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## THE ADAMS M. E. CHURCH.

The following history of the M. E. church of Adams was read by Rev. Ward W. Hunt, before a conference of ministers and laymen, held at Adams on the 13th and 14th inst. A copy has been furnished by the author for publication, by the request of the conference:

That period in the history of the Methodist Episcopal church in America, when the foundations of the M. E. church at Adams were laid, may properly be called her heroic age of religious chivalry. Men who felt themselves divinely called to preach the gospel, were sent into this region of country by the authorities of the church. Such men as Chandley Lambert, B. G. Paddock, Gardner Baker, Elisha Wheeler, and others, preached in this section. An organized itinerancy was a powerful missionary system of Christian evangelization. The church polity was well adapted to supply the religious wants of a new country, settled by a plain and industrious people. The system supplied a traveling ministry, aided by local preachers, exhorters, and a local pastorate by able leaders. These were the agencies employed by the authority of the church. The methods of evangelization carried out by these moral heroes were not only scriptural, but they had the charm of novelty. They preached everywhere as opportunity presented, in the street, or in the log cabin or grove. But the doctrines they preached were new to the people, although scriptural. They preached the fall of man, the doctrine of total depravity. They also proclaimed a general atonement, that Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; that every man had an existing ability by grace to come to Christ and be saved; that they might know, by happy experience, that Christ has power on earth to forgive sins, and that they might be cleansed from all unrighteousness; in fine, that they might be saved now from the guilt and power of sin and from inbred corruption; that they might in their religious experience ascend the Mount of Beatitudes and confine there to dwell, where they might enjoy the light of life and where the "golden sunbeams play." These great fundamental doctrines had a wonderful influence upon the people. They addressed themselves to the plain reason and understanding of men. A great many were thus converted unto God.

The Rev. Elisha Wheeler came through here and preached and formed a class, or society, in the year 1837. He held religious services in the school house, the south side of the creek. The class at first consisted of five members—Sophania Tucker and his wife and daughter, Mrs. David Wright, Mrs. Major Goodell, Daniel Dikeman, who moved to Adams white' Bro. Wheeler was preaching here, was appointed the leader of the class. That class of five members constituted the first elements from which the M. E. church in Adams has sprung. In the year 1838 or 1839 the small society, with the help of those friendly to the Methodist movement in Adams, purchased a small church building of the Universalists which stood where this church now stands.

The Adams Methodist society was organized into a station in 1839, and Rev. Wm. Ward Ninde was sent on as the stationed preacher. There have succeeded him the following preachers: David Kingsley, Schuyler Hoos, L. R. Redington, H. Chapin, Elijah Smith, Hiram Mattison, A. J. Phelps, Wm. Wyatt, Chas. Giles, John Loveys, J. F. Dayan, I. S. Bingham, C. W. Let, W. H. Hawkins, L. D. Gorrie, Wm. X. Ninde, J. Armstrong, Wm. L. Tisdale, J. C. Vandercook, F. F. Jewell, Lewis Meredith, J. T. Hewitt, B. O. Barnes, H. W. Bennett, E. C. Bruce, H. M. Danforth. These are the respective names of the galaxy of stars that have served this church up to the present time since it was organized into a station. They were all luminous bodies, but differed so in magnitude and brilliancy. It is not practicable that I should now attempt to delineate the character or describe the labors and administrations of each of these ministers of this church, but it may be serviceable to refer to some of the most important events pertaining to this church and her ministry.

In our brief review of the successive administrations by these ministers, and the most important events connected therewith, we invite attention to the first be-

