



1963

From Pioneer Preaching Point to Urban Parishes

Stephen Foster '63

Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/history_honproj



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Foster '63, Stephen, "From Pioneer Preaching Point to Urban Parishes" (1963). *Honors Projects*. 42.

https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/history_honproj/42

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

From PIONEER PREACHING POINT
To URBAN PARISHES

ARCHIVES
287.6
F757f

S. Stephen Foster

Submitted For Honors Work
In the Department of History
Illinois Wesleyan University
Bloomington, Illinois
1963

BUCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY
ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Accepted by the Department of History
of Illinois Wesleyan University in fulfillment
of requirements for departmental honors.

Richard I. Leonard

Project Advisor

Samuel A. Andrews

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement

Introduction

Technical Note

Chapters

I---Settlers and Religious Background	1
II--The First Methodist Church in Decatur 1831-1850	8
III-Prominent Members and Preachers in the Early Church	15
IV--From Wagon Ruts to Railroads 1829-1860	25
V---The Church in an Era of Change	29
VI--The Effects of Civil Strife	32
VII-The Founding of a Second Church	44
VII -Methodist Minorities	46
IX--Mutations Within the Church	52
X---Missions	68

Appendix

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For helping me in many ways, I owe thanks to people whose names will not appear here due to the length such a list would be. Among the first of those whom I will mention are my history instructors; Dr. Bunyan Andrew head of the department and my faculty advisor, and Dr. Leonard Instructor in Church History and my project advisor. To Rev. Charles Lotz, the Librarian of the Central Illinois Convergence Historical Society, I owe thanks for assisting me in locating materials in that library. Among the many people of Decatur, Illinois, who assisted me, I owe special thanks to Rev. W. W. Cutlip of the First Methodist Church, Mrs. Earl White Chairman of the Historical Committee of the First Methodist Church, and Mr. and Mrs. Donald Wolfe and family of Grace Church who opened their home to me on several occasions, and Mrs. Wolfe who also helped me find the records of Grace Church in her official capacity as a secretary of Grace Church.

I owe very special thanks to my typist, Miss Judith Giffrow, who has typed the body of this paper, and also assisted me in my career at Illinois Wesleyan University by typing several papers for me. Thanks to Miss Giffrow is also in order for the editorial remarks she has made as a fellow student.

To the above people I owe my gratitude for assisting me in compiling and completing this paper, and to my parents I owe thanks for making my education possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Foster". The signature is written in dark ink and has a slightly slanted, personal feel.

Steve Foster

INTRODUCTION

In developing my knowledge of history, my professors have instilled in this knowledge the realization of the importance of the "little men"; that though the great men of history, whose names are preserved in the annals of time, initiate broad and inclusive changes, it is the "little men" who use and accept these new ideas and those who make it possible for the "great men" to exist. To attempt to illustrate this principle I have chosen to trace the development of the Methodist Church in one particular community of Illinois. I chose Decatur, Illinois, not as a community I was familiar with, but because it would provide a laboratory in which I might be able to investigate the cross references and relationships of the currents of national history to the activities of one particular religious group on the American frontier. The Methodist Church was a likely choice for me because I am most familiar with it, and because it is the largest single denomination in Decatur, though not a dominating denomination.

In the process of my investigation it soon became evident that not only had the currents of the developing nation and church made their impressions on this community, but that the detailed items of the history of this particular community illuminated and added a dimension to the broad currents.

It has been my aim in tracing the development of the Methodist Churches of Decatur, Illinois, to place their development in the framework of national and local growth in order to give the best possible picture of the development of a pioneer preaching point on a frontier Methodist Circuit to full blown urban parishes

of the 1920's.*

It is also necessary to point out that it has not been my policy to attempt any development or sketch of the changes in theology which took place in the growing church. The development of a history must by the foundation of its material in the interaction of people neglect the essence of the church which has given it a foundation for its actions through time.

The church like Isaiah has the Spirit of the Lord upon it...

to bring good tidings to the afflicted...
to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim
liberty to the captives, and the opening
of the prison to those who are bound; to
proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and
the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort
all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn
in Zion...to give them a garland instead
of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of
mourning, the mantle of praise instead of
a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks
of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,
that He may be glorified.

(Isaiah 61:1-3)

Therefore let it not be forgotten that though the influence of historical developments upon the church have changed and molded its being, the very existence of the church also relies upon the dedication of the men who were its members, to the God of History.

Steve Foster

Illinois Wesleyan University

April, 1963

*Because this paper only deals with the development of the parishes to the 1920's, it must be noted that one more church has been added to the list of Methodist Churches in Decatur; Christ Methodist Church in 1953.

TECHNICAL NOTE

In the body of this work wherever the church is referred to, it will be the Methodist Church national as well as local.

I SETTLERS AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Rev. N. M. Baker, in his paper "History of Macon County," says that "as late as 1840 there were very few people in Macon County who were not from the south."¹ He goes further to point out that most of these southerners were of Scotch-Irish origin. In tracing his own family line he found that his forebearer, John Martin, was located in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, which is east of the Appalachian mountains. In 1780 the same John Martin was living with his family in Lincoln County, North Carolina. He points out that this movement of his great grandfather was part of the general migration taking place at this time:

And as this John Martin found his way from Pennsylvania to North Carolina, so many others during the colonial period drifted from Pennsylvania and other colonies to the Carolinas and Virginia. They concentrated in Mecklenburg County and are said to have issued a Declaration² of Independence preceding the immortal document of 1776.

¹Baker, Rev. N. M., "History of Macon County" (Decatur Herald and Review, May 15, 1921 to June 5, 1921, weekly)

Mr. Baker's statistics for the above statement are as follows:

Of 189 persons who were in Decatur before 1840, and whose lineage was possible to trace,

45.....	were born in.....	Kentucky
36.....	" "	".....Tennessee
30.....	" "	".....Virginia
25.....	" "	".....North Carolina
17.....	" "	".....South Carolina
11.....	" "	".....Ohio
7.....	" "	".....Maryland
5.....	" "	".....Connecticut
3.....	" "	".....New York
3.....	" "	".....Pennsylvania
2.....	" "	".....New Hampshire
2.....	" "	".....Alabama
1.....	" "	".....Massachusetts
1.....	" "	".....Georgia
2.....	" "	".....Ireland
1.....	" "	".....England

²Ibid.

The Scotch-Irish had taken the Presbyterian church with them from Scotland to Ireland and from there brought it to the United States. The Scotch-Irish are thought to have been the seed of the Presbyterian church as they moved West, as truly they were, for Rev. N. M. Baker was a Presbyterian minister in Decatur. The problem then is how Methodism got mixed in with these Scotch-Irish who made up the settlements that became Decatur congregations.

There may have been some early acquaintance with the powerful evangelical work of Devereux Jarratt. Jarratt was an Anglican priest in Dinwiddie County, Virginia, following his location there in 1763. His work included more than his own parish. In 1772-73 he welcomed the newly arrived Robert Williams, a Methodist local preacher from England, and worked with him in Evangelical work. In 1775, in the company of Thomas Rankin, Wesley's Assistant in America, Jarratt made a preaching tour of the southern colonies of Virginia and into North Carolina. The result of the work of the Methodist preachers mentioned and their associates, aided and encouraged by Jarratt, was the founding of several Methodist Circuits in this area. The Brunswick Circuit covering 14 counties in Virginia and two counties in North Carolina, the Fairfax Circuit in 1776, the Hanover Circuit covering six counties on both sides of the James River, and the ^{Pittsylvania} ~~Pittsylvania~~, Amelia, and Sussex Circuits in 1777. The center of the Brunswick Circuit was Brunswick County which is just west of Mecklenburg County, the home of the Scotch-Irish who made their own declaration of independence. And what is more, John Martin and families like his had to pass through this Methodist "infested" area on their way into North Carolina from Pennsylvania, and thus the connection was probably forming between Methodism and the Scotch-Irish as early as the pre-revolutionary era.

Added to the success of Jarratt and the Methodist preachers in the pre-revolutionary era and during the early year of revolt, Methodists made great gains in this area between 1784-1790 adding 3,200 members in the Brunswick, Amelia, and Sussex Circuits in 1887 alone, and some 4,761 for the western area of the Virginia

and Kentucky Circuit. The Methodist had a total increase in these years of 11,481. The Presbyterians were also busy in this period which is evidenced by the founding of the Hampden-Sidney College in 1776 at Prince Edward County and Liberty Hall Academy west of the Ridge in the same year.

The spectacular years of growth and development of both churches among the Scotch-Irish and other settlers of the area soon came to a halt between 1790 and 1797. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church made the following observation in a report to its member churches:

We perceive with pain and fearful apprehension a general dereliction of religious principles and practice among our fellow citizens, a visible and prevailing impiety and contempt for the laws and institutions of religion, and an abounding infidelity lewdness, and every species of debauchery and loose indulgence greatly abound.

The Methodists also noted this religious decline in their total membership losses of 6,000 in 1795 and 4,000 in 1796. Although some of this was due to the founding of Republican Methodism by O'Kelly, most of it was due to the spiritual deadness of that period.

The real bond between the Scotch-Irish, who were ethnically Presbyterian, and Methodism was the outcome of this period of spiritual deadness. The answer to this problem of spiritual deadness was first introduced by Timothy Dwight, newly elected president of Yale in 1797. He noted that only two members of the student body were professing to be Christians and he started preaching in Chapel which soon became a revival that not only took hold at Yale, but spread to Dartmouth, Williams, and Amherst colleges. The revival also started in the west with James McGready, a Presbyterian minister of Scotch-Irish parentage,^{who} first preaching in the Carolinas, began the revival in Logan County, Kentucky, because of his rejection by the churches in the Carolinas. The Logan County revival became known as the Cumberland revival, which took the name of the Presbytery in which it was located.

³ Sweet, William Warren, Methodism in American History (Abingdon Press, New York and Nashville, 1954, p. 134.).

In the years before 1800, as the revival was reaching its peak it reached into the Methodist camp in the person of John McGee. The great social event of a revival could not be contained in one group, and soon the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists (who were also making great strides among the Scotch-Irish at this time) were holding joint meetings.

In the year 1800 the Cumberland revival reached its culmination, when in June of that year a great meeting was held on Red River, one of the Logan County charges, attended by thousands of people. Great excitement attended this meeting, which was encouraged by a Methodist preacher, John McGee, who, overcome by his feelings, shouted and exhorted with all possible feeling.

These revivals soon grew in numbers and in duration; numbering as many as 20,000 and lasted as long as two or three days.

Cane Ridge in Northern Kentucky soon caught the "spiritual" fire in 1801 under the direction of Rev. Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian. The exclusion of the Baptists from this fellowship of Revival and emotion was very subtle, but substantial. The meetings at Cane Ridge were not only revivalistic, but also centered on a sacramental meeting after the preaching revival. The Presbyterians and Methodists not having closed communions could partake of a joint sacrament, while the Baptists having a closed communion withdrew.

The great emotional upheaval which occurred in connection with the frontier revival both shocked and worried the more sedate members of the Presbyterian General Assembly, and thus when the Cumberland Presbytery lowered its educational requirements for the minister in 1802 in order to provide pastors for the numerous young churches growing up from the revival, more than concern was voiced. After some censuring of the Cumberland Presbytery by the overseeing Synod of Kentucky, the Cumberland Presbytery was dissolved in 1806. By 1810 the members of the Cumberland Presbytery had formed their own group which was known as the Cumberland Presbyterian church. It

⁴ Ibid., p. 155.

was much closer in its beliefs, following the Arminian doctrine of man's choice of salvation, to the Methodists than to the strict Calvinist doctrine of Predestination of the elect, ^{1812 found} 19,000 in Kentucky and Tennessee, in the ^{Cumberland} Presbyterian church.

The Revival soon spread under the joint efforts of the Cumberland Presbyterians and the Methodists. ~~By 1812 the revival had spread to the entire region.~~

~~By 1812~~ This revival did not stop ^{in 1812} but touched off the fire that did not quite smoldering until Billy Sunday had broken his last chair and the string of the wooden tabernacles that he had left across the country in the twentieth century had been torn down.

It was into the middle of this seething pool of spiritual revival that Josiah Martin, the son of John Martin, moved in 1812. He settled with his family in Rutherford County, Tennessee. Josiah Martin had two sons and six daughters. Two of these daughters were wives of men that moved to the ward settlement near what is now Decatur.

The Frontier Revival also effected areas from which ministers of the Decatur area came. It was in the neighboring county of Rutherford ^{County} (Wilson County) that Wilson Pitner was born. Wilson Pitner, who will also be mentioned in a later chapter, served the Athens Circuit in 1831, which means he preached at Decatur as a point on that circuit. His brother, Levi C. Pitner, was later to become a pastor of Decatur First Methodist Church and supervise the building of the third church building for that congregation in 1867. Thus it was from this hot bed of religious enthusiasm that the settlers and some of the pastors of Decatur came. N.M. Baker points out that this major migration route in his article in tracing the line of emigration to Macon County:

The line of emigration then, was during the colonial period, from Pennsylvania and the neighboring colonies to the Carolinas and Virginia, and after the Revolution Virginia and the Carolinas into Tennessee and Kentucky and Georgia, and later from all these states to Illinois.

⁵ Baker, N. M., "History of Macon County."

The great movement to the West began in about 1812, bringing into being the state of Illinois by 1818. By 1818, the first settler of Macon county, Leonard Stevens, had moved into Illinois from New York and stopped first in Randolph County and finally settling down in Macon County in 1821 or 1822. He and his family built a homestead about three miles Northwest of present Decatur on what came to be called Stevens Creek. The sons of Leonard Stevens who came to Macon County with him were Buel, Joseph, Dorus, Luther, and James.

Mrs. John Ward, Sr., a widow with children, accompanied some friends into Illinois in 1819 from Logan County, Kentucky, the seat of the Cumberland Revival. She settled with the Smiths, Warnicks, and Austins on the south side of the Sangamon opposite the Stevens settlement in 1824. This settlement took its name from her family and became known as the Ward settlement.

In 1828, the population around the Stevens and the Ward settlements had grown large enough that people felt the need of some means of local government. The state was petitioned and Macon County, Illinois, became an official government with the county seat to be called Decatur and located east of the Ward and Stevens settlements on the Sangamon River and to be laid out after Shelbyville, Illinois.

The church now made its official entrance into the newly-established settlements in Macon County.

In the Stevens Creek settlement were a number of adherents to the Methodist faith. That fact came to the attention of Rev. Peter Cartwright, militant leader of Methodism in Illinois, who was the presiding elder of the Sangamon district. In the fall of 1829 he started the first Methodist "society" in Macon county.

⁶ Richmond, Mabel E., Centennial History of Decatur and Macon County (The Decatur Review, The Decatur and Macon County Centennial Association, Decatur, Illinois, 1930).

This first Methodist Society was made up of Buel Stevens and wife, Luther Stevens and wife, Dorus Stevens, Joseph Stevens, Mr. Hollenback, David Owen and wife, and John Frazee and wife. Its meetings were held in the home of David Owen on the West Side of Stevens Creek. Some additions were made to this society the following year from the families of Jonathan and Isaac Miller, Rev. Alonzo Lapham and his wife, and Dr. William T. Crissey and his wife who came from Edgar County. ⁷

The Stevens Settlement society was placed on the Salt Creek Circuit under the care of W. L. Deneen. In 1830 a camp meeting was held in the Stevens Settlement on the farm of David Owens, and under the direction of Asabel E. Phelps, the circuit rider that year. Some of the people who attended this meeting stayed over and added to the ranks of the congregation and to the settlement. Some of them were to relocate north of Decatur and form what later became the Sharon Methodist Church, which will appear in a later chapter.

The revivalistic yoke-fellows of the Methodists soon arrived. The first man to preach a Presbyterian sermon was the Rev. John Berry, who held a service in a log school house three and one-half miles southwest of Decatur on the farm of P. M. Wikoff. The results of his preaching was the founding of the Mr. Zion Cumberland Presbyterian Church under the guidance of Rev. David L. Foster, and at his home three miles north of

Decatur, on April 24, 1830

(7) Author's Note: The counter part of this society among the members of the Ward Settlement was established by Peter Cartwright in 1830 at the home of Benjamin Wilson. This society became known as the Blue Mound Society and was placed under the care of Rev. Deneen in its first year. The society lasted until a chapel was built in 1863, and abandoned in mid-twentieth century when the chapel was destroyed by fire. The original members of this society divided, that is some moved to Decatur and added to the founding of the Methodist Church there and to the community, with such names as Austin, Ward, and Warnick appearing. There was a greater number of southerners in the new community than northerners in 1835 (N.M. Baker and Mrs. Earl White). Thus the First M.E. Church was made up of southerners and some northerners in 1835.

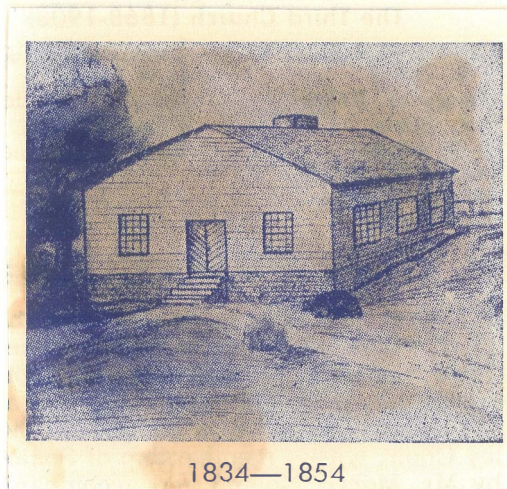
In the fall of 1830 Dr. W. T. Crissey moved to the newly-laid out town of Decatur. In the spring of 1831 his nephew, who had joined the Illinois conference in 1830 and started out on the Paoli Circuit, Indiana, and on the Tazewell circuit, Illinois, in 1831, came to visit him. Rev. W. S. Crissey, while thus visiting his uncle, delivered the first Methodist sermon in Decatur proper at the home of Isaac Miller, during the month of May. Within this same year the Society at Stevens Settlement relocated in the town of Decatur.

II

The First Methodist Church in Decatur 1831-1850

As the Stevens settlement society had been a preaching point on the Salt Creek Circuit, the relocated Society in Decatur became a preaching point on the following circuits (in the Sangamon District except where specified): 1831, Carlton; 1832, Salt Creek; 1833, Athens; 1834, the Athens Circuit was under the direction of the Chicago District; 1835 to 1837, Athens Circuit; and in 1838, Decatur was made the center of the Decatur Circuit. The first preaching place in Decatur was the home of Isaac Miller, as mentioned in the preceeding chapter, and in the homes of other members of the congregation until 1832, when the Society received permission to meet in the County court house. The County court house had been built in 1829. It was a log structure, eighteen by twenty-four feet and one and one half stories high. It had a clapboard roof, but only a tamped earth (puncheon) floor. The one meeting room was warmed by a central fireplace, and was entered from either the North or South doors.⁸

⁸ This building was located on the southwest corner of what is now Lincoln Square. In 1837 it was sold to Robert Allen and moved to a farm east of Decatur and was used first as a house then as a barn. In 1893 Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Clokey gave it to the Old Settlers Association and it was located in Riverside Park. In 1829 it was located in Fairview Park.



1834—1854

The First Methodist
Church Building

The Methodists were not the only group to use the Court House for religious meetings. In 1833, Rev. Joseph Hostetler, a new resident of Macon county and a minister in the Christian Church, began a series of "protracted" or revival meetings. These meetings resulted in the forming of the Christian Church, which also held its meetings in the court house until 1835.

