen were too worn out to pull the heavy wagons to that place, so Owen hired a boat to take his goods up the river while the family

went by land. A drunken boatman upset the boat and lost all the equipment hauled across two thousand miles of wilderness. That was heart-breaking and ruinous to them. In Sacramento they appeared wearing the old, ragged clothing worn on their long, rough journey.

Owen began preaching under a big tree at Seventh and L streets, on a lot donated by Capt. Sutter. The lumber of Taylor's "Baltimore Chapel" shipped around the horn to San Francisco, was transferred to Sacramento. One Sunday morning Owen pointed at this pile of lumber on the lot and said, "Next Sunday we will worship in our Church". They did, since all hands took up the work under Rev. James Corwin, a first class carpenter, and the building was sufficiently completed within the week. In addition a parsonage costing \$5,000 was erected, and \$4,000 pledged to Owen as salary, though Owen allocated \$1,000 of this to the building Fund.

The "Baltimore Chapel" had been a gift of friends in Baltimore to William Taylor. But since his San Francisco church was built of Oregon lumber by the time he arrived there, his chapel was sent on to Sacramento. This was additional incentive to Owen to ask William Taylor to conduct the dedication service on January 6, 1850. Taylor came and was entertained in the home of a Baltimore friend, Dr. Grove W. Deal, now living in Sacramento. Dr. Deal, a loyal Methodist and a local preacher, had gathered a congregation there before Owen arrived in the city. His house, a two story frame structure, was one of the best in town. The first floor was occupied as a store, and the second floor and lean-to at the rear, as office and living quarters.

During three days of the following week Taylor and Owen discussed far-reaching plans for the future, —a book concern, church literature, academies, and a university for California. Then came the great flood, and the muddy river waters filled the city to the second story floors. Church and parsonage were floated off their foundations. People went about the town in row-boats. Taylor returned to San Francisco on the steamer "Senator" and the Owen family soon followed. Owen decided to build a house for them at San Jose, and return alone to his work at Sacramento after the flood. In San Francisco Taylor and Owen found the 2,000 books shipped from the East for the new book-store. Since there was no place in which to house them, they bought lumber

and built a 12 by 12 feet extension on one side of the church and opened the store there, —Methodism's first Book Concern on the West Coast. At this time also the little two-year old daughter of the Owen family sickened and died, and was buried in the church yard, —a crown of sorrows to folk that had already endured so much loss.

But Owen buckled down to his task, quickly built the house in San Jose, established his family there, and returned to his charge in Sacramento. The Church and parsonage were restored to their foundations and the work went on. Rev. James Corwin then departed to take up the ministry in Stockton, forced to take boat to San Francisco, and another to Stockton—two hundred miles around to avoid a flooded plain.

In the latter part of January 1850 William Taylor made a trip to San Jose and Santa Cruz with Silas F. Bennett, who had formerly lived at Coloma. Rain and mud beset them everywhere on this journey. At San Jose Taylor preached to the people and started a church building fund. He then bought a little red horse and rode off for Santa Cruz, relating with great good humour, later, the strange predicaments that befell them on the rough trail over the mountains. In Santa Cruz he pulled together a much divided church and held a quarterly conference. He was greatly pleased with the country between Santa Cruz and San Francisco, saying that God had made more beauty per square mile in California than anywhere else in the world.

Pioneers of the Methodist Church South

CHAPTER V

We turn now to the story of the pioneers of the former Methodist Church, South, in California. A large number of people from the Southern states came to California in the gold rush, and among them were many members of the Methodist Churches there. In order to take care of these members and the growing population in California, the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Church, South, meeting in St. Louis in May, 1849, decided to establish a California Mission under the Board of Foreign Missions and place it in the specific care of Bishop Robert Paine.

In the Summer of 1849 Bishop Paine, by correspondence, selected three men for this work: Dr. Jesse Boring and Rev. A. M. Wynn of the Georgia Conference and Rev. D. W. Pollock of the St. Louis Conference. Dr. Boring, a prominent and successful pastor of the Georgia Conference, was made Superintendent of the Mission. The three men were asked to canvass their own Conference, raise their support for the first year and proceed to the field. Boring canvassed the Georgia Conference, Wynn his native South Carolina Conference, and Pollock the St. Louis Conference. They found a great amount of indifference and considerable opposition to this venture on the ground that this would be a source of conflict with the North Church, and that they were needed at home.