ginning of this church as organized into a station in 1839. A young man raised in Wayne county, N. Y., the son of a Protestant Episcopal clergyman, having been admitted into the Genesee conference on trial in 1838, was sent here by the Bishop to be the pastor and preacher of this church in 1839. He had been reared in a literary atmosphere, and had studied at Casenovia and was a good scholar, and aged about twenty years. His name was William Ward Ninde. He came to this place a single man on horseback. He arrived here in the middle of the week and visited around among the members during the residue of the week. All were especially anxious to hear the new preacher. On Sunday morning the house was filled. Not only did the Methodists attend but their adherents, and the Universalists, many of them, were present. The young minister entered his pulpit, read his first hymn, and after singing he prayed, then he read a portion of the Holy Scriptures; he then gave out another hymn. After it was sung he arose and announced his text, found in Romans 1st chapter the 10th verse—"For or I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." He had no manuscript before him, but looked pleasantly at his audience and preached to them in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power—he electrified the audience, as we may say. All criticisms slept—every eye was upon him. As he spoke of God's power in saving those that believe tears filled every eye. Although young he most triumphantly commanded the situation. The small church membership did not then know, however, much they were edified and pleased with his ministrations; that the young Wm. Ward Ninde was the greatest pulpit orator of the place, and indeed the most eloquent minister of the gospel ever stationed in Adams. In imagination, pathos and felicitous diction he excelled. Perhaps some have been stationed here of greater native power of mind and discrimination, but Wm. Ward Ninde unquestionably excelled them all in pulpit eloquence. In the galaxy of bright stars that have served this church he occupies the highest plane and shines with the greatest effulgence. His son, Wm. X. Ninde, who since served this church, although not equal to his father in native powers of eloquence, still by reason of long and rigorous discipline and mental culture he may be placed on the same plane in the galaxy with his father.

The membership and people never realized the true greatness of these two ministers—at least while they were here. But what were the fruits of his labors? Not only did this young minister instruct the people in the great leading doctrines of the Bible, but he also exerted a powerful influence over them, and secured many ardent adherents to the church who afterwards became Christians and members. But a revival followed his labors. A goodly number were converted and added to the church. We cannot here name all who then joined the society, but Bro. A. Blackstone and wife, Sylvester Griswold and wife, Mary and Clarissa Smith, Miss Starling and many others joined the church, some of whom are now living, others have passed on before to the "palace of angels and God."

We may now mention some who were at an early period inducted into this church: Chester McKee, J. C. Cooper and wife, Mrs. Whitney and husband, Wm. Merriman, Father Parham and wife, David Wright, John Weaver, Father Bennett, Robert Schram, Manford Tucker and wife, Mother Empringham and wife, Edward Dixon and wife, and others whom we are not now able to mention.

David Kingsley was the next preacher—a good man and possessed good qualifications—his term of labor was serviceable to the church. The next minister was Schuyler Hoos, a good man of great impulses and long power and considerable spiritual influence; under his labor good was secured. L. R. Redington was the next preacher, a good man and rendered good service in the ministry, and the church was built up. Then Harvey Chapin appeared, a man of years, but having good native talents, and understanding the doctrines of the church he was instrumental in feeding the flock and establishing the membership in Methodism. Then came Elijah Smith, a man of piety and

good preaching talent; he was enterprising and diligent; he held meetings around about in different places; his labors were blessed with a good revival. Bro. Smith was not only enabled through grace to secure converts, but to place the Methodist stamp upon them so that they could be easily distinguished as Methodists. Manning Blackstone and others were added to the church. That Bro. Smith could not only beget converts by the gospel, but make them firm Methodists is illustrated by a living epistle among us. He was converted under Bro. Smith's labors, being in an uncultivated youthful state, but by grace became a faithful member and a staunch Methodist. He has held several positions of honor in the church, and continues unto this day to exercise his peculiar native and acquired talents in building up the church and in strengthening his brethren, Samuel Niblock, by name.

Miram Mattison succeeded Bro. Smith. As a minister he was talented and active. Being a controversialist he dealt heavy blows upon all who assailed him in theology. The church matured under his labors. The next star that appeared was A. J. Phelps, a fair preacher, who looked after the material as well as the spiritual interests of the church. Then William Wyatt arose and served the church, and it prospered in a degree by his labors. John Loveys was the next evangelist sent to serve this church. He was a good reliable man and could build up the membership in the faith of the gospel. The next herald in the renowned succession was J. F. Dayan. It fell to his lot not only to reap the fruits of his illustrious predecessors, but he also gathered fruit from his own ministry. Bro. Dayan had the elements of a revivalist. He was a man of good natural ability and fair culture. He was successful in developing and directing the moral and spiritual energies of the church. In describing the ministerial career of this Bro. in this place, reference may be made to the spirit of union that has pervaded this church. Our house was small, and a revival beginning there and being attended by the brethren of other churches, they soon had to move to the more spacious church for want of room. In those union efforts of course the minister of our sister church shared in the responsibility of conducting the meetings; but when Bro. Dayan was here—after a series of union meetings was closed, and when each church met and held its meetings in its own house—a revival commenced in the M. E. church and our minister had the entire responsibility of conducting it.