Although the court house could accomodate the numbers of the meetings, it could not take the place of a separate building set aside for preaching services and prayer meetings. In 1834 under the direction of Moses Clampit, the circuit rider for that year, a site was donated for the first church building in Decatur by James Renshaw. Although enough of the building was completed in this year to hold services in, it was not completely paid for and finished until 1839.

The building was located in a dense Hazel thicket on what is now the east side of Church Street between Praire and Main Streets. It was due to its location that the chairman of the Town Board, Richard Oglesby and his nephew, Richard J. Oglesby, gave Church Street its name.

This frame building was an advancement over the log court house and points out the fourth point of the Turner thesis; that is, Fredrick Jackson Turner held that the third stage of settlement of the American frontier was the log cabin stage and the fourth stage was the frame house. This building was thirty-eight by forty feet and twenty-two feet high at its gables which were on the east and west ends. Its foundation was made of squared logs one foot on a side and fastened together by wooden pins. Two of the sides were weatherboarded with walnut and the other two sides were oak hewn clapboards. There is no explanation for the use of different wood, but perhaps the reason was the relative scarcity of wood on the prairies due to the location of trees only along streams such as the Sangamon and in some moist hollows.

The roof of the church was of "home-made" drawn shingles. There were two windows on the east and west ends and three windows on the north and south sides. These windows had two sashes of twelve pains of glass each. A person entered the church through the double doors on the west end and sit in one of the two rows of hewn walnut pews

according to his sex; the left side being for the men and the right side for the women. The floor was of unplanned boards one foot in width and the walls were of unpainted plaster. Suspended from the ceiling was a wagon wheel with twelve candles mounted on its rim. The wagon wheel candelier and eight other candles, four on each side wall, mounted in reflectors, provided light for the congregation when they needed it. The room was warmed by a stove. In a manuscript history of the Methodist Church in Decatur, "A History of Decatur's First Methodist Church," located in the files of the Central Illinois Conference, be in the center of the room. However, it was not mentioned as to whether the center referred to was the center of the room, which does not seem too likely, or in the center of the room off to one side, which would seem more plausible. Perhaps it was on the north, or men's, side. The center of the spiritual light and warmth was the pulpit platform located in the east end opposite the entrance. This platform was three feet wide and five feet long and reached by six steps. The platform itself had a railing around two of its sides, and in the center of the railing on the side facing the congregation was a board two feet by two feet which served as the preaching stand. Behind this was a bench upon which the preacher could sit. On either side of the preaching platform were three benches set at right angles to the pews. These benches probably served as mourner's benches for revivals. There were no musical instruments and no choir. The hymns were lined out, due to the scarcity of hymnals on the frontier; the minister would read a line of the hymn and the congregation would sing the line...the minister would read the next line, and so on through the hymn.

The money used to build the church was probably borrowed, for J. R. Gorin, who will be mentioned in a later chapter, spoke of paying off the debt in 1837. He said that people were requested to subscribe money as gifts to help pay off the indebtedness. One of the persons approached was a merchant who claimed he could not afford to contribute. The merchant's wife quickly saw her opportunity to help the new church. She proceeded to sell a shawl that her husband

had brought her from the east. The shawl must have been a beautiful item, for it brought \$25.00 which the woman immediately gave to the church.⁹

By 1836 the population of Decatur had grown to three hundred. This meant that it was big enough at that time to form its own government rather than have the county government preside over it. The town board was elected and held its first meeting November 5, 1836. The president of the board was Richard Ogelsby (a Methodist), the clerk was Andrew Love, and the Trustees were William T. Crissey, G. R. White, William Webb, Thomas Cown, W. M. Gorin, Henry Butler, and Landy Harrell. The constables were James Carter, and William Webb. One of the most important pieces of legislation handled by this board was the appointment of the board of trustees for the Methodist Church in 1839. The following was taken from court record book H., page 188, record for May, 1839:

According to previous notice the inhabitants of Decatur were convened on the 31st of May, 1839, to appoint trustees for the Methodist Episcopal church in said town, when the following persons were elected, to wit: Buel Stevens, Luther Stevens, F. Montgomery, William Greenfield, J. M. Fordice, Daniel Stickle, and A. Lapham, who shall hold office during life, unless they move away or resign, according to the discipline of said church, which said trustees assume the name of the First Methodist Church of Decatur.

In testimony whereof we have hereunto subscribed and set our hands and seals this 31st day of May, 1839.

(Then follow the signatures of the newly appointed trustees of the church).¹⁰

⁹ Decatur Republican, Decatur, Illinois, April 9, 1868, article on the closing of the third Methodist Church building.

Money for the church at this time was raised by gathering subscriptions from the community. ^{aspiration of} Such connection between the whole community and the church is forthcoming in this chapter.

¹⁰ Richmond, op. cit., p. 85.

The members of the town board in 1839 were Kirby Benedict, president; John S. Adamson, Thomas Cown, Samuel B. Dewees, Jesse H. Elliott, William T. Crissey, Thomas H. Read, trustees; H. M. Gorin, clerk; George R. White, treasurer; H. Prather, assessor and collector; G. W. Gibrath, Zebulon Cantrall, and William Webb, constables.

Several points must be discussed in connection with this unusual phenomenon, which was never known to have occurred in Decatur after 1839. First, the Decatur Methodist Church had just been recently appointed the center of a circuit by the annual meeting of the Illinois Conference at Upper Alton, Illinois, September 12-21, 1838. This meant that Decatur now was the official home of the circuit rider and that the church was probably the largest on the circuit, and thus was big enough now to have a board of trustees. Second, there were some members of the town board that were well known Methodists; i.e., W. T. Crissey and H. M. Gorin, but the percentage was not big enough to say that it was the Methodists using the town board to elect trustees. Finally, the origin of the settlers of Decatur must again be considered as to its influence, in precedent and acquaintance with various practices, on the actions of the people.

Relying on N. M. Baker's figures again (see appendix) as a means of measuring the origin of the people we know that the people that came to Decatur were from the South, principally Tennessee and Kentucky, and that they had migrated there from Virginia, the Carolinas, and were of Scotch-Irish and some English strains. In further investigation the only clues that shed any light on the phenomenon in discussion are these: 1) the Methodist Church grew up under the state church establishment of the Anglican church both in England and in the colonies of Virginia and the Carolinas, and thus was known to have inherited some sentiments of the state church as well as its organization: "at the opening of the revolution the Methodist of Virginia presented a petition to the Virginia House of Delegates in opposition to a movement on the part and the Baptists and other dissenters to bring about the separation of church and state."¹¹ Although they later changed their views, this is indicative of their relationship to state-church form of government. 2) The state-church form of government was the established form of government in the colonies from which these settlers migrated following the revolution. Thus, they had grown familiar with such a form of government and had moved away from the area shortly after its demise.

¹¹ Sweet, W. W., op. cit., p. 100.

William Warren Sweet has made it quite clear in the following that the state and church form of government was closely intertwined with local government:

It is significant in understanding the passage of Acts of establishment in the Southern colonies...that parish organization in England was not solely a church affair, but the vestry was an organ of local government; in the Southern Colonies the parish became the local governmental unit. It was the system to which they had been accustomed in England, and its transfer to the colonies, where the Anglican element was relatively strong until the revolution, was but natural. Vestries in Virginia were charged with the duty of looking after the poor. In Maryland the vestries administered the Tobacco Acts of 1730 and 1747, the purpose of which was to regulate the production and improve the quality of the tobacco crop.¹²

Sweet also points out that the free holders of the parish elected the vestry or board of trustees of the parish. Thus, there is a precedent for the action of the town board of Decatur in May of 1839, in that the settlers of Decatur had lived for quite some period of time in an area in which the English had set up an established church prior to the Scotch-Irish migrations from Pennsylvania, and that the Methodist had been a part of the Anglican church until after the official break in 1782.

3) The only other point that must be brought out is that the Baptist Church did not begin in Macon County until 1843 when a meeting of twelve charter members was held at the home of Captain David L. Allen on September 14. The Baptists being the most vociferous element against any connection between church and state since the founding of Rhode Island in 1633, would have no doubt protested any such action as took place on May 31, 1839. The absence of the Baptist made it possible for all of the elements mentioned above to come into play.

After 1839, the town grew and the church matched pace with it through evangelical work. The first noted form of such work was the revival held by William Stoddart Crissey in 1842. This revival lasted for a period of six weeks and gave a yield of seventy additional members to the church.

¹²Sweet, William Warren, Religion in Colonial America (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1953).

The duration of this revival poses some questions that must be mentioned. As it has already been mentioned, the Decatur Church was the center of the Decatur Circuit in the period from 1838 to 1854. The question then is how could Rev. Crissey serve the circuit, which was of an unknown length and held such a lengthy revival at the same time? In 1831 W. S. Crissey had served the Tazewell Circuit which consisted of ~~26~~ 26 preaching points and took three weeks to ride. If the Decatur Circuit was even extremely smaller than this in 1842, it would have been necessary for Rev. Crissey to discontinue services at other preaching points in the circuit during the revival or to leave the revival in charge of the local preacher (a layman licensed by the church to hold services in absence of the preacher).

If the Decatur Circuit was as small in 1842 as it was in 1863 (5 points), which can only be relative, for the Decatur charge was missing from it in 1863, Rev. Crissey may have ridden from Decatur to a preaching point and returned for the revival before going on to the next preaching point. And finally he may have just conducted revival meetings when he was in Decatur. All of these answers can only be surmised due to the lack of evidence in this case.

Most of the Methodist prayer meetings were held in this church. In the mid 1840's one of such of these prayer meetings was directly involved in the founding of a sewing society. The meeting mentioned was being conducted by four men around one love candle, when one of the women of the church chose to attend. The small circle did not open to receive her, and the group continued their small service. The service consisted of a scripture reading, a hymn, personal prayers, a hymn, and then without a word to the lady present, the group dismissed with a benediction, blew out the candle, and left the lady alone in the dark. Needless to say, this woman formed the sewing society that became the Ladies Aid Society.¹³

¹³"History of Decatur's First Methodist Church"

This chapter cannot be conclusive, but can serve only as the basis for the following chapters which are to deal more with the Development of Decatur as a community and the men involved in that community. The church in this period was the center of social activity for its congregation, but as a church it was also a unique product of the frontier as much as the community itself was.

III

Prominent Members and Preachers in the Early Church

One of the first of the many important men of the town of Decatur and the church has been mentioned in connection with the preaching of the first Methodist sermon in Decatur by his nephew, Dr. William T. Crissey. Richmond reports that Dr. Crissey was the first physician to settle in Macon County. Dr. Crissey spent his first year in the Stevens settlement, but soon moved to Decatur and established his practice.

It is also possible that Dr. Crissey was connected with the preaching work of the church, other than the activity of his nephew. In a record of Mr. Henry D. Dunham, an early resident of Decatur, two Crisseys are mentioned as ministers during his childhood in the 1840's; one of these men is called William T. Crissey (probably a lack of remembering the middle initial of W. S. Crissey), and the other is Dr. Crissey. Dr. Crissey was not an ordained minister, but nothing would have stopped him from being a local preacher.*

Shortly after Dr. Crissey moved to Macon County, "General" Isaac Pugh took up residence in Decatur. Isaac Pugh was born and raised in Kentucky. In 1811, at the age of six, he was converted along with his father at a frontier revival meeting. The next year, Pugh was baptized by Peter Cartwright.

*Mr. Henry D. Dunham's record is a part of the collection of records belonging to the Historical Committee of the First Methodist Church of Decatur. There are no existing records of the names of local preachers during this period, therefore, whether Dr. Crissey was such cannot be but a conclusion from Dunham's record.

Pugh's military exploits were many: he served as a second lieutenant in the Black Hawk war; as a captain of Company C., the Fourth Regiment in the Mexican war; and in the Civil War as the first captain of Company A. of the eighth Illinois Infantry and as a colonel of the forty-first Illinois Infantry, which he was instrumental in forming. In addition to his military skill, Pugh was skilled in local government. He served Decatur and Macon County as master-in-chancer, county treasurer, county clerk, county assessor, collector, mayor, postmaster, and as a member of the state legislature.

As a layman in the church Pugh was a known worker. He held various offices on the church board. He was also a prominent member of the building committee during the building of the third building in 1867.

When Isaac Pugh returned from the Black Hawk War, he brought with him a young man named Jerome R. Gorin. Gorin had been born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, October 12, 1817, and had lived for a short time in Vandalia. Before his death in 1897, Gorin was able to make sizable contributions to the city as a public officer and as a churchman. The following statement from Richmond will witness to Gorin's public life:

He served the city in various capacities, city clerk, city attorney and justice of the peace, in 1856 was elected to the legislature,¹⁴ serving one term, and was well known as [a] banker.....

J. R. Gorin never let his practice of law and his business interest interfere with his personal church life. He was among the builders of the third church in 1867, and was a well known advocate of the Sunday School of the First Methodist Church. In witness to his churchmanship and interest in the Sunday School, the following resolutions were issued by members of the Sunday School in 1897:

Whereas, God in his all-wise providence has taken our Bro. J. R. Gorin, from labor to reward, and we as individual members of this Sunday School share the common sorrow which has befallen us;

¹⁴ Richmond, op. cit., p. 143.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 141.

therefore, be it Resolved, that in the removal of J. R. Gorin the Sunday School of the First M. E. Church has lost one of its most zealous supporters, earnest workers and faithful members, that it has sustained the loss of one of its most useful members, spiritually and socially; one in whose life was exemplified many Christian graces. Resolved, that not only the Sunday School has sustained a loss, but the Sunday School workers of the city and county will miss J. R. Gorin, as a helper and counsellor. Resolved--That in recognizing his excellence of character and personal worth we commend his unassuming life, his kindness, his charitableness, and his devotion to the cause of Christ, to all who knew him so well. Resolved--that the adult class of which he was the teacher so many years, will hold him in grateful memory-- ...

(Signed) George T. Tucker
Philena A. Johnson
Henry Lunn

Decatur, Ill., Sept. 8, 1897¹⁶

The importance of such men as Dr. Crissey, J. R. Gorin, and Isaac Pugh to the early church can only be measured against the Methodist circuit system. The circuit rider was called upon to serve many Methodist societies in numerous and wide-spread communities, and thus the solidarity of the individual societies depended upon the strength of the laymen combined with the spiritual leadership of the circuit rider.

The life of the early circuit riders which served pioneer communities was such as Decatur's. Peter Cartwright called the hardships of the circuit rider's life the college of the pioneer preachers, being a pioneer himself:

...we crossed creeks and large rivers, without bridges, often swam them on horseback, or crossed on trees that had fallen over the streams, drove our horses over, and often waded out waist deep; and if by chance we got a dug out or a canoe to cross ourselves, and swim our horses by it was quite a treat. Only downy doctors and learned presidents and professors of the present day [apx. the 1860's] remember the above course of training was the college in which we early Methodists graduated, and from which we took our diplomas.

Wilson Pitner, one of the most colorful pastors of early Illinois and a graduate of the "college" detailed above by Cart-

¹⁷ Quoted without cross reference

Masters, Edgar Lee, The Sangamon, (Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1942), pp. 141-142.

wright,¹⁸ was one of the early riders of the Athens circuit on which Decatur was a preaching point in 1831. Wilson Pitner was born on Cedar Creek in Wilson County, Tennessee, during the spring of 1806. He was one of the older children of a family that grew to seven boys and five girls. One of the brothers of Wilson Pitner, Levi, was to serve the First Methodist Church of Decatur as a full time pastor thirty-five years after Wilson served the Decatur preaching point in 1831.

Wilson Pitner had no early connection with what his parents called the "noisy religion of the Methodists;" however, at the age of sixteen Pitner could no longer resist the temptation to attend one of the revival meetings that was taking place in Wilson County, and it was at this meeting he was converted. His eccentricity and colorfulness in connection with the church appeared as early as the moment

In his ignorance of the practices of the church, Pitner had mistaken quaterage, which was the salary for the preacher, as the necessary fee for membership in the church. Hence, when he went forward to join the church and shake hands with the minister, he held^a twenty-five cent piece in his left hand and loudly proclaimed, "I've got the money."

In speaking of his own experiences shortly after he had joined the church, Wilson Pitner made the following remarks concerning the purchase of his first Bible:

Soon after I joined the church I felt that I must have a Bible. I had never owned one, but I could read, and was determined to have a Bible of my own. Father had given me a little piece of ground to work for myself. I put it in cotton; and when it was gathered I took it to Nashville and sold it, and with the money I received I bought a Bible. I was so delighted I could hardly contain myself. I put it in my bosom and hurried home as fast as I could to get an opportunity to read it. But I could not resist the temptation of taking it out of my bosom and smelling of it, and it seemed to me that it smelt of the Holy Ghost.¹⁸

¹⁸Leaton, Rev. James, History of Methodism in Illinois 1793-1832, (Walden and Stowe, Cincinnati, 1883), p. 316.

After Pitner had joined the church, his parents were still adverse to Wilson's association with the "noisy Methodists," so Wilson was not allowed to pray in the house. It became his practice to remove to the field some distance to pray. It was in such a retreat for prayer that Pitner experienced the "varification" of his call to preach.

Pitner's call into the ministry was not the warming of the heart nor compulsion that some of his frontier brethren had felt, but was rather a verbal call like that of Samuel of the Old Testament, that awakened him in his sleep. He refused this call. The next night while in his accustomed time of prayer, he prayed about his call and about his family, and while still in prayer he was interrupted by one of his brothers who told him to come to the house. Wilson went to the house and that evening his whole family joined in prayer and rejoicing. Wilson Pitner needed nothing more. In 1829 Pitner, having moved to Illinois, was given a license to preach in the Illinois Conference. He was assigned to the Shoal Creek Circuit as the assistant to William Chambers. It did not take long for Pitner to reveal his rough manners and lack of education, and after one year he was persuaded to spend time in school. He went to Illinois College in Jacksonville for six months and then quit on the grounds that if he learned one more thing he would lose one of the things he had already "jammed" into his head.

Soon after he left Illinois College he was again accepted into the conference and was given the Athens Circuit in 1831. Not much is known of his activity in Decatur or on this circuit, ^{it can be assumed to have been interesting, for} but his eccentricity had not been smoothed out by his education. A few years after he had served the Athens Circuit, Wilson Pitner was conducting a camp meeting in Hancock County. The custom was to adjourn after supper for prayer meetings before the service and to blow a horn or bugle to announce the beginning of the meeting. At this particular meeting the bugle had been sounded and the prayer groups were entering the grounds singing, when Pitner was seized by one of the momentary flashes of thought that he was accustomed to obeying. He grasped the

bugle, which was already hanging on the side of the pulpit, and blew it long and loud. He then cried out with a loud piercing voice, "Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." Some "fell" in excitement with another blast, and the saints shouted and the sinners cried for mercy. With a brief invitation to the seekers, Pitner brought great numbers forward to the altar.

Although he was unlettered, there were times when he could use the most eloquent speech that would even charm the learned and professional men of the community. James Leaton records the following comments made concerning Pitner's talents; the first is from Mr. Dickens and the second is from a more well-known preacher, Peter Cartwright:

His preaching, when he swung clear, as he expressed it, was masterly and often overwhelming. When energized with the Spirit, he was the most powerful and successful exhorter I ever knew, and thousands, I doubt not, will own him in heaven as their spiritual father. His preaching and exhortations were unlike any other man's. He was always original. A true Benjaminite, he always hit on the left side.