Nevertheless, they secured sufficient funds to undertake the task, and proceeded to New Orleans in January 1850 to embark for the Isthmus of Panama. Here they were unable to obtain passage until March 1st, because of the rush of gold seekers to the West Coast. Eventually they got to Chagres, crossed the Isthmus to Panama, and reached San Francisco on April 15, 1850. In this rough port where the odds and ends of the earth were collected, the three lonely missionaries found no welcoming committees and no provision for their modest needs or comfort.

William Taylor was out of the city when the group arrived, but on his return he went at once to meet them and make them welcome. In his book—"California Life, Illustrated", he later wrote that he had doubt of the wisdom of this venture and regretted

a divided Methodism in the State, but since the missionaries were here, he wanted to show them every consideration. In Sacramento a little later, Rev. Isaac Owen not only welcomed Pollock, but graciously culled through his membership and gave him all the names of Southern people in his flock.

Conferring together in San Francisco, the group decided that Dr. Boring should stay there as Superintendent, while Wynn should go to Stockton and Pollock to Sacramento. However, Mrs. Boring was ill, and they decided that the Borings should go to San Jose for some time to recuperate her health. Wynn remained in the city, opening services in the old Court House, and in May 1850 he organized the first Methodist South Church on the West Coast.

Toward the end of July, Dr. Boring returned to San Francisco and took up his work there, while Wynn proceeded to Stockton, where early in August he was able to organize another Church. But he was not to stay there long, since he was afflicted with the "Chagres Fever", a malarial disease which the swamp lands about Stockton made worse. However while there, he got building plans underway, and in the Fall visited the "Hell-roaring" camp of Sonora where he preached to a large and motley throng, out of which he got a church organization of thirteen members. Here, too, he secured a lot and started a subscription for a building.

In the meantime, Pollock went to Sacramento and organized a Church there and in a short time had the shell of a Church building constructed. But Pollock was a sick man and after a few months was forced to release his work and return to his home in the East where he soon died. This left the Sacramento Church with a debt of \$2,000, and a discouraged membership. Later a Rev. Pennman, a local preacher of the Methodist Church, South, took over the work, but he soon entered other business and the Church was again without a pastor.

In November of 1850, A. M. Wynn was again in the Bay area, this time at Sonoma where he organized his fourth church. Wynn was the evangelist and organizer of this early group of Methodist South missionaries. At the end of the year there were churches at San Francisco, Stockton, Sacramento, Sonora and Sonoma, but only two preachers—Boring and Wynn.

Such was the picture in 1851, when on April 16, Dr. Boring, Rev. A. M. Wynn and a local preacher, Rev. Cyprian Gridley, of Stockton, met in San Francisco for consultation. The outlook was dark and the Church at home seemed indifferent. They decided upon a bold and sagacious plan: to hold the field and ask Conferences in the South to raise each \$1,000 and appoint a man to California. The original plan was to leave the appointment of men to the Board of Missions, but later the Conferences were authorized to do this. This plan caught on in the East and produced grand results.

In the meantime Dr. Boring continued at Wesley Chapel, San Francisco, where he bought a house, which had been shipped around the Horn for a warehouse. This he converted into a serviceable chapel. This was the first Church building erected by the Methodist Church, South in California.

Rev. A. M. Wynn now went to San Jose and gathered a congregation and in May, 1851, organized a Methodist Church there. By Fall he had a brick building erected and this was dedicated on October 17. Rev. Cyprian Gridley took up the work in Stockton and soon built a Church there, but with a heavy debt and at a high rate of interest, which proved very distressing to him and all concerned. Rev. W. R. Gober and bride, from Louisiana, arrived in the middle of this year and were appointed to Sacramento. He got the church reorganized, and the building finished and a parsonage erected. His young and inexperienced bride went into the streets and raised a large part of the money to pay the bills and debt. Rev. Joseph S. Malone, who arrived in California early in the year, did some fine pioneer work in Columbia ere he assumed the work in Sonora and built a church there. The arrival of other men in late '51 and early '52, and the organization of the Pacific Annual Conference will be told in the next chapter.