This fact marked a new era in the history of this church. The membership as well as the minister seemed to feel the responsibility of carrying on the work which the Lord had so graciously begun. They met before meeting in the evening, and after meeting they would retire to one or more houses for prayer. Just before meeting one day the writer, with several young men whom he found to be seeking for religion, called at Bro. Blackstone's. The Bro. approaching the house informed Bro. Blackstone that his design was to have a short prayer meeting. They were quickly admitted into the parlor and there they all knelt down and prayed and four or five young men were converted. That was the way the work went on. The writer was teaching a select school here at that time of about forty scholars. The revival went through the school and spread all around. Perhaps seventy-five or one hundred were converted, and they were strong converts, ready and willing to carry on a meeting in public on Sunday in place of preaching. Considering the available resources and ability possessed by the church Bro. Dayan was eminently instrumental in building up the church and in bringing in a new dispensation which has continued unto this day. His administration was indeed an epoch in the history of this church.

Rev. I. S. Bingham next appeared in the ministry as the pastor of this church, a man of good natural ability and a prudent manager. He made a successful team, and the church was united and strengthened by his labors. Bro. Bingham had the special honor of serving this church during a second term. Charles W. Lett was the next minister, a good preacher of feeble health, but was faithful and true to the cause of religion and the church. William Hawkins was the next successor in the ministry here. During his term

the church was burned. He was energetic in the effort to build a new church. Bro. Wm. Hawkins was the chairman of an official meeting when the subscription for building this house was first opened and signed. Wm. A. Gilbert, J. C. Cooper, M. Tucker, the writer, P. Smith and we think A. Blackstone were present. To build this church was a great work for the minister and the society. It required work, money and perseverance. We rejoice that it now stands a memento of former religious enterprise. P. D. Gorrie followed Wm. Hawkins as minister, a sound man of good mind and respectable culture. He was able to instruct the people, and under his labors this church edifice was being reared. Bro. Gorrie is well known as a writer. During his pastoral term this church was completed and dedicated. Bishop James preached the dedicatory sermon, and the writer remembers his text. It was chosen from the Psalms, "I will not give sleep to mine eyes or slumber to mine eyelids until I find out a place for the Lord, etc." The energies of the church being thus employed in working and praying for the cause secured a spiritual growth and maturity of strength in the membership. Then came Wm. X. Ninde as the preacher of this charge, whom we have already located on the same elevated plane of his father on his right hand in the luminous galaxy of ministers who have served this charge.

Nothing of special importance transpired under the labors of J. W. Armstrong, a good man of great varied attainments. He was a teacher and will be long remembered for his piety and instruction. Wm. L. Tisdale and J. C. Vandercook followed in consecutive order. The former being here but two years his brightness was not so fully manifested. During his and J. C. Vandercook's pastorate the church was disciplined by the peculiar condition of things and of the country. Then another herald appeared in the person of the Rev. F. F. Jewell, a man of more than ordinary pulpit talent. The house was filled with attentive hearers. A somewhat extensive revival obtained during his ministry. He was also instrumental, with the help of the brethren, in repairing the church and in paying off what Bro. Blackstone called the "national debt" on the church. Bro. Jewell's term is another epoch in the history of this church. Lewis Meredith succeeded Bro. Jewell. He was a very good preacher and well read man. His labors were blessed with a revival, and he is held in esteem, especially by those added to the church by his ministry.

J. T. Hewitt was the next star in the galaxy, a good preacher and gentleman. He charmed the people by his descriptive discourses. He stayed two years, and the church was benefited by his labors. Rev. S. O. Barnes next succeeded in the ministry here, a nice man who attended to his own work, and was blessed in his labors by a revival, aided by the noted Bro. Halman of Troy and his fellow workers. H. W. Bennett was here but one year of his own choice. He was beloved and rendered efficient service to the church. Rev. E. C. Bruce then appeared, a man of study and preciseness. Under his labors the church prospered in spiritual and in temporal things. The church building was rejuvenated during his term and the finances all adjusted. His was a quiet but successful term. Then Rev. H. M. Danforth appeared, a good man and preacher. The church was built up by his labors. This closes the galaxy of ministers down to the present incumbents, who now speak for themselves.