.....a very singular and remarkable man among us..... Notwithstanding his want of learning and in common he was an ordinary preacher, yet at times, as we say in the back-woods, when he swung clear there were very few that could excel him in the pulpit, and, perhaps, he was one of the most eloquent and powerful exhorters that was in the land.¹⁹

Some of the other preachers of this period were uneducated and eccentric like Pitner; one of these men was Moses Clampit, who served the Decatur preaching point in 1834, and ended up in the Methodist Church South in California in 1861. However, not all pioneer preachers were rough cut, and uneducated. One such man was Normal Allan who served the Decatur Circuit in 1841. Allan, like A. E. Phelps, Pitner's predecessor, was of good manners and neat dress, and in more striking contrast to these earlier men, and he had gone to school. Allan had at-

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 329 and 325 respectively.

tended Illinois College for some time and studied well, but he did not spend enough time, for he never graduated. But his college training showed up in his sermons, which were "intellectual, and full of pathos, and the power of the Holy Ghost."²⁰

Between the educated men such as Allan and the uneducated and eccentric men such as Wilson Pitner were such men as William Stoddart Crissey and Rev. Jonathan Stamper. These two men came from varying backgrounds--Crissey was born in Salisbury, Connecticut and Stamper was born in Madison County, Kentucky--but they had one item in common: they both served the Decatur Charge and later settled there in retirement. In order to do justice to each man it is best to discuss them individually.

William Stoddart Crissey was born in Salisbury, Connecticut, on April 21, 1811. In 1815 his parents, who were Presbyterian, moved to Cincinnati where they died in 1818. William T. Crissey, the uncle of W. S. just happened to have been living in Cincinnati and he took care of his newly orphaned nephew.

In 1821 W. S. Crissey's connection with the Methodist Church started when he was converted and united with the Old Stone Church. In 1823 the Crisseys moved to Louisville, Kentucky, and in 1825 they moved to Bloomington, Indiana, where young Crissey received a license to exhort. In 1829, W. S. Crissey received his license to preach at Paris, Illinois. He was then sent to the Paoli Circuit, Indiana. It was in May of 1831 that he preached the first Methodist sermon in Decatur and in the Fall of the same year he was assigned to the Tazewell Circuit. He served the following circuits and charges until he superannuated in 1839 due to his depleted health: 1833, Mt. Carmel Circuit; 1834, Eugene; 1835, Danville; 1836, Milwaukee (the Wisconsin territory was a part of the Illinois Conference until 1840 when the Rock River Conference was formed, and did not become a conference until Wisconsin became a state in 1848); 1837, Joliet. Crissey rejoined the Illinois Conference as an active member in 1842,

²⁰ Leaton, Rev. James, History of Methodism in Illinois, 1832-1840 (Unpublished), p. 201.

at which time he served the Decatur Circuit and he spent one more year in the conference--1843--in which he served the Springfield Station until his health gave out and he was again forced to superannuate until 1848 when he made one more try at Rushville and then could not finish the appointment.

During his years as a preacher, W. S. Crissey had made more than an ample contribution of new societies and revivals; he founded a new society at Lockport while he was at Joliet; he held revivals in Danville, Springfield and Decatur. His success as a circuit rider may have been due to the traits which James Leaton ascribes to him:

He was scrupulous in observing all the requirements of the Discipline, fasting every Friday, visiting among the people, and regularly meeting the classes. In this duty he was particular in inquiring of the members in regard to their attention to family and secret prayer and their abstinence from intoxicating drinks. He was a faithful administrator of discipline; and while blessed with many gracious revivals of religion, his forte seemed to be purification and building up of the church.²¹

And even in his retirement from the active ministry due to his health, he was an active evangelist, for "it was said that through his evangelical work that J. T. B. Stapp became a member of the Methodist Church."²²

During his second period of superannuation he settled in Decatur. Nothing much is known about his activity until 1847, when he took the job of County School Commissioner which he held in the years of 1847 to 1860. Mr. Crissey's interest in education expanded. His dream was a college for Decatur, and his work had become well-known enough to make him a consideration for the nomination to State Commissioner of Education in the Republican Convention at Bloomington in 1856; however, he

²¹ Leaton, Op. cit. (see footnote #18), p. 403.

²² From the Obituary of Margeret Crissey, the Decatur Review, June 21, 1928. Mr. Stapp was a well-to-do capitalist that became instrumental in the founding and building of Stapp's Chapel in 1867.

did not receive the nomination. He also served on the town board of trustees between 1851 and 1855, and served as president of that board in 1851. In 1860 he made an effort to build a business building at the northwest corner of the Old Square, but he had to stop due to a lack of funds. He sold this partially-completed building to another member of the First Methodist Church, Franklin Priest, who completed it and it became Priest's Hotel.

In the period of the Civil War, W. S. Crissey served as a chaplain in the Union Army, and his son served in the cavalry. When he returned, W. S. Crissey was one of the prominent members of the second Methodist Church to be formed in Decatur; as late as 1883 his name appeared on the records of the Official Board of Stapp's Chape. It was sometimes shortly after this last entry of his name on the church records that Rev. Crissey died, but his exact date of death is not known.

Jonathan Stamper did not come to Illinois until 1841, by this time being fifty years old. The major part of his career as a clergyman was spent in Kentucky where he had been born. He was converted at a Kentucky campmeeting when he was nineteen years old. He had earned great acclaim in his home state. He was sent to the General Conference six times, and two of these times he had headed the list of delegates. In absence of the bishop, he was also twice elected president of the Western Conference.

In 1841, he was transferred to the Illinois Conference and was given charge of Springfield Station. In 1844, he returned to Kentucky, having served the previous year at Quincy, Illinois. While in Kentucky he served as Agent for Transylvania University one year, and as Presiding Elder of Maysville District for two years. He spent 1848 in Jefferson City, Missouri, as a member of the St. Louis Conference and returned in the fall of 1849 to serve Newport, Kentucky. During his two years at Springfield, he must have acquired some property in Decatur, for in 1850 he superannuated in Kentucky and took up residence on his own property in Decatur.

In 1858 he decided to use his preaching talents again and rejoined the Illinois Conference, subsequently being assigned to Decatur. In 1859 he was too feeble to keep up the work so he was left without a charge until the next conference. In 1860 and 1861 he served the Mechanicsburg circuit and superannuated again at the end of this term.

Stamper, like Wilson Pitner, had been a powerful preacher, although his form and manner differed from Pitner. The following description of one of Stamper's sermons by D. Redford bears out Stamper's contribution to Illinois and Decatur as a preacher and his membership in the pioneer college of preachers:

He entered with calmness upon the investigation of the subject, gradually leading his hearers from point to point until he held over them a complete mastery. Showing the necessity of a general judgment that men may be rewarded or punished for all their works [he went on to the handing out of crowns or doom to the imaginary assembly of the dead]. A hush like the stillness of death permeated the congregation as crowns were distributed or the ungodly chased away to the blackness of darkness forever. When heightening his rich and mellow voice and throwing his whole soul into the appeal, he pleaded with those who heard him, who though on the [edge] of hell...to turn and live. Commotion was seen in every direction, more than one hundred persons pressed to the altar and pleaded for mercy.

After his superannuation in 1861, Jonathan Stamper apparently continued to fail in health for on February 26, 1864, he died. The death of Stamper, and the death of Crissey and churchman Gorin much later were but extinguishing a few candles of the pioneer fires which had begun to die out in 1850 with the change of Decatur and the movement of the frontier to the far west. The men listed above were products and formers of the frontier and builders of the foundations that supported the post-frontier period.

²²Leaton, James, Volume 3 containing conference notes and biographies---unpublished and in the files of the Central Illinois Conference Historical Society Library---p. 68.

IV

From Wagon Ruts to Railroads

1829-1860

In the year 1829, Macon County had no towns, no churches, no railways, no markets, no libraries, no jails, no post offices, no newspapers, three schools, and but few roads--which were little more than trails. The most obvious things which were, were the land and the people.²³

The population of Decatur in 1829 was between thirty to three hundred, and the total census of the county in 1830 was 1,122. By 1860, the population of Decatur had grown to 3,839. Such growth meant an extensive changing in the composition of the town and the actual business machinery of living. The effects of this growth cannot be divorced from the growth of a church, for they effect the members of that church in a direct way. To see the effects of such growth and to determine what brought it about we must start with pioneer Decatur.

In 1831 the Springfield-Paris road was relocated to pass through Decatur. A road was also developed to Shelbyville and extended to Bloomington. But as much help as these roads were, they were not thought of as the permanent route of connection with the world; mail was brought from Shelbyville once a week by horseback. The dream of the Decatur inhabitants in 1830 was to navigate the Sangamon. Abraham Lincoln gave a speech on this topic in the same year. Even as late as 1846 a flatboat run was tried and finally reached New Orleans after a winter stay at Long Point where it had been lodged on the sand bars. After this experience, horses and later the stagecoach were relied upon as the means communication with the rest of the world.

The small population of Decatur was not due to its insignificance in comparison to the surrounding villages, but rather was due to the very lack of population of most of the Illinois section in which Decatur is located. In 1847 the mail was still carried by a rider who traveled to the mail points and returned.

²³ Lindsay, Mrs. L. N., "The Illinois Prairies and Macon County 100 Years Ago"...appearing in the Decatur Herald between March 3 to February 24, 1929, written for the D.A.R. Centennial.

This rider was Silas Packard. His journeys to the mail points illustrate the sparseness of population even as late as 1847:

In the lonesome journey between Decatur and Paris, nearly seventy miles, there were not a half dozen houses. On the route to Bloomington the first house after leaving Decatur was at Salt Creek. Then came the tiny village of Clinton. But between Clinton and Bloomington there was not a house! His horse and the wild deer were his only company.²⁴

The folk lore of our frontier has left us with tales of hardship and ceaseless toil that marked the life of the pioneer in this lonely area of prairie, but N. M. Baker has suggested that these tales, though not exaggerated, have been set down in undue proportion. He pointed out that "the real pioneer had more leisure than we, their sons and grandsons, have today 1921."²⁵ He pointed out that it took less time to build a house of unsawed logs than it took in 1921 to build a house of cut lumber.

It was in this pattern of leisure and loneliness that the church found its appeal through the campmeeting. The campmeeting and the revival provided a necessary, functional, and contemporary means of contact between people on the wide prairies of tall, quiet grasses. Baker describes the social behavior of the pioneer as follows:

After the few acres of corn were laid by, the wheat patch harvested and tramped out, and the flax in the flax-pen, there was little more to do during the glorious months of the fall but to hunt and fish and visit the neighbors, and attend camp-meetings if religiously inclined; and horse races and shooting matches furnished plenty of excitement for those who were not.²⁶

It was the need for excitement that made "noise" a necessary part of the frontier church within the social needs of the pioneer. The development of the revival will be discussed at more length in a later chapter.

²⁴ Richmond, Op. cit., p. 100.

²⁵ Baker, Op. cit.

²⁶ Ibid., p.

In 1848 gold was discovered in California and brought on a great movement from the "middle boarder" to the far west. Many men went to California from Decatur. Some of them died there or on the way, and some, like Richard Oglesby, returned rich. Oglesby brought \$4,500 back to invest in Decatur land. But as important as the gold rush was in populating the far west and bringing gold into Decatur, another event occurred in 1850 that was of much more importance to Decatur and all of the central west or "middle boarder;" Congress made the first land grant for railroad construction in 1850. The grant had been made possible by the work of Stephen A. Douglas and ^{by} the southern votes he received help from in congress. The railroad to be constructed was to connect Chicago, which had no rail connection with other cities at this time, and Mobile, Alabama. All told, the land grant ran to 3,736,000 acres of which some 2,500,000 were in Illinois. The railroads were to be financed by the selling of alternate six-mile-deep plots along the right-away of the road, and thus the grant made possible a new means of transportation and encouraged movement of settlers along its path.

In 1851, the Illinois Central Railroad was incorporated to transport government troops and mail and to connect Galena to Cairo and Chicago to Cairo, the two lines meeting at Centralia. When the Galena to Cairo line was first surveyed it was to pass six miles west of Decatur. E. O. Smith, backed by the town, requested and succeeded in getting the track relocated in order to run through Decatur. The first actual line to pass through Decatur was the Great Western Railroad which sent its first locomotive, "The Frontier," into Decatur from Springfield in 1854. This road was later to develop into the Wabash and connect Hannibal, Missouri, to Indiana.

In 1855, the Illinois Central ran its first train through Decatur at the point where the I.C. crossed the Wabash. A depot had been provided for in a deed given to the Illinois Central by B. H. Cassell on July 4, 1853.²⁷

²⁷ The Great Western became the Wabash ^{and} in 1877, was consolidated with the St. Louis, Kansas City, and Northern Railway Company in 1879. In 1869 the first Great Western Roundhouse was built in Decatur and by 1884 the Peoria shops were moved to Decatur. This meant a great source of income to Decatur for ^{years} and in 1929 alone the annual payroll in Decatur for the Wabash was \$5,000,000. For further information see Richmond, op. cit., pp. 208-215.

The entrance of the railroads into Decatur was the focal point of the change that rapidly took place in the frontier and in the town of Decatur. Some of the elements of this change must be mentioned in developing an accurate picture of the 1850's as a period of change.

The first harbinger of change was the entrance of James B. Shoaff into Decatur on a stagecoach from Bloomington in 1851. Although Mr. Shoaff saw a community of frame buildings along a wheel-rutted, undrained muddy street, lined with wooded sidewalks, he felt that he could profit by starting a newspaper in Decatur. On June 26, 1851, the first edition of the Shoaff Family Gazetteer appeared. The paper was well received by the community, and many other papers were started but only some of these lasted.

In 1852 William Martin located in Decatur and set about testing the clay, which he noticed was abundant in the area, and he found that it was good for making bricks. He took a trip to Saint Louis and returned with four men and a wagonload of equipment and set up a brick works that provided bricks in abundance where they had previously to be imported from Edgar County for those few brick buildings that did exist.

With the coming of increased business, money began to increase in use and demand. Prior to 1850 no need was apparent for such items as banks, but by 1852, J. J. Peddecord was holding money enough for the customers of his grocery store to find it necessary to install a small private safe. By 1855 there was enough demand for banking services to make it worthwhile for Peddecord to quit his store and to go into a partnership with L. L. Burrows to open a full-time bank. This firm was to develop and finally merge with the National Bank of Decatur in 1912 after the death of the two original partners.

With the presence of money and growth that made way for more money making, Decatur began to attract men with money to invest. One of the first real capitalists of Decatur was Dr. J. T. B. Stapp who came to Decatur in 1855 with \$20,000 in cash.

Dr. Stapp, an aristocrat, was born in Woodford County, Kentucky. Although he was a doctor, his prime interest was in financial affairs, having started as a cashier in the State Bank of Illinois after the Black Hawk War. He had served as the receiver of the United States land office at Vandalia as an appointment from President Taylor, and continued under Presidents Taylor, Fillmore, and Pierce. In 1855, he resigned to come to Decatur. Dr. Stapp's importance to the church has already been mentioned and will be further elaborated on in a later chapter.

With the influx of the well-to-do people such as Dr. Stapp, Decatur Society began to develop. By 1855, big social events such as the benefit dance held at the Revere House for the support of a destitute widow of a railroad workman were not uncommon. This event, ^{and} the incorporation of Decatur as a city in 1855, marked the definite end of the early frontier and an advancement into the second era of change and development, which the elements in this chapter have marked.

V

The Church in an Era of Change

In the same year that the great western locomotive, "Frontier," entered Decatur, the second building of the First Methodist Church was completed. It was also in this year that Reuben Andrus was appointed to the newly renamed "Decatur Station." When the First Methodist Church had grown to the size of single charge without an attached circuit, it was also this same year.²⁸ It was this general change, taking place all over the frontier, which William Warren Sweet says ushered in the change in the type of college attended by the Methodist preachers from the type of Peter Cartwright's day to an academic institution:

In view of all the circumstances of the case, the change from the circuit to the station system--each young preacher being alone, instead of having an elder brother with him to teach him, the elevated state of society, and the wish of our good people to have educated men, resulted in a general move toward an educated ministry.²⁹

²⁸ For the details of the construction of this building see the appendix.

²⁹ Sweet, Methodism in American History, p. 224; after Brunson, Alfred, A Western Pioneer: or Incidents of Life and Times of Rev. Alfred Brunson, 2 vols. (Cinn.: Hitchcock & Walden, 1879).



The Sec
First Methodist
Church

Reuben Andrus found the charge with eighty-four members and increased the membership to one hundred and forty. As has been illustrated in the preceeding chapter, this increase in membership relied as much upon the entrance of the locomotive, "Frontier," as upon the evangelical abilities of Reuben Andrus.

With the increase in diversity of the origins of the population of Decatur, the religious complexion of Decatur began to take on various new hues. In 1852, the Presbyterian (not Cumberland Presbyterians, who never entered Decatur proper) formed a church in the home of Samuel Powers under the direction of David Hopkins. In 1855, the increase in their membership enabled them to build a church at W. Prairie and Church Streets, where the YMCA is now located. The Episcopalians also opened meetings in the Old Masonic Hall with fifteen members in 1855.

With the presence of German and Irish workers in the rail gangs, who built both the Illinois Central and the Great Western, a new aspect of the frontier was illustrated. By 1850, some Germans had already settled in Boody, or at that time, Friedrichsburg, southwest of Decatur. Herr Friedrich Nientker had started preaching among his neighbors in 1850, and by 1855, he requested that a German Methodist preacher be sent as a missionary to the Decatur area. That missionary was Herr R. Schobe, the first minister of the German Methodist Church of Decatur. Another German church to appear in Decatur during this period was the United Brethern Church under Rev. Ambrose in 1856.

The Irish influence should be given credit for the appearance of Father Pendergast in 1854, for ^{the Irish} ~~the~~ were 100% Roman Catholics. Father Pendergast held the first Roman Catholic services in Decatur in a frame house on West Main Street. The Roman Catholics then used the brick courthouse and private residences. In 1857, Father Cassack was instrumental in purchasing a frame church on West Prairie and a brick church was started in 1863.

The founding of the Antioch Baptist Church with fourteen members in 1858 marked the inclusion of another group in the changing population of this city. In 1853 Steve Stewart, the

first full-blooded Negro in Decatur; opened a barber shop. Pressure of the abolitionist movement in the North upon the South was making it more difficult for free Negroes to live in the South, and thus the appearance of the free Negro in Decatur was the effect of the national problem, which later contributed to the start of the Civil War.

The appearance of the Universalist Church in 1854 with nine charter members and the Church of God in 1857 with eleven charter members under Elder A. J. Fenton, marked the complex changes taking place in the population.

In returning to the effect of the growth of the population of Decatur during the 1850's on the Methodist Church, we find that the numbers of this church also grew. In 1858 with the evangelical activity of Jonathan Stamper, the membership of Decatur Station was raised to 247 with forty-three probationary members and seventeen adult baptisms. In this same year, the Decatur District was created, due to the need for a Presiding Elder to be located in the center of a growing area for the Methodist Church. The first Presiding Elder was Hiram Buck from 1858 to 1860.