Pioneers of the Methodist Church South

CHAPTER VI

In 1850 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in St. Louis and authorized the formation of an Annual Conference in California whenever the number of preachers and churches would warrant. When the "\$1,000 Plan" succeeded in enrolling fifteen or more men for the California Mission, Dr. Boring sent out the call for the Conference at San Francisco on April 15, 1852. The group met in Wesley Chapel, Powell Street, and under the instructions of the Bishops proceeded to organize the first annual Conference on the Pacific coast. Dr. Jesse Boring presided and the following men responded to the Roll Call: Jesse Boring, A. M. Wynn, Cyprian Gridley, W. R. Gober, J. S. Malone, J. M. Fulton, J. F. Blythe, A. M. Bailey, Morris Evans, W. A. Simmons, J. C. Simmons, D. B. Leyne, E. B. Lockley, S. W. Davies, and J. W. Kelly. The names of A. Graham, J. M. Jones and John Mathews, men who were expected to arrive soon, were added to the Roll, making eighteen in the charter membership.

The name of "The Pacific Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South" was adopted. Committees on Education, Books and Periodicals, Finance, Preachers' Aid Society, Missions, Sunday Schols, Bible Cause, and Public Worship were appointed and the regular work of an Annual Conference got underway. Rev. J. S. Malone in his Columbia Mission had found three men for Conference admission. Rev. W. H. Long was presented with credentials from the Congregational Church, and was received into full connection. Later it was discovered that his true name was W. H. Ives, and that he had entered the Conference with an ulterior motive, so he was dropped. Rev. A. Minear, formerly a member of an Eastern Conference, and Rev. M. M. Moore, both from Columbia, were received on trial, but proved inefficient and were discontinued by the following Conference Session.

Provision was made for a college and four high schols. Two of the latter schools were already in operation, —Bascom Institute at San Jose under the management of Mrs. Ruth C. Hammond,

and a school organized at Sacramento by Rev. W. R. Gober. A resolution was passed, "that each member of this Conference furnish to the secretary at his earliest convenience a short biographical sketch of his life." But this was never done, and all the records of these early Conferences were lost. It is interesting to note that the organizing Session of the California Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church passed a similar resolution and with similar result.

At the close of the Conference, the following list of appointments was read: San Francisco District—John W. Kelly, Presiding Elder; San Francisco—Joseph S. Malone and Morris Evans; San Jose, and Principal of Bascom Institute—Alexander M. Wynn; Sonoma—Elijah B. Lockley; Bodega—to be supplied; Benicia and Martinez—Dennis B. Leyne; Stockton—Andrew M. Bailey; Stockton Academy—to be supplied; Mariposa—John M. Jones; Sonora and Columbia—William H. Long; Woods Diggings—Adam Minear. Sacramento District—Alexander Graham, Presiding Elder; Sacramento and Asbury Institute—William R. Gober; Marysville—William A. Simmons; Shasta City—John Matthews; Nevada City—John F. Blythe; Grass Valley—John C. Simmons; Auburn—James M. Fulton; Georgetown—to be supplied; Greenwood—to be supplied; Nashville—Solomon W. Davies; Jacksonville—to be supplied; Angels—M. M. Moore. Cyprian Gridley was left without appointment and D. W. Pollock was superannuated.

We will now give a brief summary of the men and their fields of work. Some of the places, as Woods Diggings, Nashville, Shasta City, and Jacksonville, sound strange to modern ears, as these are only "Ghost Towns" today. Many of the fields had never been visited; were only "possibilities"; and the men had to find their way and set up a work. Most of the towns were rough mining communities, reached by wilderness trails, where scarcely a woman was to be found. The men who pioneered here were a sturdy lot and worthy of more than the passing notice which we can give them in this booklet.

Dr. Jesse Boring, Superintendent of the California Mission, was a native of Georgia, and had served many of the chief stations in the Georgia Conference before he was appointed to California. He was a man of modest and diffident nature, but a preacher of great power and effectiveness, and particularly gifted in the art of description. On one occasion, when describing a ship caught in a maelstrom and carried down beneath a seething, foam-lashed sea,

he was interrupted by a man in the audience who arose and gazing intently at the speaker, exclaimed—"My God, she's gone!" Dr. Boring's years in California were filled with torture, and his finances ruined by a note of indebtedness on the Stockton church, which he had kindly endorsed. At length he returned to his native state for many years of usefulness in his church.