In this place it seems incumbent upon us to notice another class of luminaries who have been connected officially with this church. They constitute a constellation of stars of great official and in some cases ministerial brilliancy. We refer to the galaxy of the church called Presiding Elders. We have the largest and most potent presley of any church on the continent. We will repeat their names here from memory: N. Salisbury, John Dempster, Lewis Whitcomb, Isaac Stone, Geo. Woodruff, Geo. Gary, A. J. Phelps, Gardner Baker, F. H. Stanton, D. W. Boney, Thomas Risley, M. D. Kinney, I. S. Bingham. These are all we now remember down to the present time. In the constellation there are three who shoot brightly in the darkness. John Dempster stands highest in the arc of the constellation;

George Gary stands at his right on a little lower plane, and Gardner Baker on his left hand on the same plane with Gary. These men served the church in the practical office when it was specially useful and fraught with great good to the church having a lay ministry. John Dempster was a diligent student and became thereby an eminent divine. His sermons were characterized by deep and discriminating thought and peculiar originality of diction. Perhaps, as we stated, Gary and Baker occupied a little lower plane in divinity and culture, but were not inferior in labors and fidelity to the cause of Christ. We will not dwell on the character of these prelates, nor present to your view the shining qualities of the others who have died and who are living—we leave this brilliant constellation and proceed to write out some of the history of this church as it now is. Perhaps we should record the fact that there are four supernumerary and superannuated preachers belonging to this charge, enough in number to render some support or do injury to the church, but they are now being well directed by our wise and judicious pastor, who does not appear anxious to have but one chair in the pulpit. So far as we know the pastor has not been required to have a committee to look after their temporalities and report them to conference for material aid, as no one is, so far as we know, a sacred pauper.

The location of this church is favorable, it being but about fifty miles from the geographical centre of the state and in the southern border of Northern New York. Being thus situated in the most fertile and productive part of Northern N. Y. it has received the benefits of such providential advantages. According to the official report in the minutes there are now about 220 members. A good degree of peace and Christian fellowship obtains and a degree of prosperity. During the term of Bro. Fugate thus far several have been added to the church as the result mainly of a faithful pastorate. The church is daily organized so that class meetings and prayer meetings are regularly held, and are an efficient agency in building up the church in the graces of the spirit and in numbers. The Sunday-school is very well organized and averages about 100 in attendance. The church property is out of debt and a fair field is before us for spiritual improvement. The church is now competent as to ability to occupy becomingly the position Providence has given her, so as to be a successful agency in the enlightenment and salvation of souls and in building up believers in the faith of the gospel. What is now needed is a development of spiritual power and its proper direction in connection with instruction as to doctrines and church polity that our young members may become able and efficient laborers in the Master's vineyard.

Since this church was established a large number who occupied a place among us have been gathered to the heavenly garner, they rest from their labors and their works do follow them. A large number are now nearing the river that separates from the church triumphant. The members of this church have great attractions over on the golden shore. We are often led to exclaim in our social meetings:

"And if our fellowship below  
In Jesus be so sweet,  
What height of rapture shall we know  
When around His throne we meet."

Laying aside the records of this church let us look at its feeble beginnings fifty-five years ago. Contemplate a class of five members with a leader in the old school-house the other side of the creek. Who in the light of human reason can tell us what would be the destiny of that small class of six persons without wealth or worldly influence, surrounded by those who were prejudiced against them? How long would they remain as an organized ecclesiastical body, having no worldly prestige, and surrounded by powerful antagonistic forces? The growth of this church from such feeble beginnings to its present status cannot be accounted for on any principle of human calculation. It is the result of theanistic agency—God and man working together.