Hiram Buck served the Decatur Station in 1864-65 and served twice more in the position of Presiding Elder of the Decatur District during 1868 and again in 1876-1879. Rev. Buck possessed many talents. He was a great thinker, his sermons giving evidence of hard thinking and research into the theological points of his talks. He served periodically as an administrator of the church as a Presiding Elder, he served periodically as an agent for both the Illinois Female College (which was to become McMurray College), and he served for a newly-formed university at Bloomington, Illinois--Illinois Wesleyan University, which he had helped to found. Finally, Hiram Buck was a financial genius. He collected quite a sizable amount in real estate throughout the central Illinois area. It was from his estate that Buck Memorial Library was constructed at Illinois Wesleyan University in the 1920's. A general description of him seems to bear out his characteristics as a "man among men:"

He has an iron constitution, large physical frame, and lungs like a Bengal tiger, and uses them with an unlimited service. He usually preaches from an hour and a half to three hours, and at the top of his voice from text to application."³⁰

It was men such as Andrus, Stamper, Buck, and many others that developed the church during this era of change, which saw the population of Decatur increasing in size. The membership of the Decatur Methodist Church, under these men, grew from eighty-four in 1854 to 300 in 1860 with a Sunday School of 330. As the city of Decatur was born and began to grow, and new innovations appeared in its life, the church responded to this growth.

VI

The Effects of Civil Strife

At 4:30 a.m., April 12, 1861, the batteries of Charleston began their bombardment of Fort Sumter off the South Carolina coast, and these shots were to be heard around the country. By April 14, the news had reached Decatur, and was read from the pulpits of the churches. On the following day, President Lincoln had issued a call for 75,000 volunteers and the town of Decatur took up flags to show its loyalty to the Union. Within the next two days, two full companies of 100 men each had been enlisted and started off from Decatur to Springfield to join the Eighth Regiment under Richard J. Oglesby.

In the fall of 1861, the Methodist Church welcomed Rev. Jesse Hines Moore as their new minister. It was not long before his patriotic flare was noted. It was just such patriotic convictions that had lead his father, uncles, and grandfather to be soldiers in other wars, and so it was with Jesse. In 1862, Jesse H. Moore joined the forces of the Union Army as colonel of the One Hundred Fifteenth Regiment. He was a brave leader in battle bringing honor to his regiment in the battle of Chickamuga:

³⁰Leaton, Volume 3, p. 132.

The One Hundred Fifteenth was in the most exposed position of any regiment in that bloody battle and held its place against great odds.³¹

In April of 1865, President Lincoln gave Colonel Moore the rank of brigadier-general and the One Hundred Fifteenth Regiment was given an honorable dismissal. After his return from the army Moore became the Presiding Elder of the Decatur District from 1865-1868. In 1868 he superannuated in order to go to Congress for five years. As will be seen later in this chapter, J. H. Moore became involved in the action of the Methodist Church in Decatur in the office of Presiding Elder, as well as having been an officer in the Union Army for a three-year period.³²

Jesse Moore was not the only minister in the Methodist Church to leave Decatur temporarily to go to the battle. W. S. Crissey, a retired Methodist minister, also went into the fray as a chaplin. Some other members of First Church to go were Isaac Pugh and William T. Crissey. Many others also went from this congregation, for by 1865 Macon County had sent 2,500 men into the Union Army.

The women at home were also occupied with the activity of the period. In November, 1861, the women organized the Sick and Wounded Soldiers' Aid Society of Decatur (the name was changed to Hospital Aid Society) to work in conjunction with the National Sanitary Commission. These women soon were giving their time to visiting trains of wounded men that passed through Decatur. The women attempted to work with homeless refugees from the South in August of 1862, but the filth and condition of these people were too much for the ladies, so the work was turned over to the county, at the Aid Society's insistance.

The preoccupation of the city with the activities of the war dropped the membership of the First Methodist Church from 300 to 275 in 1862, and had its effects upon the activity of

³¹ Richmond, op. cit., p. 245.

³² For further information on J. H. Moore, one of Decatur's greatest men, next to Lincoln, see the appendix.

those 275 members. No official record exists with the pastors of Decatur, but the following pastors' reports might be indicative of the effect of the war upon the church membership:

The sound of the drum calling for volunteers, the training of soldiers, companies leaving for the seat of war, are but scenes of every day's occurrence. Amid the excitement...you can readily understand the difficulty of sustaining the institutions of religion. In fact the pastor and his church are continually in danger of having their feelings more deeply interested in the fearful conflict between the North and the South [such as Jesse Moore] than in their own growth in grace, or in the winning of soldiers for Christ.

(1862 from Albany, New York):

Of the general state of religion in this city and neighborhood, I regret to say that our worst fears in regard to the effects of the war are realized. Ever since the calamitous conditions of the country became the all-engrossing subject of thought and conversation, the higher interests of Christ's kingdom have been thrown proportionately in the background. The additions to most of our churches have been few; the interest in our week-day meetings has diminished; the preaching of the gospel has not excited the accustomed power; in short, the humiliating confession must be made that the church and world seem to a great extent to have fallen into a common slumber. And the saddest thing is that our condition in this respect seems to be but too faithful a representation of the conditions of nearly the whole church. 33

Sweet records that after the initial shock of the war, that some revivals were started and the Y.M.C.A. began its work. Like the rest of the country, the Decatur Methodist Church noted a burst of energy after the first effects of the war. In 1863, under the spiritual guidance of Robert Hiner, the church had grown to 353 with 33 probationary members...they had not recorded a probationary member since 1859. Although probationary members continued to appear in the conference records between 1863 and 1866 with 30 adult baptisms in 1865 and 15 in 1866, the membership rose only to 400 in 1865 and returned to 353 in 1866.

³³ Sweet, William Warren, The Story of Religion in America, (Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1930, revised 1950), pp. 325-326 (underlining mine).

The church remained static, but during the post war years the city of Decatur continued to grow, for by 1870 the population of Decatur was 7,161, for a percentage increase over 1860 of 86.5%. However quiet the church may have seemed in these two post-war years with growth and expansion all around it, it could not remain asleep, and in the years 1867 through 1868 the Methodist Church of Decatur became a center of activity and growth.

It was in 1866 that Levi C. Pitner was appointed as pastor to the Decatur Station; Levi Pitner was a brother of the early and colorful Wilson Pitner who had served the Decatur preaching point in 1831. Not only did L. C. Pitner have a connection to frontier tradition of revivalism through his own family but through the family of his inlaws; for in 1847 L. C. Pitner had married Armina Cartwright, the youngest daughter of Rev. Peter Cartwright. Like his brother Wilson and his father-in-law, Cartwright, L. C. Pitner became known for his ability to hold revivals:

During his active ministry Mr. Pitner was one of the most useful and successful preachers in the conference. He had extensive revivals in most of his charges, and was instrumental in leading hundreds and perhaps thousands to the savior.³⁴

Decatur proved to be no exception to the evangelical preaching of Levi Pitner, and by conference time in 1867, the Decatur Station reported 577 members, 253 probationary members, 105 adult baptisms and 17 childrens' baptisms. The difference between the number of probationary members and the adult baptisms was the amount of new members taken in by letter of transfer. The Pitner revival was apparently just what the town had been waiting for. Another event related to this revival in time was the organization of a second Methodist congregation in the city of Decatur in the latter part of 1866, and this was at first known as the Franklin Street Methodist Episcopal Church. The

³⁴Leaton, Volume 3, p. 194.



The Third Building
of The First Methodist Church
1868-1904

complete story of this early start of what is now Grace Methodist Church will follow in the next chapter, but it must be mentioned here that an erroneous bit of "folk history" connects that founding of the second congregation and the revival in the alleged conversion of the capitalist, J. T. B. Stapp. This is definitely not true. "Dr." J. T. B. Stapp and J. J. Peddecord, the two major contributors to the construction of what became Stapp's Chapel were listed as members of Class #9 in the Decatur Station church as early as 1863.³⁵

However, even though the opinion that J. T. B. Stapp was converted in the revival is erroneous. The revival had its effect upon Stapp and the city by centering their emotional concentration upon religion. Also the revival may have been a spiritual "strange warming of the heart," for Stapp, just as Altersgate Street had been for the father of Methodism, John Wesley, over a century before.

In the Fall of 1867 an advertisement appeared in the Decatur Republican proclaiming the Methodist Church property on the corner of Water and Prairie Streets for sale. Thus, it became known that not only had Levi Pitner added to the number of the church, but that also that number had created a need for a new building of larger dimensions. On April 9, 1868, the Old Church was officially closed and the Sunday School was moved to the basement of the new building. Several people spoke, among them J. R. Gorin and Isaac Pugh. Dr. W. E. Wilson, who spoke before Pitner, expressed sorrow at leaving the old church which had been built only thirteen years before. Pitner replied that,

He felt a compensating feeling, however, in contemplating the new structure which would, before the fall of next winter's snows, rear its stately towers to heaven on the

³⁵ For the incorrect view see Richmond, p. 140. For the record of Dr. Stapp as a substantial supporter and member of the first church, see The Official Board Minutes of the Decatur Station, March 9, 1863 to January 1, 1877 (A Manuscript in possession of the Historical Committee of the First Methodist Church, Decatur, Illinois), pp. 5-6.

spot where he then stood. The speaker discussed the area of a new church, the ability of the people to build it, and the certainty of the success of the enterprise. He argued that proposition at some length, and congratulated the congregation on the flattering prospect under which the work was about to commence. He assured the audience that³⁶ the new church would be built, and that right speedily.

As Rev. Pitner had said, the community was anxious to see the stately towers of the new church rise above the city. The two towers were to be 150 and 180 feet high and the "audience room" sixty by eighty-seven feet in dimensions. The new church could seat 1000 if seats were placed in the aisles, and 750 without such seating arrangements. The Decatur Republican was also behind this move to build and it let the community know its position on September 28, 1868:

We are glad to see that those having charge of the matter are determined to push it to an early completion, and trust that our citizens, both inside and outside the church, will not slow in furnishing the needful funds to enable the congregation to finish their magnificent temple of worship in a style that will be a credit to our city.³⁷

The product of this industry was finally dedicated on Sunday morning January 14, 1872. The dedication services were preached by Rev. M. Eddy of Baltimore, Maryland. In the morning he preached for one hour and twenty minutes and asked for funds at the end of the service to liquidate the indebtedness incurred in building the new building. In the evening service Dr. Eddy again asked for money and the \$4,000 needed was pledged and the dedication took place.

But to retrace our steps to the Fall of 1867, we find that one of the most spectacular trials of ministers in the Illinois Conference of the Methodist Church took place in November over the question of Levi C. Pitner's integrity.³⁸

³⁶ The Decatur Republican, Issue #37, April 9, 1868.

³⁷ Ibid., Sept. 28, 1868.

³⁸ For details of trials of Methodist Ministers in the Illinois Conference see "Church Trials in a Changing Society," an honors paper written in the history department of Illinois Wesleyan University, 1960, by Robert Williams.

The charge made against Pitner was advanced by Mrs. Sophia Antrim concerning what she felt to be misconceptions by Pitner of her character during a call he made at her home in the afternoon of the 25th of October, 1867. The center points of contention were a photo album, a bed room, and a parting gesture made by Pitner. Mrs. Atrim, who was home along at the time, claims that Pitner had placed his hand on hers while looking at the album, and suggested that they had to be careful what they said, for they might "set the world on fire." Mrs. Antrim claimed that she was uncertain as to the meaning of this behavior, but when Pitner kept remarking about the bedroom as he was preparing to leave and that he allegedly threw her a kiss saying "shall we seal it when we meet again," she was certain that he had been making romantic overtures to her. Pitner claimed that he did look at the photo album, but that he had only bumped her hand, and that he had remarked that one of the faces in the album "would never set the world on fire." He claimed that his mention of the bedroom was in a passing tour of the new home, and that his remark was to the effect "that it was a good thing to have the bedroom off the parlor in order to provide heat for it in the winter." The alleged kiss-throwing Pitner asserted was nothing but a simple salute that he was accustomed to give by passing his hand near his chin or face and saying that "I'll see you again," or words to that effect.³⁹

This simple misunderstanding was not simply settled as easily as it might have appeared. The first knowledge of the problem spread through gossip. When the first hint of trouble reached the official board of the First Methodist Church, a committee was sent to the party in question to see what the truth of the matter was; Rev. Pitner was kept out of it. On November 11, 1867, the official board, in the absence of Pitner,

³⁹For the exact specifications of Mrs. Antrim's case, see the appendix. Also, the transcript of the trial is on file in the Library of the Central Illinois Conference Historical Society.

met to come to some conclusions regarding the gossip. The following was drawn up by J. R. Gorin, C. C. Burroughs, and J. W. Coleman, and accepted by the board:

Preamble and resolutions passed by the Official Board of the 1st M. E. Church of Decatur, Ill., November 11th., 1867.

Whereas reports are and have been in circulation in this community derogatory to the character of our esteemed Pastor Rev. L. C. Pitner and

Whereas upon the first knowledge of the existence of such reports a committee of two members of this Official Board proceeded to investigate the truth of said reports and after a fair and impartial hearing from the person who it is said first gave circulation to said reports, they unhesitatingly decided that there was no foundation in truth upon which to base them and having the utmost confidence [sic] in the strict integrity and high moral worth of Brothers Wm. H. Mitchell and W. J. Condell, who composed the aforesaid committees, who also inquired into the matter, we unhesitatingly believe the statements which they have made to be just as they received [sic] them from the person in question. After weighing all the testimony.

Be it resolved by the Official Board of the First M. E. Church of Decatur that in their opinion, Bro. L. C. Pitner has not been guilty of any immoral conductor any evil intentions in the premises and we hereby tender him our sympathy and pledge him our confidence [sic] and support in the fiery trials through which he is called to pass and that we will hold him up in our prayers before the throne of Grace.

Resolved that a copy of this preamble and resolutions be presented to Bro. L. C. Pitner and to the Presiding Elder of this District.

(Signed) J. R. Gorin
C. C. Burroughs
J. W. Coleman

The situation was then complicated by the efforts of Pitner to settle the situation, by calling at the home of Mrs. Antrim a second time to make an effort to get to the bottom of the case. But before anything was accomplished he was interrupted by the arrival of her husband, and for

⁴⁰ The Minutes of the Official Board of the First Methodist Church Decatur Illinois, 1863-1877, pp. 117-118.

fear that she had not mentioned the situation to him, he proceeded to talk about Mr. Antrim's new house, and never did get back to his original purpose. Thus following the second call of Pitner and the above resolutions, the church felt things were settled, when a printed attack on Pitner's integrity was published by Mrs. Antrim with the help of one of her neighbors. Upon this outburst Pitner called for an ecclesiastical trial, which was common at this time as a means of solving the question publicly and in keeping with the best court methods of the day. Pitner wrote the following letter to his Presiding Elder on November 21, 1867:

Rev. J. H. Moore,

Dear Sir, I hereby renew my demands for a legal investigation into rumors [sic] against my Ministerial character, I only consented the delay out of deference to the wishes of my brethren. Please attend to this matter at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully
(signed) L. C. Pitner⁴¹

The trial was held starting December 10, 1867 under the direction of Jesse H. Moore, Presiding Elder, and the committee appointed to hear the case were the reverends W. A. Wilmer, James Shaw, E. D. Wilkins, W. H. Webster, and Preston Wood. The consels for the defendant were Rev. P. N. Manier and W. J. Henry. The counsels for the church were Rev. A. B. Cochran, Secretary, and George W. Bright, Assistant Secretary.

As the trial developed, the essence was unfolded as earlier mentioned. The Decatur Republican noted that "crowds of spectators are in attendance at every meeting of the court." It became evident that not only Rev. Pitner's personal integrity had been attacked by Mrs. Antrim, but that his political preferance had also been attacked by some newspapers. The Decatur Republican was quick to

⁴¹ Taken from the transcript of the trial, p. 57.

point out these biased views of the Democratic "copperhead" papers in the area; the following quote is from the December 12, 1867, issue of the Decatur Republican:

To these busy copperheads, who have used every means in their power to spread abroad the reports of Mr. Pitner's alleged improper conduct, we would recommend a speedy change of tactics. Their effort to fasten the blame of all clerical shortcomings on the Republican party is doubtless a very pleasant pastime to them.....

The zeal with which the Copperhead paper of the country heralded abroad garbled and incorrect statements of this affair is in perfect keeping with the ordinary course pursued by the scandal loving scribblers who control them....Will the Copperhead press take back any of their slander? The fact that he is a Republican would not make his crime, if he were guilty, any the less heinous. Will that fact make his acquittal any the less honorable?

In the course of the trial mention was also made of possible friction existing between the older established First Methodist Church and the new Franklin Avenue Church. The following appeared in the examination of Mr. Antrim in the process of the trial concerning the work of the church investigating committee:

Condell says we have been up to your house to see your wife and there was a report rumored (sic) around about something of Mr. Pitner's throwing a kiss at your wife, said I where did you hear it, they said they heard it in the meeting the night before, and spoken to Mr. Pitner about it and he remarked, My God is that so, I said to them how did it get out, they said it came from Mrs. Hargis. Condell said there was a feeling between the two churches, and it was a rumor to injure our Church and wished to know if I would not come to church on the next Sabbath, and said that would say to the people there was nothing of it.....

However, it must also be said that too much credence^{Condell} be placed on this statement as evidence of friction existing between the two congregations.

⁴²transcript of the L. C. Pitner trial, pp. 54-55.

The committee found all the specifications under the charge not sustainable and thus the charge of immorality against Pitner was dismissed. Pitner was exonerated, but what is more, the integrity of the revival he had instituted was saved and as a consequence the new building project. It is amazing to note that Pitner continued to hold successful meeting in 1868 after such an experience, which might have thrown question on his work, but the acceptance in the city of his work continued to exonerate him. He received a gold watch and chain from the young men of the church on December 14, 1867, as a token of their appreciation for his work. History shows that he left no evil impression on Mrs. Antrim. Mrs. Antrim was not a member of the church at the time of the trial, and yet in 1834 she was 94 years old and still an active member in the WSCS of the First Methodist Church.

However, the trial did not close without some hard feelings in the church. The members of the Official Board were so anxious to have their pastor exonerated, that they found fault with the manner in which the Presiding Elder, Jesse H. Moore, conducted the trial, and they immediately sent their complaint to the Bishop.