Alexander M. Wynn was born in Charleston, South Carolina, and losing his his parents at an early age, he was raised by Bishop J. O. Andrews. He was given a good education and entered the ministry of the Church in the Georgia Conference. Frail of body but of indomitable spirit, he pursued his work and accomplished large results for the Kingdom. He left a shining trail in California, but after a few years was forced by ill-health to return to his Georgia home.

David W. Pollock, who had served in the Missouri Conference for about nine years, spent only a few months in California, Ill-health caused him to transfer to Alabama, where he soon died. He as a ban of enthusiasm and enterprise too great for his physical strength.

Cyprian Gridley was a native of Washington County, Ohio, who came to California by way of several years' service in both the Mississippi and Louisiana Conferences. He was a quiet and lovable man, of unquestioned integrity, but whose sanguine temperament led him into many financial troubles in causes undertaken for the church.

William R. Gober, born in Georgia, joined the Mississippi Conference and was stationed in New Orleans when he was appointed to California. Following a pastorate in Sacramento, he served as a Presiding Elder for two years, then resigned from the ministry to teach school. He studied law, and was elected to the Legislature. Worldly success beckoned, but suddenly he turned back and resumed his work in the church. Three times he presided over the Annual Conference in the absence of a Bishop and twice was elected to the General Conference. In later years he transferred his membership to the California Conference of the North Church, and spent the rest of his days in that Communion.

Joseph S. Malone was a native of Alabama; joined the Tennessee Conference and after a few years transferred to the St. Louis Conference when in a few months he left for California. Arriving in San Francisco in August of 1851, he went at once to Columbia and

Sonora. He was a man of fervid zeal and poetic imagination and possessed of a fearless nature and social quality that endeared him to the gold-mining fraternity. After two years he returned home.

John F. Blythe was a native of North Carolina; moved to West Tennessee and joined the Memphis Conference in 1846. Appointed to California, he reached San Francisco in September, 1851, and was sent to Nevada City, where he began an aggressive ministry. In less than a year he had built four churches—one in Nevada City, one in Grass Valley, one in Newtown and one in French Corral. Later he served as a Presiding Elder, roaming over valley and mountains until tuberculosis broke his health. He died on April 3, 1862.

Andrew M. Bailey was born in Tennessee, but joined the Kentucky Conference in 1839, preaching in that state until he came to California in the fall of 1851. His educational advantages were very limited, but he had a great religious experience and became a powerful evangelistic preacher. A sweet singer with unusual compass of voice, he was peculiarly at home in the early-day camp-meetings. His first work was with the heavily debt-burdened church at Stockton, but after six months he was transferred to the Santa Clara Circuit, where he tranmped and preached from San Juan Mission to the Lower Redwoods on the San Francisco Peninsula. At length he seemed to despair of the success of his Church in California and joined the North Church where, after serving for a few years, he located.

James M. Fulton was a native Virginian, converted at a camp-meeting in 1843 and admitted into the North Carolina Conference in 1847. J. C. Simmons remarked of him: "He was not a great preacher, but he was a great Christian." And, "Knee-marks fill the track of his entire progress through the mountains and valleys of California." He would pray anywhere, any time, on any occasion. Dr. O. P. Fitzgerald—later Bishop, wrote—"He was a singular compound, hero, hypochondriac, and saint." Fitzgerald describes how he met him on board the steamer on the way to Conference, and Fulton pulled him down among the baggage for several long prayers. "His diet was tea, crackers, and boild eggs . . . he would eat nothing cooked on Sunday." "Sent to the mines, he was a wonder to those nomadic dwellers at Vallecito, Douglas Flat, Murphy's Camp and Lancha Plana . They were puzzled to determine whether he was a lunatic or a saint." But his simplicity and goodness won people everywhere. On one ocaasion he met a

swineherd with a drove of hogs in a narrow ravine. The hogs took fright and ran away. Whereupon the swineherd began cursing the preacher. That man of God got off his horse, knelt in the mud and prayed for the profane herdsman until the latter took flight in panic. But he won his man, for the swineherd later dated his conversion from that experience. Growing thinner with rigid fasting and prayer he was sent in 1857 to Los Angeles Circuit for his health. One morning he was found dead, kneeling by his bedside in prayer.