Paul, speaking of the comparative importance of the human and divine agency, says: "So then it be that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." For this reason we say Methodism is of God. A goodly number in the ministry and laity have planted but God has given the increase. This church then is a miracle of grace, having been built up by feeble instrumentalities by the blessing of God. The doctrines inculcated fifty years ago were as now that God has made ample provision for the salvation of all men by the death of Christ, who by the grace of God tasted death for every man, that if we confess and forsake our sins, God is able and willing to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all un-

righteousness; that if any man doubted as to the doctrine of forgiveness and regeneration and sanctification, it has been taught from our pulpit and at our social meetings "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or true." Another feature in our history has been, all were invited and expected to do something that is not upon the faith and light they then had in order to be saved, not indeed as a meritorious but as a conditional cause—that is, salvation is conditionally bestowed upon all who believe and obey the gospel. This has been the teaching. We have been taught to work out our own salvation, for God worketh in us—enabling us to work. Such have been the doctrines taught.

As to laborers, they have generally been the members of the church and her ministry. But few traveling vagrant revivalists have been employed here, which probably has been a blessing to the church. God has been pleased to bless these simple means employed, and sinners have been converted and the church built up.

During the half century past there has been a great change effected in our church polity, but no change in our doctrine or social means of grace. These remain the same, and we trust will continue forever, or while time endures.

We cannot give here a detailed account of the results secured by the instrumentality of this church. Signal victories have been achieved, souls have been converted and believers built up in the faith. But there have been a goodly number of triumphant deaths in this church. "The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law, but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord." Having been taught that we may know that we are saved now, we have no doubt as to the future, but firmly declare that if this earthly house be dissolved we have a building of God eternal in the heavens. Hence we often sing:

"Away with our sorrow and tear,  
We soon shall recover our home,  
The city of saints shall appear,  
The day of eternity comes.

By faith we already behold  
The lovely Jerusalem here,  
Her walls are of Jasper and gold,  
As crystal her buildings are clear.

Immeasurably founded in grace  
It stands as it always has stood,  
And brighter its builders display,  
And flames with the glory of God.

None but our children will be present to  
hear the history of the next half century  
read; we of mature age will have passed  
away from the scenes of time. In harmony  
with our belief and past history may  
we be able to exclaim with reference to  
our final departure—

"From earth we shall quickly remove,  
And mount to our native abode,  
The house of our Father above,  
The palace of angels and God."

Amen. W. W. Hunt.

Pierrepont Manor.  
—The mumps have arrived.  
—Capt. Jennings is quite sick.  
—The principle subject of conversation at present, is the failure of the Marchant's bank.

—Ben Grenall tapped his sugar bush Feb. 14, and has made some very fine syrup.

—Jim Lamson has moved up into the Grenell house, lately occupied by Charlie Barber.

—During last there will be services at Zion church every Wednesday and Friday evening.

—The many friends of Miss Rhoda Gross will be pained to learn of her serious illness.

—Eaton Goodnoth leaves this week for Waseca, Minn., where he has obtained a lucrative position in a book-store. We wish him success.

—Mrs. M. J. Parr is teaching a class in penmanship. All who desire to improve in this accomplishment should avail themselves of this opportunity.

—At the present writing, (Monday evening) Mrs. H. Foreman is very sick with typhoid pneumonia, and but little hope is entertained for her recovery.

—Rev. Mr. Nasmith and Prof. A. H. Copeland, of Manneville, addressed the people on the subject of temperance, Monday evening, Feb. 13, in the Union church. A good audience was present considering the bad night.

—Highest prices paid for veal calves, live poultry, hams and eggs by P. L. Williams, Pierrepont Manor, N. Y.

—Go at once to Wilds & Foreman's. A Sugar 8c; kerosene 7 1/2 to 24; best matches 12 1/2; rice dress goods 6 1/2; lamp chimneys 8 to 60; 1000 other bargains. Go at once. Butter, eggs, &c. wanted. Big auction Saturday evening. Eloquent auctioneer. All go and save money. WILDS & FOREMAN.  
Feb. 18, 1882.

Butterville.

—The sixth of the series of parties to be given by the Farmers Cornet Band will be held at the band hall in Butterville on Friday evening, Feb. 24th. 47w2

—A nice stock of law blanks at Goodner's music store, at 30 cts. per doz.