It is the opinion of the author of this paper that J. H. Moore must have made a real effort to be honest and impartial in light of his connection to the town as a former pastor, officer in the Union Army over men from this area, and in light of the following statement from his diary:

April 22, 1864. This day I am forty-seven years of age. I ought to be a wiser and better man. The greatest desire of my heart is to be a true man, true to God, true to man, true to my country. But no man can hope that in his life his motives will be fully understood. But it is sufficient to know that to be misunderstood does not effect one's real character. I will try to be honest then, whether I am understood by my fellow men or not.⁴³

However, the charge made by the Official Board was not just a misunderstanding. It was a crime in the church for the Presiding Elder to be partial in his judgments, and this charge put Moore in

⁴³Leaton, volume 3, op. cit., p. 217.

jeopardy of dismissal from the Conference. Therefore, J. H. Moore wrote a letter to the official board of the church asking for removal of this charge by a resolution from the board to the bishop; the following is from that letter:

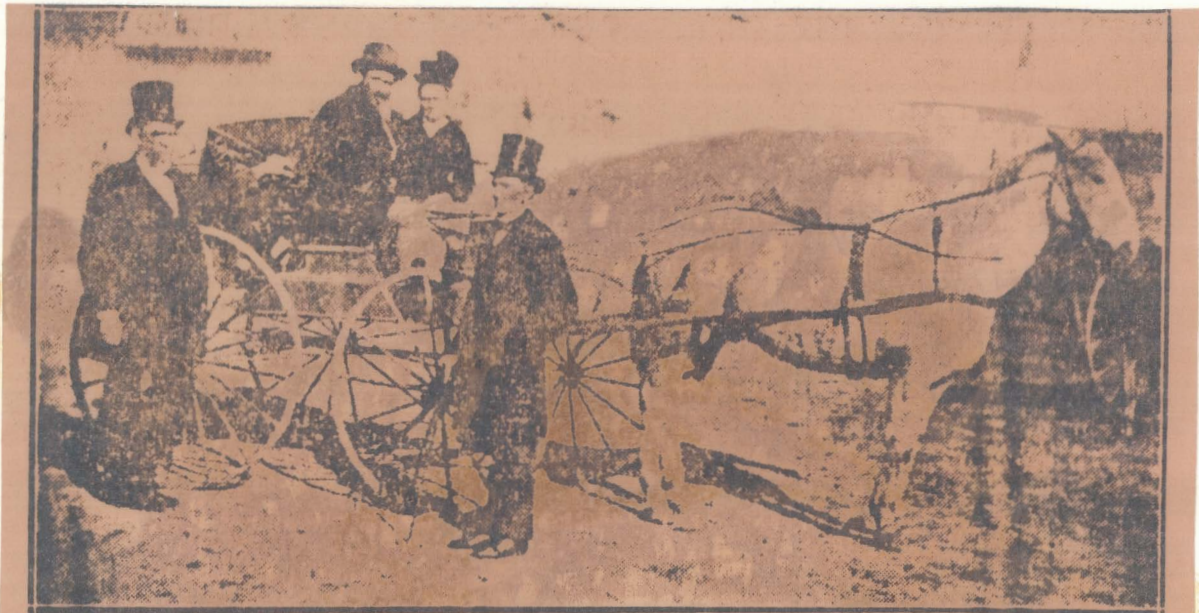
I have never had a hard word or personal altercation with any one of you that I can now call to mind. I have merited and am entitled to your respect, but after all I feel that you wronged me deeply wronged me. This wrong I shall forgive in any went. You have in your official capacity made an attack upon and charged me with an offence before one of the highest functionaries of the church more hideous in its nature if not so scandalous than that upon which your minister was put upon his trial. All this I shall forgive in any went. I come before you therefore asking simple justice at your hands. The adoption of the resolutions which I hold in my hands will do me the justice which I demand. I ask that you adopt them enter them upon the journals of this board allow me a copy and order a copy forwarded to Bishop Kingsley.

(Signed) J. H. Moore P. E.⁴⁴

The resolution stated in brief, that although the Presiding Elder had been "charged" with prejudice and partiality that he had "acted" fairly and impartially in the trial of Bro. Pitner and in accord with The Discipline of the Methodist Church. It was passed by the board and signed by W. E. Hubbard, the Secretary; however, Pitner still held his feelings against Moore, and he signed his name to the records as dissenting from the resolutions.

In recapitulating the events related in this chapter, we find that the growth of the First Methodist Church under Pitner's direction, took place ~~due to~~ ^{in the} period of stagnation in the church during the war, coupled with the population growth of Decatur during this period. It is a marvel that the church did grow in the light of the trial of Pitner and the hard feelings created by this trial, but to call this a complete marvel is to have underestimated the will of the lay members of the church to live in Christian harmony and forgive as they should do as Christians.

⁴⁴The Official Board Minutes, 1863-1877, the First Methodist Church.



When it was eminently safe to block traffic on North Water street back in 1875. Here's a friendly little visit at Water and South Park streets between some rather distinguished people. In the buggy are Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Smith, former residents of Decatur, back on a visit from California. The horse is "Old Tom" formerly the property of Mr. Smith but sold to J. Q. A. Odor, the man whose hand on the buggy suggests proud ownership. Mr. Odor was a member of the banking firm of Rucker, Hammer & Odor.

The third man is none other than Dr. J. T. B. Stapp, the wealthy physician who gave his name to Stapp's chapel now the Masonic temple in Eldorado street. Note the farm wagons drawn up around the west side of Central park.

No. 10 in "Old Decatur" series.

VII

THE FOUNDING OF A SECOND CHURCH

Between 1863 and 1868 Rev. A. Bradshaw, a temporarily superannuated circuit rider, made his home in Decatur, having become familiar with the city as preacher of the Decatur Circuit in 1862-63. During his stay he became known to several members of the community who joined him in 1866 in the founding of a new Methodist society. This group was to meet in a house on the Southwest corner of Franklin Avenue and Cerro Gorde Street, and became known as the Franklin Avenue Church. For the first months of 1867, the pulpit of this church was supplied by Presiding Elder Rev. Jesse H. Moore, the first regularly appointed preacher being appointed at conference time in the fall of 1867.⁴⁵ At this conference Rev. L. B. Carpenter was appointed to the Franklin Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church. Rev. Carpenter apparently was not unknown to the citizens of Decatur, for the following comment appeared in the Decatur Republican in connection to the announcement of his appointment:

Mr. Carpenter is not altogether a stranger to our people, having preached here on several occasions, always with the greatest acceptability [sic].⁴⁶

Within a short amount of time the society outgrew its quarters in the house on Franklin Avenue and the question of constructing a new building was raised. J. T. B. Stapp and J. J. Peddecord made a friendly deal that enable the congregation to raise the money necessary to build a church; Stapp agreed to provide \$8,000 if Peddecord would provide half that

⁴⁵It is not known whether Rev. Bradshaw preached in the new church in 1866. There is also some question as to the date of the founding of this church. The record made by W. F. Gilmore in 1897 in the Membership Roles of Grace Church (manuscript in possession of Grace Methodist Church, Decatur, Ill.) lists the first organization of this church in 1867, approximately in March, while the Hostess Reference Book (published by the Women's Home Missionary Society of Grace M. E. Church, Decatur, Ill., circa 1920) lists the founding date as 1866. In noting the reference to the new congregation as early as January 18, 1867, in The Official Board Minutes of First Methodist Decatur, the 1866 date seem more plausible.

⁴⁶Decatur Republican, September 26, 1867.

amount. With the example of Stapp and Peddecord other members made sizeable contributions, which are listed below:

J. T. B. Stapp.....	\$8,090.60
J. J. Peddecord.....	4,350.00
D. S. Shellabarger.....	2,425.00
George Priest.....	3,325.00
William Bowers.....	1,800.00
Boyd, Haskel, and Myers (each \$1,300.00).....	3,900.00
George Stare.....	1,200.00
Isaac Shellabarger.....	800.00
Samuel K. Swingley.....	425.00
Total of the	\$25,315.60
first major subscription ⁴⁷	

The final cost of the building was \$35,000, but the gratitude of the congregation to Dr. Stapp for starting the first subscription and donating the land on which to build a parsonage, was strong enough to bring about the naming of the new church Stapp's Chapel. This name was kept for twenty years, and changed in 1887 during the pastorate of G. E. Scrimger to Grace Church.

The loss of such men as listed above from the roles of the First Methodist Church might well be expected to be a major financial question. Action was taken January 18, 1867, to determine whether the pledges made and overpaid to First Church should be left in the First Church treasury or transferred to the Franklin Street Church. The result of this investigation was as follows:

Committee on conference with Franklin St. Church in regard to finances reported through Bro. Condell that they had agreed that each charge should take care of its own finances. That a few leaving here had overpaid the amount subscribed by them for the time they remained here, and that the committee had agreed that this should be refunded them. The transfer of members is left with Bro. Pitner and Committee.⁴⁸

We cannot be certain that all of the members of the new church came directly from the First Church congregation, or that they were recent converts to the Christian faith under the Pitner revival; however, there was more indication than the above state-

⁴⁷ Gilmore, op. cit.

⁴⁸ The Official Board Minutes of the First Methodist Church, Decatur, 1863-1877, p. 100.

It is interesting to note that in the same manuscript four years earlier, J. T. B. Stapp and J. J. Peddecord had given \$22.50 each in their class offering in which the standard donation was approximately one to two dollars, with W. J. Condell, E. M. Henkle, and W. T. Stamper the only others in the same rank as Stapp and Peddecord. (pp. 17-19)

STAPP'S CHAPEL



For many years the church building that housed the Grace Methodist congregation at Eldorado and Franklin streets was known as Stapp's Chapel. The church was organized in 1866 and a mission building erected. As the congregation grew a new church was needed. Dr. J. T. B. Stapp, a prominent and wealthy business man, contributed liberally

to the building of the church in 1867, and it became known as Stapp's Chapel.

Later the name of Grace Methodist was adopted. The building was used until 1906 when it was sold to the Masons and the congregation went to a new church in North Main. In 1930 Frede and son bought the property and wrecked it to make way for the present Frede building.

ment as to their transfer. In 1868 the membership of the First Church had dropped from 577 in 1867 to 566, but with a continued addition of people; including 150 probationary members (some of these from the previous probationary list of 1867), and sixteen adult baptisms. There was also a marked difference between the two churches in evangelism; the 125-member Stapp's Chapel had only five probationary members and no adult baptisms, and only ten children were baptised, thus indicating transferred members in full connection with the church.

There exists no record of any definite altercation between the charter members of the Franklin Avenue Church and the members of the First Methodist Church, except the one reference made in the trial of Pitner. The basis for drawing any conclusions as to the reasons for founding a second church is not to be found in feuds, but in the growth that characterized the city and the church in this period. The energy that had been used for war was turned toward the church and the community and the period of stagnation of war made^a preparation for this period of growth.

VIII

Methodist Minorities

The Germans

Bad political and economic conditions in western-Europe sent a flood of German immigrants to seek their fortunes in America during the years from 1830 to 1860. This immigration became particularly large during the forties, and in 1847 alone more than fifty thousand entered the United States.

In connection to the first German^{protestants} in this country, the Methodists had made no effort to serve them or include them in the Methodist Church, partially due to the linguistic tenacity of the Germans. However, with the great wave of Germans that began coming to this country in the 1830's, the Methodists began to realize the possibility of working with this group. The editor of the Western Christian Advocate began to urge that something be done among the German population. William Nast, a young German who had come to the United States in 1828, was appointed to

⁴⁹ Sweet, Methodism in American History, p. 270.

begin the German work in Cincinnati in 1835. This was the beginning of an aspect of the Methodist Church that developed into four separate conferences before 1864.

By 1850 many of the newly-arrived German immigrants had found their way out into the land of the "Middle Border", some of them settling in the Decatur area, and especially southwest of Decatur in Boody. In 1850 began the seeds of what developed into the Trinity or German Methodist Episcopal Church at Decatur and the German Methodist congregation at Boody, with the conversion of Friedrich Nientker. Bro. Nientker called for a pastor and missionary to come to the area, and in 1855 Rev. R. Schobe was sent to Decatur and Dr. Peter Henner was sent to the Boody area as a missionary. The Boody Church then was united with the Decatur Church under the same pastor from 1855 to 1871.

The evangelical effect of the presence of a German-speaking church can be seen in the fact that between 1858 and 1863 there were 70 adult baptisms in the German Methodist Church of Decatur; however, due either to mobility of these people or to the appearance of the United Brethern Church, the German Methodist Church grew only from twenty-eight in 1856 to fifty-four with fifteen probationary members in 1863.

The evangelical work of the German group was advanced by the work of F. William Niedermeyer, who had been pastor of the Trinity Church in 1856-58, and had retired from the conference and located at Decatur in 1862. In 1866 he and a local preacher from Boody started work among the Germans at Mowequa in 1866. F. William Niedermeyer also illustrates the movement of the Germans into the English-speaking church, for in 1879 his name appears in the Official Board minutes of the First Methodist Church as a member of that board.

During this early period the church was a missionary district under the Illinois Conference, but in 1864 the Sudwestliche Deutsche Konferenz was formed in the General conference at Philadelphia. This new conference contained 87 preachers and 5,308 members. The Districts of this conference were Belleville,

Burlington, St. Joseph, Kansas, and Saint Louis. In 1878 the Saint Louis Conference was established with 100 preachers and 8,244 members, and it grew to be 149 preachers and 10,923 members in 1901.

It was in this period that Philip Kuhl served the Trinity (Decatur) Gemeinde or congregation in 1881-1882. Kuhl was born in Darmstadt, Germany, March 17, 1814. He came to America in his late teens and settled in Beardstown during 1840. After two years in Beardstown he joined the German Methodist Church, ~~and moved~~ ~~to Beardstown~~ where the Illinois Conference received him on trial in 1845. He served as Presiding Elder of the Quincy District in 1849 and as superintendent of the Orphan Asylum and Educational institute at Warrenton, Missouri. He was sent to six general conferences between 1852 and 1872. He died while serving the Burlington, Iowa, church, on June 28, 1887. He was acclaimed by James Leaton as "a leader in Western German Methodism."

No one of the German ministers was more widely known or more highly esteemed in the territory in which he labored.⁵⁰

It was shortly after the pastorate of Kuhl that the Trinity Gemeinde decided to build a new church. The compound lot on which the church and parsonage were to be built was purchased from David L. Hughes and his wife for \$500.00 and from the Citizens Street Railway Company of Decatur (D. S. Shellabarger, president) for \$1,700.00. The lot was bought in February, 1887, and the church and parsonage were erected on this lot the same year.

In 1902 the Trinity Gemeinde had reached its zenith with 119 members, 21 probationaries, and a Sunday School of 110. It was not the failure of the church that brought about its demise in 1920, but rather the inability of the Germans to hold to their ethnic and linguistic customs. Many of the members, such as F. William Niedermeyer, had been drifting to the English-speaking churches in Decatur. On May 11, 1919, the thirty-five members of the congregation passed the following resolution (with some hope of continuing the church):

⁵⁰ Leaton, Volume 3, op. cit., p. 192.

As the present location of the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church of Decatur, Illinois, that we, the undersigned members of said church agree to and give our consent for to se⁵¹l the present church property at the best price obtainable and authorize this Official Board to seel such property and purchase a more suitable location for a place of worship.

The vote was 38 ayes with no opposition. The committee made up of G. J. Schultz and H. T. Wencke were instructed to accept bids for \$12,000 and no less than \$10,000.

On November 15, 1920, the church was sold to the Colored Methodist Episcopal congregation which had taken the name of Trinity Colored Methodist Episcopal Church. Although mention of the building of another church had been made, the document appearing below is the last official action of the Trinity Gemeinde des Deutsche Methodist Episcopal Kirche:

Albert C. Witzeman, Henry T. Wencke, August Kusch, Theodore Sheppard, Charles and John Kusch, as trustees of the German Methodist Episcopal Church of Decatur, Illinois (also known as the Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church of Decatur, Ill.) by virtue of power and authority conferred upon them by the resolutions hereto attached and made a part of this instrument TO

S. L. Tucker, C. W. Taylor and Isaiah Taylor, as the trustees of the Trinity Colored Methodist Episcopal Church of Decatur, Illinois, and their successors in office forever, conveys a tract 45 feet in width off the entire East side of Lot 13 [etc.]

The African Methodist Church

The first organization of the African Methodist Church was a convention called by the Bethel Society in Philadelphia

⁵¹ Abstract, No. 173981, showing title to E. 45 ft. of Lot 13 in Allen McRaynolds & Co. addition; made for the Trustees of The Trinity Colored [Christian] Methodist Episcopal Church--prepared by J. R. Larson, Official Abstractor of Macon Co. Illinois--County Building, Decatur, Illinois.

⁵² Abstract No. 173981, document 125314. The Saint Louis Conference was disbanded in 1925. Thus the Decatur church preceded the demise of German Methodism by five years.

in 1787, in objection to the practices of discrimination. The Bethel Chapel had been dedicated by Bishop Francis Asbury in 1793.

The organization of Saint Peter's African Methodist Church in Decatur during 1863 came just ten years after the first Negro, Steve Stewart, had settled in Decatur and opened his barber shop.

The first organizational meeting took place in the Masonic temple in the downtown area, under the direction of Elder F. Meyer. Like the pioneer Methodist Church, they held services in various places for two years. In 1865, Captain Allen offered the congregation two lots on his estate as a location for a building. The only stipulation placed upon this was it would revert to the Allen estate. The building was erected in 1865. This first building and three of its successors met their fate by burning.

The early St. Peter's Church ran a school for Negro children in the building until 1874 when the children were admitted to public schools. By 1876 the church had grown to forty members with a building value of \$1,500. They had a corresponding Sunday School of 40 members.

The present building was erected by this group on Greenwood Avenue in 1927. The building fund and drive were set in motion by Rev. J. H. Sydes, and lasted through the pastorate of Rev. I. M. D. Washington to be completed under the direction of Rev. R. H. Hackley.

The Christian Methodist Church

The Colored (renamed Christian in 1956) Methodist Episcopal Church like the African Methodist Church, was formed as a separate body from the Methodist Church proper. While the African Methodist Church had been a northern church until the post-civil war era, the Colored Methodist Church grew out of this post-civil war era in the South. In 1866, the Negro members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Petitioned the church for their own separate church, and this request was granted in 1870.

With the movement of the Negro population toward the North following the war, it is most likely that this church organization would be found in a city such as Decatur in the central Illinois region. Though no exact date is known for the forming of this church in Decatur, it would not have been too long prior to 1920 when the following election was recorded:

I, (Rev.) S. S. Lander do solemnly swear, that at a meeting of the members of ME Church held at Decatur, in the County of Macon and state of Illinois, on the first day of November A. D. 1920, for that purpose the following were elcted as trustees of said society, to writ, S. L. Tucker, C. W. Taylor, Isaih Taylor, according to the rules and usages of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church.

It was also on this day that the church adopted the corporate name of Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church. Following its official organization the congregation bought the German Methodist Episcopal Church building on the 15th of November, 1920. As to the origin of this congregation we can only go back to the legal abstracts.

Conclusion

It must be noted in concluding this chapter that the groups listed above were not and are not members of the Methodist Church proper, but were off-shoots of that main body as early as 1787 and as late as 1870, with the Germans forming their own conference in 1864. However, the Germans lost their identity with their language and merged with the Methodist Church again in 1925, and the other two groups in question are not members of the Methodist Church proper due to the continued restrictions against people of their color in this country. When and if such segregation breaks down completely, there is a great possibility that these groups will cease to be "Minority Methodists."

IX

Mutations Within the Church

The period from 1850 to 1920 was a period of growth for the United States and a period of urban development. It was within this period that the church underwent various radical changes in expressing its internal organization and its evangelistic efforts. It was within this period that the church of today was conceived and born.

The early church in Decatur was more a part of the church of John Wesley and the American Bishop Francis Asbury than it was of the church of the present. It contained the early elements and means of conducting its organization and business that the earlier Methodist societies had employed. The class groups that were to be found in the pioneer church and the church of the mid nineteenth century had originated in England under the inventive genius of Captain Webb and the continuing guidance of John Wesley. The first class was organized as a means of raising money for the Methodist society in Bristol when Webb and Wesley remodeled a foundry for this society to meet in--the class was composed of twelve people who would donate a penny a week to the church and what they didn't have their leader Webb would give. Wesley saw the way in which this could be employed for study and prayer, and also the way in which this could fit into the organization of the society and provide some practical means of keeping in touch with each member of the Methodist Societies from the top leaders down to the class leader, and from him to his classes. Thus, the class became an integral part of the Methodist groups. This class was in no way connected to a Sunday School class, for the Sunday School class was a separate and individual contribution to the church in the 1830's. The class was made up of no more than ten to twenty people and met at any time during the week which was convenient for its members.