Morris Evans was a native of Louisville, Kentucky and joined the Louisville Conference in 1848. Bishop Paine appointed him to California in 1851 and he reached San Francisco in February, 1852. He was sent to Sonora to redeem the church there from the wrong-doings of W. H. Long, and had an interesting pastorate. On his first Sunday, three neighboring gambling houses had brass bands playing for them, and a blacksmith shop across the street was repairing an engine boiler. During his stay in Sonora several atrocious murders took place and Mr. Evans was asked to serve as spiritual advisor to them and witness the hanging.

Morris Evans served on both the Marysville and San Francisco districts as Presiding Elder, and was active as a camp-meeting evangelist. Once at a camp-ground on Bear River, in charge of Cyprian Gridley, over one hundred people were converted under his preaching.

In 1863 he was in Virginia City, Nevada, and popular with the miners. One miner was once overheard giving this invitation: "Boys, come with me and hear Mr. Evans preach. I tell you he can sling a text."

In 1865 Rev. Evans located and returned to his native state where he again took up a successful ministry.

William A. Simmons and John C. Simmons were brothers, born and reared in the State of Georgia. William graduated from Emory College in 1844, and joined the Georgia Conference in 1846. The two brothers offered themselves for service in California in 1851, and reached San Francisco in February of 1852. W. A. Simmons went to Marysville, but stayed only six months, then was transferred to Georgetown, Eldorado County, where he served Georgetown, Yankee Jim's, Elizabethtown, King's Hill, Spanish Flat, Dry Creek, and all other places in his mountain area. He usually walked over the trails, though sometimes he rode a mule. He preached in barrooms, hotels, under shade trees, and in miner's tents and cabins. He was in Nevada City in

1853 and Grass Valley in 1854, where his health failed, and that Fall he returned to work in Georgia.

John C. Simmons was appointed to Grass Valley in 1852, and later served Stockton, Mariposa and San Jose. For four years he was a professor in the Pacific Methodist College. He was the historian of the Methodist Church, South, in California, and to him we owe most of our information regarding the work of its pioneers.

Dennis B. Leyne was a native of County Kerry, Ireland. He came to America in 1840 and was converted under the preaching of Dr. Jesse Boring, and joined the Alabama Conference in 1846. He had the full, broad brogue, and much of an Irishman's traditional wit. He enjoyed his religion. The Conference of 1852 sent him to the Benicia and Martinez Circuit, which he made to include places at the South end of San Francisco Bay, Oakland, Alameda, San Ramon Valley, Benicia, Martinez, Suisun and Napa. He stayed in California but a short time, then returned to Alabama.

Elijah B. Lockley was another native of Georgia, who joined the Alabama Conference, and later came to California, in February, 1852.

He was sent to Sonoma, where he built a neat little Gothic Church. Later he served at Columbia, Santa Clara, and many other early day places. He was a large, fat man, and lazy, but possessed of unusual powers in preaching. Simmons, the historian, said he was a born wag, and Dr. Fitzgerald told many amusing stories regarding him. Once in Columbia he, a bachelor, invited four men to dinner. They came, but found Lockley reposing on a lounge, and no dinner in preparation. He said: "Oh, it isn't cooked yet." "Parker, make a fire in the stove; Toman, go up town and get some crackers, oysters, coffee, and steaks; Oxley, go after a bucket of water; Porterfield, hunt up the crockery and set the table." The amused guests obeyed orders, and soon the dinner was prepared, served, and eaten, with Lockley graciously presiding at the table. Other escapades would fill a book. He located and returned to work several times, and at last was killed in an accidental shooting.

Solomon W. Davies was a native of North Carolina, joined the South Carolina Conference about 1840, and came to San Francisco in April 1852. His appointment was Nashville, of which little is known. For many years he was in and out of the effective relation on account of a throat ailment, and finally he was killed by a passing train at Santa Rosa.