In Decatur First Methodist Church in 1863 evidence of the strength of the classes was to be seen in their function in gathering the pastor's salary:

The stewards appointed the estimating committee reported the sum of \$1250.00 quarterage to be paid to R. Hiner pastor for service during this conference year. Said amount...and the Presiding Elder's claim appointed to the different classes in Decatur Station following this was the apportionment of the amount needed among the classes in exact amounts to each class⁵⁴.

However, though the classes were strong in 1863, the growth in the number of church members and the increase in the business and community activities had their effects upon the people and perhaps upon the system of classes through the people who were members of them. The gradual change of the distance of time may^{also} have caught up with the system, for after the 1860's the classes began to wane. In 1872 efforts to retard the demise of the class system resulted in channeling the classes into a General Class meeting to be held on the first Sabbath of every month. In 1873 a committee on classes and revivals was appointed, consisting of Gorin, Condell, Baker, and Taylor. The report of this committee shows concern over the gradual decline of the classes.

It was recommended that assistant leaders--or rather additional leaders--be appointed; that we do our best to revive the classes and to that, visiting the members should be observed; and⁵⁵ that we hold an old-fashioned Methodist revival.....

By 1874 a general slump in the economy had begun, and lack of the class system to include the whole church as a means of supporting the church became evident. It was in June of 1874 that the envelope system of collecting the offering was instituted for the first time in Decatur. No longer were the classes a cohesive force within the congregation, able to support the church through their pledges.

In the February 22, 1886, meeting of the Official Board, the name class had been dropped and the name Cottage inserted. But, as much as the name makes them sound important (one cottage

⁵⁴ The Minutes of the Official Board of the First Methodist Church, 1863-1877, October 26, 1863, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁵ Ibid., November 10, 1873, p. 221.

for each ward of the city), their strength and unity was a far cry from the classes of 1863, for in 1887 the following motion was made and carried:

Motion prevailed to employ S. S. Ewing for one month at a salary of \$145.00 to canvas the membership, secure pledges and provide all who need them with envelopes.⁵⁶

During the period of the decrease of the power of the classes, functions of the Official Board became stronger. In respect to the things which the classes had probably been doing among their poorer members, the following motion was made in 1864:

On motion resolved that we will take a collection on the first Sunday evening each month for the poor of our congregation.⁵⁷

The newly-established poor fund treasury was used to disburse a load of wood for Bro. Moreland in 1863, a cord of wood, and a sack of flour to sister Miller in 1867. Reports from the pastor in seeing to the care of the needy are such as the one that follows:

Bro. Leaton reported the family of Mr. Locum on N. Water St. as being in a destitute condition, and several brethren agreed to respend [sic] to their necessities by contribution. On motion Bro. Shull has reported as certain the needs of Bro. Sloat and family⁵⁸ with power to draw on the treasury of the poor fund.

As has been seen in the mutative change from the class system to the care for the needy by the whole church, the church had become more of a unified group centered in the Official Board rather than in the classes which made up that church. It was in this period that the church became more of a separate entity within the community than it had been previously. Prior to 1854, the Church had been interlocked with the community;

⁵⁶ Official Board Minutes of the First Methodist Church, January 15, 1877-December 7, 1896 (manuscript in the possession of the Historical Committee, the First Methodist Church, Decatur, Ill.) November 14, 1887, p. 131.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 1863-1877, October 17, 1864, p. 41

⁵⁸ Ibid., November 2, 1876, p. 342.

the coming of the circuit rider was a social event for the whole town. The town board elected the first trustees and the Methodist Revivals was a social event that concerned the total community. But with the appearance of the complex and growing population of the city that started in 1855, the church came into itself, gathering in its classes and its social functions.

The Sunday School activity became stronger among the children in an effort to interest them in the church, as is seen in this article which appeared in the Decatur Republican:

The teachers and scholars of the first M. E. Church sabbath School repaired to the fair grounds yesterday, headed by the Decatur Silver Band, and enjoyed themselves in partaking of an eloquent and sumptuous pic-nic.⁵⁹

The appearance of church socials in the late 1860's and early 1870's ~~is not~~ may seem nothing but the enjoyment of an evening together once every two weeks, but with the demise of the class system and the change of the community, it became necessary for the church to hold together its members by a different means.⁶⁰ The occurrence of sociables must also be seen in the light of the church ban on entertainment during this period.

The origin of the Methodist concern with morals was the same as that of the class system; John Wesley. Wesley would admit anyone to the societies that wanted to know the Christian way of life, but was very quick to expel any person that did not live up to the moral expectations of that Christian life. The effect of Wesley's views on morality can be seen in the question

⁵⁹ The Decatur Republican, June 18, 1868.

⁶⁰ The sociable also bore great similarity to the class, which is pointed out in the following quote from the Quarterly Conference Records of Stapp's Chapel and Grace Church, 1867-1892, p. 15.

A church sociable has recently been organized to meet weekly at private residences and promises much good in the cultivation of the social element and in the promotion of a Spirit of Unity and love.

Therefore, the formation of the sociable in light of this quote is a convincing proof of the demise of the class.

of the use of liquor which came before the General Conference of the Methodist Church in 1796:

If any member of our society retail or give spirituous liquors, and anything disorderly be transacted under his roof on their account, the preacher, who has the oversight of the circuit shall proceed against him, as in the case of other immoralities and the person accused shall be cleared, censured, suspended, or excluded, according to his conduct as on other charges of immorality.⁶¹

The question of morality became a common question in the official board minutes. The question was, "Are there any who walk disorderly?" One case was noted in 1863, but no more were to be seen until 1865. The number of cases in the Decatur First Methodist Church official board began to increase with the demise of the strength of the classes, for previously the class probably investigated the occurrence of rumors such as was reported in the following:

It being stated that there are evil reports concerning Bro. David Strohm. On motion a committee of three was appointed to investigate his case and report at the next official meeting.....⁶²

On December 17, brother Strohm was found to be innocent of the rumors abroad. If the charges concerning unchristian conduct were serious enough, and valid, the offender was asked to withdraw from the church.

By 1870 another element other than the history of the Methodist Church had entered into the concern of the First Methodist Church over morality, that element being the appointment of Rev. James H. Noble to the charge in 1869. In 1870, starting in February, there was a wave of cases that came before the board, such as the following entry for one meeting:

Bro. Chas. Halb reported as walking very disorderly & Bro. Gorin having talked to him promises amendment. Wm. L. Smith and wife reported haveing borene [sic.] with them

⁶¹ Sweet, Methodism in American History, p. 136 (underlining by the author of this paper).

⁶² Official Board Minutes, 1863-1877, Dec. 10, 1866, p. 93.

a long time hoping they would amen were expunged. John and Wm. Swaringen reported as walking and talking unbecoming Christians their leaders appointed as a committee to see them. [Note here that the leaders are appointed by the board, a sign of the continued effort of the class to exist, but under a new standard] Bro. Alf. Baily also reported as acting and talking unbecoming a Christian. Gorin and A. Imboden to see him. The Girt family reported as doing Badly. Bro. Baker to see them. No other business we adjourned.⁶³

During the next year, four other cases of disorderly conduct and habitual drinking were brought up before the board; one of these involved the expulsion of Bro. Charles Halt, and the other, a trial of a member for drinking. The efforts of Rev. Nobel to raise the morals of the church, had become evident in the conduct of the official board, and by 1871, the board made note of this:

In looking back over the past two years, we feel highly gratified in the fact that the membership of 1st. M. E. Church, has been highly edified and instructed in spiritual matters under the Presiding of our beloved Pastor J. H. Noble, who has been untiring in his labors to educate the members of the church and the congregation and raise them up to a higher elevation of morality and it give us pleasure to be able to testify that he has been eminently successful in his efforts in this regard, as also in the able manner in which he has conducted the affairs [sic.] of the church which today occupies higher⁶⁴ grounds than it has ever done before since its formation.

The concern of the Methodist Church, as a total unit, had not died over the question of morality in the church; in 1872 the General Conference passed the following items at Brooklyn, New York, among which was the concern for morality:

The important legislation enacted was the recognition of the newly formed Women's Foreign Missionary Society, which had been organized in 1860...; the recognition of the Freedmen's Aid Society; the adoption of a plan for the forming of District Conferences; the adoption of a rule on amusements, which specifically condemned the

⁶³ Official Board Minutes, 1863-1877, Feb. 7, 1870, p. 160.

⁶⁴ Ibid., July 17, 1871, p. 174.

buying, selling, or using intoxicating liquors; dancing, playing at games of chance, attending theaters, horse-races, circuses, dancing parties or patronizing dancing schools.⁶⁵

By 1876 the question of enforcing this rule against amusements came before the official board of the First Methodist Church. Bro. Gorin moved that the rule be enforced against "dancing and all other worldly amusements," and it was carried unanimously by a rising vote; January 24, 1876.

In the next two years eleven cases of theatre attendance were noted and taken care of. Cases were usually dismissed with the acknowledgement of the complaint by the person in question and a statement of change of habit. The circus was included as a "worldly amusement" and people were brought into question by attending such things; the following appeared in the board minutes of 1877:

Bro. Bayne acknowledged having attended circus. On motion it was decided to hear with him in view of the confession made to Board.⁶⁶

However, it must not be assumed that the scorn of the church upon the means of worldly entertainment cannot be said to be just narrow view. The theater today is as different from the theatre of the growing city of the post-civil war era as the church today differs from its predecessor. The following item appearing in the Decatur Republican in 1868, although not typical, still points out the difference mentioned:

Last Friday and Saturday evenings that portion of our citizens who delight in witnessing bloody and brutal exhibitions, were entertained by a series of fights between a bull-dog and a black bear, at Macon Hall. The inhuman wretches who cater to a depraved taste by advertising and giving such brutal entertainment should be arrested and fined on general principles, if we have no law covering the case.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Sweet, Methodism in American History, p. 325.

⁶⁶ Official Board Minutes, 1877-1896, August 27, 1877, p. 18.

⁶⁷ The Decatur Republican, January 30, 1868.

However, we would consider an attack upon dancing and card playing a somewhat narrow view when they took place in the home. The following note was made in 1876:

Bros. Condell and Mitchell were appointed a committee to visit Bro. and Sister Greer in relation to charges of having social dances and card parties at their residence.

/one week later/...moved that Bro. Condell and Pastor wait on Bro. and sister Greer and inform them of consequences of their proposed action as to dancing parties at their residence.

/two weeks later then the second note/
The Pastor reported Bro. and Sister Greer⁶⁸ as having withdrawn from the church without letters.

The church today would not consider the banning of card playing in the home and dancing in a private residence as a serious moral gesture, but it must be remembered that the communities in which the Methodist Church exists today are much different than the morally instable and extremely newly developing cities of the post-civil war era. The results of these cases cannot be disputed, in that they helped the people within the church to realize that there was a connection between baptism and their daily lives. Nor were all the cases that appeared over matters of a less consequential manner. Between November of 1876 and August of 1877 several cases of serious matters developed. Mr. McComas was charged with using bribes to sway votes in his favor for the office of County Prosecuting Attorney, and investigation was undertaken by the church. Mr. John Dilman was dismissed after his conviction for larceny, and C. B. Prescott was removed of false charges rumored that he was swindling his customers. James Fowler withdrew from the church under charges of adultery with his niece.

Important items to the Christian Community of the church, such as the ability of the members to behave in a brotherly fashion toward each other, were brought before the board. In

⁶⁸ Official Board Minutes, 1863-1877, pp. 346, 348, 350.

1876 a case of disagreement between "brothers" Baily and Thrall was settled, after which the two agreed to "walk in Christian love and harmony." In 1885 a family quarrel came before the board for investigation. The man of the family in question was ordered to withdraw from the church if he could not return to his wife and live in peace and harmony with her after she had offered to make amends for her actions. No final notation appeared as to whether the persons appointed to the committee of investigation were successful in patching up the marriage.

After this period of 1870-1890 the trials of the members of the congregation were dropped from the minutes of the official board, and are assumed to have ended; at least in the case of theater attendance. For in June of 1904, the First Methodist Church accepted an offer from the Opera House as a meeting place during the time in which the old church building was to be torn down and the present one to be build in 1905.

But in continuing in this period, the effect of the trials was evident in the establishment of the sociable in 1872 and the growing use of the revival as a means of entertainment. By the separation of the congregation from such means of entertainment as the theater and the circus in the 1870's, the Decatur stage had been set for the great revival under Rev. James P. Dimmitt in 1882. But the concern of the church over the "warmth" of religious feelings and the connection of this concern to the revivalistic method of converting nonbelievers, was rooted in a period when Decatur was nothing but wild prairie grass and flowers. To consider the revival and its growth and mutation, we must consider its total growth on the American scene.

The birth of the camp meeting in Kentucky with the beginnings of the great frontier revival of 1800 was possible due to the frontier situation in which it was spawned. The camp meeting held at Steven's Steelelement in 1830 was just such a frontier phenomenon. The camp meetings in Macon County were common gathering for the inhabitants of the area. The Cumberland Presbyterians had established camp ground at Mt. Zion, Bethlehem, North Fork,



the fourth Building
of the First Methodist Church
1904 —

and Friends Creek and the Methodists had set up such a camp at Mount Gilead. When the various revivalistic groups came into Decatur proper, they took the camp meeting with them establishing a camp west of town.

The camp became Oakland Park in the 1884's when the Citizens Railway Company leased the land, (the street-car line being built to it in 1884 and a large wooden tabernacle built there in the same period). Albert F. Smith was manager of the park and soon had prohibitionist speakers at various meetings because of his personal feeling about liquor. The camp became a chatauqua grounds, and the camp meetings lost the flavor that the pioneer preachers such as Wilson Pitner had given them in their earlier days. The camp meeting moved from a religious social gathering to a social educative gathering as the frontier left it behind in settled areas.

The revival itself was a little more adaptable to the growth of towns and cities and it moved indoors away from the great camp meetings. Revivals such as that of Levi Pitner took place in the evenings over long periods of time. The Pitner revival itself was actually periods of afternoon and evening meeting meetings lasting for several weeks at a time from October of 1886 to February of 1868. Some of the meetings were held during the day in the winter due to the rural nature of part of the community; that is, some of the farmers would be able to attend mid-morning meetings in the winter after their basic chores were done.

The participation of the congregation was essential to the later revivals, where the frontier meetings had been centered only on the preachers. In 1877 a suggestion for a revival was turned down, not because it was not needed, but because the congregation was not yet ready to make the required effort to support such meetings and bring them to success.

The element of entertainment became the drawing card of the revival where the element of a social gathering had been the drawing point of the camp meetings on the frontier. The need

for entertainment within the church became strong with the ban on entertainment which has been noted in the 1870's. The ability of entertainment to draw non-church people as well as church people into the meetings coupled with the need to reach large numbers of the rapidly growing population of the city, continued to produce revivals when the congregation felt that it could put forth enough effort to make the revival a success.⁶⁹

The lack of entertainment in the church in 1882, coupled with the growth of Decatur during this decade made possible the revival which was the greatest of all in 1882. James Dimmitt, minister at that time of the First Methodist Church arranged for Thomas Harrison, the "Boy Preacher" to hold the revival. The revival lasted 21 weeks with excellent results for both the First Church and Stapp's Chapel. The evangelistic work of the churches had been in a slump prior to the revival and between them they had reported only about 20 adult baptisms for the four-year period. In the fall of 1882, the populations of the two churches stood as follows: First Church, 425 members, 15 probationary members, 12 adult baptisms; Stapp's Chapel, 202 members, a probationary member, and only six adult baptisms. The impact of the Dimmitt-Harrison revival was one of the greatest for the Methodist Church in Decatur. At conference time, in 1883, the churches reported the following changes: First Church had added 200 members for 625 members, 180 probationary members, 131 adult baptisms; Stapp's Chapel had gained 138 members for 340 members, 28 probationary members, and 74 adult baptisms.

Between the two churches there was also a marked increase on the family level as well as the individual adult interest in the church, for in 1883 there were some 55 children baptized and a total gain of about 250 in the two Sunday Schools. The interest of the family is noted by Bernard A. Weiseberger as a function of the period as well as the effect of adult conversions within the revival itself.

⁶⁹ The growth of the city of Decatur during the period was directly coupled with the occurrence of revivals. From 1860 to 1870 the population had risen from 3,839 to 7,161 and from 1870 to 1880 it rose only 9, 547 while it took a great leap from 1880 to 1890, growing to 16, 841 in 1890.

Parting and death were real terrors to that generation. The sentimentality which overflowed in the short stories of both the popular and religious presses, however mawkish it might be, had a foundation in real anguish. The prospect of a family reunion in heaven was more tempting than anything held out by the prophets of "realism."⁷⁰

Revivals were held at various times in the 1880's and 1890's in Decatur, but none of these could even attempt to measure up to the results of the Dimmitt-Harrison revival. The smaller growth of Decatur during this period may also have had its effects upon the lack of spectacular success in revivals of these decades. Although the 1880's were a period of great growth, the Dimmitt-Harrison revival had tapped part of that growth, and the growth in the 1890's had dropped from the 76.4% increase of the 80's to a 23.2% increase.

However, the revival was not dead, although some devices that were to take its place in the entertainment field, such as the nickel-odeon which was to become the motion picture, were in their infancy. The appearance of Billy Sunday, an ex-baseball player turned revivalist, in the middle west in the first decade of the twentieth century⁷¹ ~~gives credence to this.~~ Billy Sunday was to become nationally known, but he began his first meetings here in the middle west in such places as Bloomington and Decatur, Illinois.

In May of 1907 Sunday met with the pastors of Decatur and arranged for a revival to be held in Decatur in February of 1908. In the winter of 1908 part of Union Street was temporarily closed and a barn-like wooden tabernacle was built at the corner of Union and Eldorado Streets by nine pastors, the YMCA secretary, and a lawyer. The tabernacle could seat 5,000 and was lighted by 450 sixteen-candle-power electric lamps.

Sunday arrived in Decatur on February 5, 1908, having come from Bloomington by private car. His reception was indicative of his attractive personality, for he was met by a crowd at the transfer of his house. And from there, after a day of rest, he started his revival.

The opening night of the Sunday revival was a spectacle of unique proportions. The tabernacle was jammed with people, reporters

⁷⁰ Weisberger, Bernard A., They Gathered at the River (Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1958), p. 217.

flanked the platform in benches, and the platform itself was decked with a 518-voice choir, the ministers of Decatur, and an immense banner bearing the letters "Decatur for Christ." Billy Sunday entered with a flourish, threw his coat off to the side and began one of his typical roll-up-the-shirt-sleeves sermons. For approximately two weeks he entertained the citizens of Decatur with chair smashing, baseball field dialect, and roarings at the Devil and his followers in Decatur. Sunday never stood still during his sermons, and usually lost his coat, ties, and his starched collar before he was through blessing out the unrevived and the evils of "booze." He preached a theology of a literal hell, which was common to all revivalists. He often won the sympathy and union of the crowd against a supposed enemy, such as saloon keepers, by declaring that he was in danger and that a planned riot was under-foot. The Decatur Herald and Review reported that these claims were not credible due to the constant order in or about the tabernacle during the whole period of the meetings.⁷¹

The results of the revival were numerically impressive. The Sunday staff placed the number of converts, or those who "shook hands with Sunday for Jesus," at 6,200. Translated into actual membership roles in the Methodist Church there were some strong figures, which even though they make the primary figures seem a little out of proportion, they are nevertheless impressive: by conference time, 1908, the First Methodist membership had jumped from 1318 to 1900 with 150 probationary members and from 22 to 400 adult baptisms, and an increase in the size of the Sunday School from 840 to 1200. Grace Church (formerly Stapp's Chapel) also showed a great increase from 748 to 1177 members, 25 to 84 probationary members, 22 to 332 adult baptisms, and a jump in the Sunday School from 716 to 896. Decatur also felt another pressure of the Sunday Revival other than growth in numbers in the churches. Just three weeks after Sunday preached his last sermon, Decatur voted its 62 saloons out of business. However,

⁷¹The Decatur Herald and Review, February 19, 1933.

this was not only work of Sunday. It had been prepared for by Margaret Crissey, the daughter of the frontier preacher W. S. Crissey, who with many other people had carried on an untiring attack upon liquor. The town then moved back into a "wet spot" from 1910 to 1914, and then went dry to the end of the 18th. amendment in 1933.

The Sunday revival had left lasting effects. Yet his technique was soon to die. In Decatur 25 years after the revival the following statement appeared in the Decatur Herald and Review in an article reviewing the Sunday revival:

A Billy Sunday convert, who is a loyal worker in one of the Decatur Churches, was asked if he would be interested in a meeting to recall the famous protracted meetings⁷² of 25 years ago. He frankly declared he would not be.

What had happened to the religious fire of this convert? Had his heart turned to pharisaical stone? No, his feeling was that of the whole country. The movement away from the revivalistic fires that had been kindled on the Kentucky frontier more than a century earlier was a change in the needs and practices of the whole church.

The early demons that the revivalists had cursed became but shadows in a changing society; the "booze" question was settled by the 18th. amendment in 1919; smoking became a minor vice; the radio put the theater into the parlor; and the economy made thrift a vice. The discord of ^{Science and} the Bible soon became reconciled as not¹¹ oppositional, but as views from a different vantage point upon the same item; the view of science being seen as the How of creation and the view of religion as the Why. The Scopes trial brought this discord to the forefront in July of 1925, but it was the end of the controversy rather than its beginning that this event marked.

The revival in the realm of entertainment was soon to lose its appeal with the growth of new means of spectator entertainment. Baseball began to rise in popularity as Billy Sunday witnessed. But more than sports of a spectator type, the rise of

⁷²Ibid.

emotional entertainment in the moving picture made emotional experiences available to all. The first picture to appear with a plot was The Great Train Robbery in 1903, and by 1914 David W. Griffith had liberated the movie camera from the themes of the nickelodeon and the simple filming of stage action with his \$100,000 production of The Birth of a Nation. By 1917 the motion picture industry had developed into a multimillion dollar business, and crowds of people were attracted away from the garish entertainment of emotional religion to the doors of the new "flickers."

In summing up the death of the revival and its efforts as culminated in the nation and within the churches who had sponsored Billy Sunday, Bernard A. Weiseberger makes the following observation:

"Billy" symbolized the price of popularizing religion and burying its discords in a rush to enroll new church members. Only a handful of ministers was ready to claim that he was too expensive. His career came to a sudden downfall in 1920, not because the church assessed his worth and decided to do without him, but⁷³ because life in America abruptly turned a new corner.

As well as the abrupt corner that American life had taken, the Church was turning new corners in reaching the new members of the community. As the new urban communities developed the Sunday School grew. But with the death of the class groups in the Methodist Church adult Sunday School classes soon developed. The Sunday School had one advantage over the church, it was more mobile, due to its ability to be run by the church in different parts of the city, other than where the church was located. Soon classes were held in many different parts of the community as they were in Decatur during the 1870's, and thus the mission had been born. The mission became a strong means of reaching into the community and this helped to answer the need for evangelism that the revival had once filled.

It was also a permanent means.^{the revival was} a point in evangelism, the mission was a continuous line. The church structure was^{an} expression of its needs and those very needs were in a state of mutation

⁷³Weiseberger, Op. cit., p. 223.

between 1850 and 1920. The impact of the growth of the city and industry within the city had strong effects on that community and as a consequence were reflected in the actions of the church. The blessing of the church in this period appears not to have been a plan which was prepared to meet the problems before they arose, but rather the ability to change with the appearance of new problems and new structures of society.

X

Missions

According to the commission of God given to me,
like a skilled master builder I laid a founda-
tion, and another man is building upon it.
(I Corinthians 3:10)

The mission school was one of the most interesting and effective methods of evangelism that grew up following the changes wrought in Decatur by the locomotive, "The Frontier," in 1854. The mission is not to be mistaken for a rescue mission for the downtrodden, although it may have often reached people in such positions, but rather it was an organized extension of the Body of Christ or the church organization that reached out into sections of the city and provided Christian means for drawing people together in that area; i. e., the Sunday School class was one of the first of such means. Several missions arose in this period overlapping each other in time, but not in location. And due to their separateness in location it will be best to relate the growth of each mission as a subsection of this chapter, rather than tackle them in time, for we might lose the connection that a few of these missions have with the various churches of Decatur that have been built on their foundations.

Jane's Chapel

The first mention of Jane's Chapel as a mission "Sabbath School" occurred in 1866. Brother Shull the superintendent of the school brought his problems before the board and after some discussion it was decided to raise money by a collection to be taken at the next Sunday evening service for the mission school. The mission was then supported financially by the church. The name of this school was not Jane's Chapel during this period; rather it was known by the prosaic name of the "West Mission."

Things went quietly with but little mention of the existence of the mission in the official board minutes. In 1873 some mention was made of adding a preaching service each sabbath at the West Mission, and it was decided that Brothers Burrough and Barber would procur a preacher for every sabbath. Brother Luttrell was appointed leader of the class. Work at the mission did not separate the members from the church, for Burrough and Barber were in charge of the preaching services at the mission and still had time to be considered for leaders of two classes at First Church.

The First Church kept strong financial and moral control over the mission. In 1875 the lot on which the mission building stood was sold, and mention was made of looking for another site, when Mr. Wykoff a member of the board mentioned that he had reserved the land and that the building could remain there as long as the board wished, providing the board of First Church paid the taxes. In 1876 the integrity of Ed. Luttrell came into question in one of the many morals trials of this period. The following action was taken:

Motion: that both classes be united at the mission to meet on Friday evenings. That Bro. Ed. Luttrell be cited to appear and answer informally certain rumors touching his character and standing in the church.⁷⁴

The result of this action was the removal of Luttrell from the position of class leader.

The preaching at the mission also underwent some change in 1876. The question was at first referred to the local members and the superintendent, and by conference time a minister was appointed to the West Mission of Decatur. The Mission's first minister, Rev. J. R. Locke had the privilege of serving two missions at the same place within two years for after his first year the name was changed to Jane's Chapel in 1877 and was known by this name until 1894, when it was disbanded; in the years 1882-1883 ^{only} ~~it~~ was ^{it} ~~listed again~~ as West Mission.

⁷⁴ Official Board Minutes, 1866-1877, p. 331.

The success of the preaching services at 4:00 P. M. on Sunday apparently waned after Rev. Locke had tried it for two years, for in 1879 to 1885 the charge had no regularly appointed pastor, but its preachers were supplied by the Presiding Elder. Regular pastors were appointed to Jane's Chapel between 1885 to 1888, but in 1888, the following item received approval and ended the preaching services:

At the Pastor's request the Board advised that the services at Jayne's ⁷⁵[sic.] Chapel be a Sunday School and Class Meeting every Sunday without preaching except at the further direction of the pastor [the pastor of First Church that is].

The Official Board of First Church unsuccessfully tried to throw off its responsibilities at Jane's Chapel in 1889. In 1893 after some effort had been made to get classes to meet under the direction of the Young People's Christian Endeavor Society and the name had been changed to West Main Street Chapel, the mission was on its way out. In 1894, the building was torn down and the lot which had been given to the First Church by the Annual Conference in 1892, was used to build a parsonage on. This early failure of a mission to grow into a church is not indicative of the general run of Missions in Decatur, as will appear in the next few pages.

Sargent's Chapel

In 1885 a wind-fall came to the board of the First Methodist Church: for some unknown reason the Presbyterians abandoned a Sunday School in the southeastern part of the city. The following took place in answer to the new situation:

The question in regard to the Sunday School in the 4th ward [The fourth ward was east of South Main and South of E. Prairie Street] formerly controlled by the Presbyterians, what shall we do with it? After some discussion, Bro. Lunn moved that the First M. E. Church take the same as a mission school and to be under our control. Carried. On motion A. M. Werner was appointed Superintendent of said Mission School.

⁷⁵ Official Board Minutes, 1877-1896, March 8, 1888, p. 140.

⁷⁶ Official Board Minutes, 1877-1896, October 19, 1885, p. 120.

This school was greatly advanced by the effort of Miss W. Miranda Sargent who had joined the church after 1877. Miss Sargent went into the area around the mission school and visited children and used some rudimentary medical skills winning many by her actions and cheerful spirit. With the growth in the school that followed Miss Sargent's work, the need for permanent quarters arose. In the last of 1885 and the early months of 1886, Dr. T. I. Coultos, the pastor of First Church, started a building program. Two of the workers in the mission, Mr. and Mrs. E. S. McCarty donated the land (sold it to the church for \$1.00) on which a chapel could be erected, on the 900 block S. Broadway, and the chapel was completed that year. The deed for the chapel and the property were in the hands of the pastor and board of First Church and the property was kept by the workers in the mission, such as E. S. McCarty, and the board of Trustees of First Church.

The growth of this mission may have helped deplete the effect of the West Mission, which was not too far from the Sargent's Chapel. But it must be noted that it was not that the congregation was unwilling to maintain two missions at the same time, for in 1895, shortly after the collapse of the West Mission, a Mission was established in the northern part of the city. This mission was called Wesley Mission.

The work of the congregation itself grew and with the growth in the missions it became necessary to have an assistant pastor in 1898. Funds were collected at both the Wesley and Sargent's Chapel for the support of the assistant and turned over to the treasurer of First Church, who in turn paid the assistant's salary from the regular funds. The ties between Sargent's Chapel and First Church were regularly tested by such things as sidewalk ordinances that called for a sidewalk past the chapel, and a leaky roof which was repaired by the First Church board in 1902.

By 1915 the Sargent's Chapel had grown to be more than a mission. In that year the District Superintendent (the new

name for the Presiding Elder) appointed Rev. A. J. Jockish, a man who had known the congregation for a year as assistant pastor of First Church in 1914, to the joint charge of Sargent's Chapel and Sharon Church. In 1917, this joint charge was broken up and Rev. J. L. McGiffin took on the work of Sargent's Chapel as an individual church.⁷⁷

The growth of the community added to the growth of the work at Sargent's Chapel, and as the city expanded to the south in this period, several other churches came into being such as the new St. James Roman Catholic Church built on E. Clay in 1911, not too far from where the chapel was to relocate.

In 1925, the District Superintendent bought the lot on the corner of Maffit Street and Cleveland Avenue at the cost of \$2,000. With the untiring efforts of Rev. J. T. Stretton between 1924 and the September of 1925, the Cleveland Avenue Church was born and built from the foundation of the growing Sargent's Chapel. The old chapel was sold and the furniture moved into the new church, which had windows donated by the St. Paul's Methodist Church and the G. A. R. The bell that had once belonged to Stapp's Chapel was also moved from the old Sargent's Chapel to the new church. On September 13, 1925, Rev. A. M. Wells, the District Superintendent, dedicated the church that was built on the foundation of the mission started by the First Methodist Church in 1885.

Asbury Chapel

The appearance of the phenomenon of the mission was not the only result of efforts made at the First Methodist Church in this area. The relatively new Grace Methodist Church saw the needs of the city for evangelical outreach and they founded a mission on the North side of the city in 1887.

⁷⁷ The Sharon Church was as old as the First Methodist Church. It arose from the Stevens Creek camp meeting of 1830 and met in Bagdad School northwest of Decatur after the First Church groups moved to Decatur in 1831. It built the building used at the time of its attachment to Sargent's Chapel in 1872.

This organization took place in June 1887, in a room of a house on the corner of Broadway and Leafland Avenue. Mr. J. O. Spence was elected superintendent. By fall, the school, which was known as the Decatur Mission, had outgrown its quarters and was moved⁷⁸ into a house on the corner of Herkimer and Broadway.

This mission was a rapidly growing school, and by the fall of 1888 subscriptions had been raised and the new building was begun on the second site. This building was dedicated by Rev. George Scrimger, the pastor of Grace Church. Prayer meetings, Sunday School, and an Epworth League gave witness to its continuing growth and in the fall of 1897 a church sprang up from this mission foundation; on October 1, 1897, Asbury Chapel was formed with a membership of 38. This chapel and Wesley Mission were appointed a pastor that same year--Rev. A. Wells.

During the years 1898 and 1899 the Asbury Chapel was served by W. A. Reynolds and S. C. Pierce respectively in conjunction with the Sharon Church. In 1900 the charge was^{only} supplied a preacher by the District Superintendent. But this was not due to its lack of growth, for with the appointment of W. D. Weems in September of 1900, a continuation of growth was marked by Weems instituting plans to build again in 1901, and getting as far with the plans as to buy a lot at the corner of Pugh (now Grand Avenue) and North Main Streets. This building program progressed, and in 1903 the Asbury Chapel was moved to this new building and renamed the North Main Street Methodist Church.

As prosperous as this church was, it was decided with the building of a new church by the Grace Methodist congregation just a few blocks south of their church on North Main Street, that it would be better to join with the bigger church. In 1905 the decision was made and the union agreed upon.

By Spring the Church was so near completed [sic] that services could be held in the basement. On the first Sunday when services were held, the two Sunday Schools marched in a body from their respective Churches. The

⁷⁸ Hostess Reference Book, p. 3.

North Main Street School being headed by Mr. H. S. Gebhart who was Superintendent. He continued to hold this office in the new church for a number of years.

Wesley Mission

The Wesley mission was first established in 1895 with the following motion:

Whereas the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor of this church desiring to advance the cause of Christ and the Church in this city and to increase the usefulness of our Church in particular a Sunday School in the northern part of the city. Whereas to successfully continue this work they desire to purchase a lot and erect there a suitable chapel, therefore be it resolved that we the official members of the First M. E. Church do hereby endorse any action they may have taken in the premises and promise there our hearty co-operation in their further efforts to the successful accomplishment of their desires. Committee added to help: Spenser E. Huff, J. S. Imboden, and Milton Johnson sr.

The Wesley mission continued in the hands of the First Church until 1904 when it became the property of the Grace Methodist Church. The situation in which this transaction took place was the dividing of the town into half by the two churches mentioned. The first notation of this division was made in a meeting of First Church on September 5, 1904:

Resolved...That First M. E. Church of Decatur will retire from the field North of the railroad in Decatur in favor of Grace M. E. Church as soon as Grace M. E. Church shall build a good church North of the railroad.....This retirement to mean that thereafter the First M. E. Church to maintain ⁸¹ place of worship North of the Wabash Railroad.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ The Official Board Minutes, 1877-1896, June 17, 1895, p. 196.

⁸¹ First M. E. Church, Decatur, Illinois, November 7, 1896 to November 19, 1908 (in the hands of the historical committee of said church), p. 103. This action followed on the heels of an unsuccessful attempt to merge

Grace and First churches in 1899.

This action met with the acceptance of Grace Church on June 1, 1905 and was made official by the First Church on May 30, 1905. Thus the Wesley Chapel became the property and the charge of Grace Church. In 1927, Wesley Church of Decatur appeared in the Conference records under the care of Fannie B. Sinkhorn. After this it was an individual charge under the care of pastors appointed by the Illinois Conference, and it is still a church today.

St. Paul's Methodist Church

This church unlike the other missions was started by a minister as an individual mission church under the direction of the District Superintendent rather than under a congregation. In 1914 Rev. J. C. Brown started ^{To work a wonder} in the east side of Decatur ringing door bells. In 1915 he had established the church with 202 members, and an initial baptism of 63 adults.

The evangelistic efforts in this period were to be seen in both the mission and the First Church. Unaided by any large revivals such as the Sunday revival of almost a decade before, the mission under the direction of Rev. Brown had 139 adult baptisms and 329 members in his church, while the First Church with 1916 members had 124 adult baptisms for the same year. The efforts of Brown and his fellow preachers bore fruit again in the next year with 21 adult baptisms in the mission, 97 in First Church, and 23 in Grace Church.

Under the efforts of C. R. Booth between 1918 to 1922 the membership of St. Paul's Church had grown to 818. In 1921 the congregation of 755 made plans for a building and laid the cornerstone the same year.

Conclusion

Thus the church had found a new and effective method of reaching into the unchurched population of the city without the badgering of what had become an emotional spectator play in the revival. The church had regained its intimate contact and set out on a new era in a pluralistic urban community. Upon the foundation of the pioneer community and church the contemporary urban parishes were erected by the generations that sprang up in the fertile soil tilled by their forefathers.

A P P E N D I X

Prominent Men and Their Origins

(From N. M. Baker's "History of Macon County")

Jasper J. Peddecord.....Maryland
(first bank)
Lawber Burrows.....New England
(Peddecord's assistant)
Jerome R. Gorin.....Kentucky
(Peddecord's partner)
Richard Oglesby.....Kentucky
(Senator)

GENERALS OF THE CIVIL WAR FROM DECATUR

Richard Oglesby.....Kentucky
Isaac Pugh.....Kentucky
G. A. Smith.....Pennsylvania
Herman Lieb.....Switzerland
Jesse H. Moore.....Illinois
Spangler.....Pennsylvania
(mill in 1840)
Maffit.....Unknown
(miss)
John Bell.....Tennessee
(first threshing machine)
Malom.....Kentucky
(second thresher)

Jesse Hines Moore

Born St. Clair Co. Ill., April 22, 1817. Joined M. E. Church early boyhood.
1837 Attend Mc. Kendree College, graduated in 1842 with honor in classical department. Taught at Nashville Illinois. 1844 Principal of Georgetown Male and Female Seminary. Entered the Illinois Conference of the Methodist Church on trial 1846, appointed to Shelbyville 1848. 1848 became principal of Seminary at Paris Ill., dropped from the conference next year. 1854. President of Quincy Circuit English and German College. 1856 returned to the Illinois Conference.....served Decatur in 1861, enlisted in army 1862. Brigadier General 1865. 1865 returned to the Methodist Church as a President Elder in the Decatur District. 1868 superannuated from the church to go to Congress. 1877 returned to Conference after serving 1873-1877 as U. S. Pension agent at Springfield. 1877 preached at Mechanicsbury. Superannuated in 1878. 1881 appointed U. S. Consul at Calloo, Peru. Died July 11, 1883 of yellow fever. 1885 returned to Greenwood Cemetary, Decatur, Illinois.

The Saga of the Second Building
of the
First Methodist Church

(Notes from the records of the Trustees--January 5, 1852-January 29, 1861)

January 5, 1852

Committee of Bros. Candler and Elson--authorized to purchase the "Old Jail Lot," as soon as title ascertained--not to exceed \$150.

March 2

Plan of E. O. Smith adopted

March 8, 1852

Bids let for the building of the church

March 22, 1852

Moved by Bro. Elson that we accept the proposals of G. C. Nichols and J. A. Patterson to build and furnish a church in Decatur according Draft and specifications...carried.

Specification a--\$1920 build and enclose

b--\$ 560 balance of church

March 29, 1852

Bid changed to

Cash bid.....\$2480 (as before)

Expense of

anties.....\$ 54

Deduct on

subscription\$ 250

Total.....\$2784

In view of Nichols and Patterson changing their proposal so much since their former proposal was accepted: Resolved therefore that the motion to accept be rescinded and that the last proposal be rejected. More that the building committee inform them of the resolution. Resolved that the trustees proceed without delay to building said church under their direction.

August 24, E. O. Smith employed at \$1.75 per day to superintend the building of the church.

Total cost of the completed building under the direction of the trustees of the church....

.....\$10,000

SPECIFICATIONS OF THE TRIAL AGAINST LEVI C. PITNER 1867

CHARGES

IMMORAL CONDUCT

Specification 1st.

In this, that the said Rev. L. C. Pitner did call to see Mrs. Sophia Antrim, while she was alone in her own house, and after passing the compliments of the day, did say to her, I am your friend, are you not my friend, why can't we be friends, real friends. But we must be careful what we say or a word might set the world on fire, or words to this amount. This in Decatur, Illinois on the 25th day of October, 1867.

Specification 2nd.

In this, that the said Rev. L. C. Pitner, on the same day, and date, at the same place and the same occasion, as set forth in the 1st specification did take up Mrs. Sophia Antrim's Photograph Album /sic./, and asked her to be seated by his side and introduce to him, the persons whose likenesses were contained therein, and while thus seated he did, twice, move his seat nearer the said Mrs. Sophia Antrim, and did lay his hand on her hand, and after she had withdrawn her hand, did soon after lay his hand upon her arm; and furthermore, while engaged looking at the Album, he the Rev. L. E. Pitner did say to the said Mrs. Sophia Antrim, that he could read faces, that he could read her face, that he could read all about her, except one thing, or words to this amount.

Specification 3rd.

In this, that he the Rev. L. C. Pitner, after having been shown through the house on his own request, arose as if to leave, shook hands with Mrs. Antrim, and afterwards stepped to her bedroom door, opened it and remarked what a nice bed-room; how handy to have a bed-room off of the sitting room, this on the same day and date and on the same occasion as above stated.

Specification 4th.

In this, the said L. C. Pitner did again shake hands with Mrs. Sophia Antrim, stepped outside the door put his hand to his lips, kissed it, threw it at her, and remarked, "Shall we seal it when we meet again." This at the same place and on the same day and date as above stated.

Specification 5th.

In this, that on the 30th day of October 1867, he the Rev. L. C. Pitner did again call on Mrs. Sophia Antrim, at her own house to apologize and said he had felt worried ever since his previous visit, on the 25th. day of October, and feared she had not comprehended his meaning and might be offended at his manner during

his previous visit, upon Mrs. Antrim stating that she was displeased, and that he had taken her to be the wrong person, he said, "No, I always took you to be a good woman." Her husband just then coming to the door, he the Rev. L. C. Pitner, said to Mrs. Sophia Antrim, "Have you told your husband anything, the husband coming in before the question was answered by Mrs. Antrim, Rev. L. C. Pitner immediately rose up and greeted him, and said to him that he had called to look at his house, that he was studying, house building, that he thought some of retiring from the Ministry and did not know but that he should soon want to build a house, and therefore desired to look through his, (Mr. Antrim's) house and observe the plan of it.

(signed)

E. W. Moore

B. A. Allison

LIST OF PASTORS OF THE METHODIST CHURCHES OF DECATUR

(Some not available)

W. L. Deneen.....1829
 Asabel E. Phelps.....1830
 Wilson Pitner.....1831
 Levi Springer.....1832
 James H. Dickens.....1833
 Emanuel Metcalf.....1833
 Moses Clampit.....1834
 S. P. Burr.....1835
 Richard Bird.....1836
 Moses Wood.....1836
 Levi Springer.....1837
 David Coulson.....1838
 Elijah Knox.....1839
 Arthur Bradshaw.....1840
 Norman Allen.....1841
 W. S. Crissey.....1842
 John Mathers.....1843
 Michael Shunk.....1844
 Richard Bird.....1845-46
 Calvin Lewis.....1847-48
 Joel Goodrich.....1849
 Thomas A. Eaton.....1850
 James C. Rucker.....1851-52
 S. T. Sterritt.....1853
 D. Bardick.....1853
 Reuben Andrus.....1854
 J. Montgomery.....1855-56
 R. E. Guthrie.....1857
 Jonathan Stamper.....1858

Reuben W. Travis.....1859-60
 Jesse H. Moore.....1861
 Robert Hiner.....1862-63
 Hiram Buck.....1864-65
 Levi C. Pitner.....1866-67
 James I. Davidson.....1868
 James H. Noble.....1869-71
 N. P. Heath.....1872
 W. N. McElroy.....1873
 Horace Reed.....1874-75
 James Leaton.....1876-77
 W. R. Goodwin.....1878-80
 James P. Dimmitt.....1881-83
 T. I. Coultas.....1884-86
 James Miller.....1887-91
 T. A. Parker.....1892
 David F. Howe.....1893-96
 Frost Craft.....1897-1900
 H. C. Gibbs.....1901
 W. J. Davidson.....1902-07
 John C. Willitts.....1908-12
 Eugene M. Antrim.....1913-15
 F. A. Havighurst.....1916-19
 Chesteen Smith.....1920-24
 F. W. Ingvaldstad.....1925-28
 A. Ray Grummon.....1929-35
 Thomas B. Lugg.....1936-43
 Laren Spear.....1944-

Stapp's Chapel---became Grace Church in 1887

1867-1869.....L. B. Carpenter	1894-1895.....R. G. Hobbs
1870-1871.....H. O. Hoffman	1896-1897.....W. F. Gilmore
1872-1874.....W. Stevenson	1899-1900.....J. F. Wohlfarth
1875-1876.....W. D. Best	1901-1902.....Wm. Brandon
1877-1878.....S. McBurney	1903-1907.....J. W. VanCleve
1879.....G. W. Miller	1908-1913.....T. N. Ewing
1880-1882.....W. H. Musgrove	1914-1915.....R. F. McDaniel
1883.....W. H. Webster	1916-1918.....N. M. Rigg
1884-1886.....G. Stevens	1919-1922.....A. M. Wells
1887-1890.....G. E. Scriinger	1923.....Wilbert Dowson
1891-1893.....H. H. O'Neal	

Sargent's Chapel---became Cleveland Avenue Church in 1925

1915-1917.....A. J. Jockish	1926-1927.....W. H. Johnson
1917-1919.....J. L. McGiffin	1927-1928.....H. Campbell
1919-1920.....T. Lee Knotts	1928-1929.....Henry Nylin
1920-1922.....F. Bucholz	1930-1931.....John Neal
1922-1923.....G. Baldrige	1931-1935.....Donal Gibbs
1923-1924.....M. Falk	1935-1937.....Thomas Parkinson
1924-1926.....J. Stretton	1937-1940.....Lewis Ellison

Wesley Church

1927.....Fannie B. Sinkhorn
1928.....Leon W. Kern
1929.....C. C. Yeck
1930.....R. A. Hartrick

St. Paul's Church

1915-1916.....J. C. Brown
1917-1925.....C. R. Booth
1926.....H. F. Powell
1927-1929.....C. S. Boyd
1930.....V. Thompson

Asbury Chapel---became North Main Street Methodist Church in 1903

1897.....Decatur Mission.....A. M. Wells
 1898.....Asbury Chapel....W. A. Reynolds
 1899.....S. C. Pierce
 1900 Supply
 1901.....W. D. Weems
 1902.....F. N. Sandifer
 1903-1905.....G. V. Metzel

The German Methodist Church

Trinity Gemeinde des Deutsche Methodist Episcopal Kirche

1855.....Randolph Schobe
 1856-1857.....F. W. Niedermeyer
 1858-1859.....Karl Holtkamp
 1860-1861.....Henry Nauman
 1862-1863.....Phillip Naumann
 1864.....Georg Buehner
 1865-1866.....John Ritter
 1867-1869.....L. Harmel
 1870.....Jakob Tanner
 1871.....J. H. Hilmers
 1872-1873.....John Baumgarten

 1877-1879.....Wm. Schuss
 1880.....Phillip Naumann
 1881.....Phillip Kuhl
 1882-1884.....Wm. Schonig
 1885.....Michael Roeder
 1886-1890.....G. Edward Heidel
 1891-1892.....Chas. Thalenhorst
 1893-1896.....J. C. Rapp
 1897-1901.....Chas. Rodenberg
 1902.....Heinrich Ross

.....1920--Church Closed

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Published materials

Baker, Rev. N. M., "History of Macon County," (the Decatur Herald & Review, May 15-June 5, 1921)

Brockway, Edith, The Anti Bellum Days of Decatur Illinois 1822-1855 (Published by the Girl Scouts in honor of their 50th. anniversary, 1912-1962, Arthur Graphic-Clarion, Arthur, Illinois, 1962)

Clarke, S. J. Past and Present of the City of Decatur and Macon County (C. S. J. Publishers, Chicago, 1903)

Erva J. Kirkwood, series of articles of the history of Methodism in the Decatur Area (The Decatur Review January 27- February 22, 1929)

The Decatur Republican (Decatur Illinois 1867, passum)

Gaustad, Edwin Scott Historical Atlas of Religion in America (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York and Evanston, 1962)

Hostess Reference Book (Women's Home Missionary Society, Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, Decatur, Illinois, circa 1920) contains a section on history of the church.

The Illinois Conference Minutes, 1829-1930

Johnson, Charles Beneuly Illinois in the Fifties (Flaigan-Pearson Co., Publishers, Champaign, Ill., 1918)

Jubiläumsbuch der St. Louis Deutschen Konferenz, E. C. Magaret, Friedrich Munz & George Addicks (Jennings und Graham, Cincinnati, 1901)

Leaton, Rev. James History of Methodism in Illinois, 1793-1832 (Walden and Stowe, Cincinnati, 1883)

Lindsey, Mrs. L. N., "The Illinois Prairies and Macon County 100 years ago," (written for the D. A. R. centennial, The Decatur Herald, March 3-February 24, 1929)

Masters, Edgar Lee The Sangamon (Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1942)

Nelson, William Edward City of Decatur & Macon County (Pioneer Publishing Co., Chicago, 1910)

Official Record, St. Louis German Conference, 1879-1925 (published in 1925)

Richmond, Mabel E., et. al., Centennial History of Decatur and Macon County (Decatur Review, in co-operation with the Decatur and Macon County Centennial Association, Decatur, Illinois, 1930)

Smith, John W. History of Macon County Illinois From its Organization to 1876 (Barker's Printing House, Springfield, Ill., 1876)

Sweet, William Warren Methodism in American History (Abingdon, New York & Nashville, 1953 revision)

Sweet, William Warren Religion in Colonial America (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1953)

Sweet, William Warren The Story of Religion in America (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1930&1950)

Weiseberger, Bernard A. They Gathered At the River (Little, Brown & Co., Boston & Toronto, 1958)

Unpublished Documents and Records

Abstract No. 173981, showing title to East 45 feet of lot 13 in Allen McReynolds & Co. Addition (Made for the trustees of the Trinity/Colored/Christian Methodist Episcopal Church--prepared by J. R. Larson, Official Abstractor of Macon County, Illinois--County Building, Decatur, Illinois)

"A History of Decatur's First Methodist Church," (in the files of the First Methodist Church of Decatur and the Illinois Conference Historical Society)

Asbury Chapel Records, October 1, 1898-1904, North Main Street Church 1904... (in the safe of the Grace Methodist Church, Decatur, Illinois)

Board of Trustees Records for Decatur First Methodist Church January 5, 1852- January 29, 1861 (property of the Historical Committee of the First Methodist Church, Decatur, Illinois)

Dunham, Henry D. Statement of Recollections of First Church Decatur (Historical Committee, First Church, Decatur)

Facts About Decatur Illinois (The Association of Commerce Decatur, Illinois, 1940)

Gilmore, W. F. Record of Stapp's Chapel (Grace Church Safe, written 1897)

Grace Methodist Church Official Board Records, October 9, 1905-March 4, 1907 (Grace Church safe)

Leaton, Rev. James Methodism In Illinois, 1832-1840
(the Library of the Central Illinois Conference Historical Society, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington, Ill.)

Leaton, Rev. James Minutes, Illinois Conference, 1840-1851
compiled by Leaton (C. Ill. Conf. Historical Society Library)

Official Board Minutes, First Methodist Church of Decatur, Ill.
March 9, 1863-January 1, 1877 (Historical Committee, First Church, Decatur)

Official Board Minutes, First Methodist Church of Decatur, Ill.
January 15, 1877-December 7, 1896 (Historical Committee, First Church, Decatur)

Official Board Minutes, First Methodist Episcopal Church, Decatur, Ill., November 7, 1898-November 19, 1908
(Historical Committee, First Church, Decatur)

Transcript of the Trial of Levi C. Pitner, December 10, 1867 to December 14, 1867 (C. Ill. Conf. Historical Society Library)

Quarterly Conference Records, Stapp's Chapel & Grace Church, 1867-1892 (Grace Church safe)

Imboden, J. S. Diary (December 25, 1893-1895, property of Edward Imboden, Decatur, Ill.)

Interviews
by the author

Mrs. Earl (Florence) White, January 25, A. M. , 1963

Mrs. Effie Barnhart, January 25, P. M., 1963

Mr. Edward Imboden, January 27, P. M., 1963

Mr. Elwell Crissey, February 23, P. M., 1963

I N D E X

African Methodist Episcopal
 Church.....49
 Allan, Norman.....20
 Allen, Captain.....50
 Ambrox, Rev.....30
 Andrus, Reuben.....30
 Antioch Baptist Church...30
 Antrim, Mrs. Sophia
38, 40, 42
 "Are there any who walk
 Disorderly".....56
 Asbury, Bishop Francis...52
 Asbury Chapel.....72
 Austin Family.....6

 Bailey, "Brother".....60
 Baker, "53
 Barber, "69
 Bayne, "58
 Berry, Rev. John.....7
 Bethel Society.....49
 Boody German Church.....47
 Booth, C. R.75
 Bowers, William.....45
 Boyd, R.....45
 Bradshaw, Rev. A.44
 Bright, George W.40
 Brown, Rev. J. C.75
 Buff, Spenser E.74
 Buck, Hiram.....31
 Burroughs, C. C.
39, 69
 Burrows, L. L.28

 Campmeeting.....26, 60
 Cane Ridge Revival.....4
 Carpenter, L. B.44
 Carter, James11
 Cartwright, Peter, 6,15,17
20
 Christian Church.....9
 Christian Methodist
 Episcopal Church....50
 Circuits on which Decatur
 was a point.....8
 Citizens Street Railway
 Company.....48
 Clampit, Moses.....9,20
 Classes.....53
 Cleveland Avenue Church..72
 (see Sargent's Chapel)
 Crissey, Margaret.....63
 Crissey, Rev. William
 Stoddard...8, 13, 14, 15,
 21, 33, 63
 Crissey, William T. ..8, 11,
 12, 15

Cochran, A. B.40
 Coleman, J. W.39
 Colored Methodist Episcopal
 Church.....49
 Condell, Brother.....53, 59
 Cossack, Father.....30
 Coultus, Dr. T. I.71
 Court House.....8, 9
 Cown, Thomas.....11
 Cumberland Presbyterian
 Church.....4

Decatur

A Town, 1836.....11
 A City, 1855.....29
 Decatur Republican.....
40, 44
 Dickens, Rev.20
 Dilman, John.....59
 Dimmitt, James P. ..60, 62
 Dimmitt-Harrison Revival..
60, 63
 Douglas, Stephen A.27
 Dunham, Henry D.15
 Dwight, Timothy.....3

Election of Board of Trust- tees (1939).....11-13

First M. E. Church..45, 46
52
 Fordice, J. M.11
 Foster, Rev. David L. ..7
 Fowler, James.....59
 Franklin Ave. M. E. Church
 (See Grace M. E. Church)
 Frazee, John.....7

Gebhart, H. S.74
 Germans.....30,46
 Gorin, R. M.11,12
 Gorin, J. R.10, 16
36, 39, 53
 Grace Methodist Church
 Franklin Ave. M. E.
35
 & First Church.....41
 Founding.....44
 Stapp's Chapel.....45
 Great Western R. R.
 (See Wabash R. R.)
 Greenfield, W.11
 Greer, Mr. & Mrs.59

Hampden-Sidney College...3
 Harrell, Landy.....11
 Haskel, Mr.45
 Henry, W. J.40
 Hiner, Robert.....34,53
 Hollenback, Mr.7
 Holt, Charles.....57
 Hospital Aid Society....33
 Hostetler, Rev. Joseph...9
 Hubbard, W. E.43
 Huckley, Rev. R. H.50
 Hughes, David L.48

Illinois Central R. R. 27,30
 Imboden, John A.74

Jarratt, Devereur.....2
 Jockish, A. J.72
 Johnson, Philena A.17
 Johnson, Milton.....74
 Janes Chapel.....68

Kuhl, Phillip.....48

Ladies Aid Society.....
 (Beginning).....14
 Lander, Rev. S. S.51
 Lapham, A.11
 Laws of Morality.....56,57
 Leaton, James.....20,54
 Liberty Hall Academy....3
 Lincoln, Abraham, 22, 25
 ...32, 33
 Locke, J. R.69
 Locum, Mr.54
 Logan Co. Revival.....3
 Love, Andrew.....11
 Lunn, Henry.....17
 Luttrell, Edward.....69

Manier, P. N.40
 Martin, John.....1,2
 Martin, Josiah.....5
 Martin, William.....28
 McCarty, Mr. & Mrs. E..
 S.....71
 McComas,"Brother".....59
 McGee, John.....4
 McGiffin, Rev. J. L. ...72
 McGready, James.....3

Miller, Isaac.....8
 Miller,"Sister".....54
 Mission.....66,68
 Mitchell, "Brother"..59
 Montgomery, F.11
 Moore, Rev. Jesse
 Hines32,34,40
42,44
 Moreland, "Brother"..54
 Motion Pictures.....66
 Mt. Zion Cumberland
 Presbyterian Church..7
 Myers, Mr.45

Nast, William.....46
 Negroes (enter).....31
 Niedermeyer, Wm. F.47 & 48
 Nientker, Friedrich.....30
 Noble, James H.56
 North Main St. M. E. Church..73

Oakland Park.....61
 Oglesby, Richard..9,11,27
 Oglesby, Richard J...9,32
 Opera House.....60
 Owen, David.....7

Peddecord, J. J. ..28,36,44
 Pendergast, Father.....30
 Phelps, Asabel E.7,21
 Pitner, Levi C. ...5,35,38,
43
 Pitner, Revival.....38,45
 Pitner, Wilson..5,18,19,21
 Pierce, S. C.73
 Powers, Samuel.....30
 Presbyterian Church.....30
 Prescott, C. B.59
 Priest, George.....45
 Pugh, Isaac...15,16,33,36

Rankin, Thomas.....2
 Ranshaw, James.....9
 Republican Methodist....3
 Reynolds, W. A.73
 Roman Catholics.....30

Sangamon River.....25
 Sargent's Chapel.....70
 Sargent, Miss W. Miranda
71
 Schobe, Rev. Robert.....30
 Schultz, G. J.49

