The GARDEN of METHODISM

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There were no less than thirty new appointments opened up in Delaware during the year 1779. The majority of these were in Kent County. Asbury was in hiding, yet directing the movement of his able lieutenants. As soon as it was safe he began to organize a circuit, and traveled it for nearly two years.

This part of Methodism was watered by the tears of the pioneers and diligently worked by their sacrificial services. It has been hallowed by the feet of the early men who made Methodism and has been consecrated by the remains of many of God's saints, among whom is that of Bishop Whatcoat, who died in Dover and was buried under the pulpit of old Wesley.

Kent County, Delaware, Methodist Churches

Armory Methodist Episcopal Church in Dover was the direct result of a great revival in the State Armory. A few members of Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church, not quite at home in that organization, decided to undertake the raising up of a new society in Dover. Accordingly they employed a minister to hold a revival and secured the Armory as the place to hold it. It was an outstanding religious stir and as a result they organized the new society on May 14, 1891. The Wesley congregation having sensed the need of just such a move had erected a chapel in the north western section of the Town in the year 1887. When the new Society was organized, having taken the name of Armory, the Wesley trustees sold them the chapel for a very nominal sum. This society continued to be called Armory until they were incorporated in 1922. At that time they changed the name to St. Paul's.

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church in West Dover Hundred, formerly was known as McElwees and also Rash's Chapel, was built prior to 1829. On October 10, 1829, Joseph Rash sold a lot to Myers Carson, Joseph Clark, John Jones, John Townsend, and Robert Hargadine, trustees of McElwees. It did well for a season, but eventually ceased to function, just when we do not know. However it was revived in 1939 and was considered a mission. The name was derived from the minister that served them when the church was built.

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church located on the old road leading from Harrington to Felton was started in 1814, for on April 14, 1814, "William Masten conveyed to Elisha Hitchens, Richard Harris, William Masten, Sr., Peter Hitchens and John Harris, trustees, seven hundred square feet of land, whereon a school-house and Methodist meeting-house is now begun, for worship and Sabbath and week-day schools". This was the beginning of the Asbury Meeting-house which was rebuilt at least once since then, namely in 1888. It is located one and one half miles from Masten's Corners.

Asbury—Harrington and Smyrna has the local name of Asbury for their organization. For additional facts see Harrington and Smyrna.

Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church is the local name for the Milford society. See Milford.

Banning's Meeting-house, Methodist Episcopal Church, was located on the cement road that leads from Magnolia to Dover. There is nothing left to indicate there ever was a church there except the cemetery. The graves have been neglected and it is now a wilderness of bushes. The State Highway people have erected a set of cement steps. The society was organized in the home of Caleb Boyer's father by Freeborn Garrettson in 1778. The chapel was erected shortly afterwards, at least by 1781. In 1855, they sold the old building to a Mr. Draper, and he used it for a barn. The remnant of the congregation moved their membership to Magnolia.

Barratt's Chapel, Methodist Episcopal Church, is nationally known as a historic shrine. It is located on the road from Frederica to Magnolia. Its origin goes back to the sermons of Freeborn Garrettson in 1778. He preach-

ed in the homes of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Sipple. Their first church was made of logs and stood near the old drawbridge over the St. Jones River. In 1780, Bishop Asbury encouraged them to build a better building. In that year Philip Barratt deeded to Reynear Williams, David Lewis, Waitman Sipple, Samuel Smith, Caleb Furbee, Jonathan Furbee, Andrew Purdin, William Virden, and Daniel James the land upon which the present building stands. The Chapel was at that time the cathedral of Methodism. It was dedicated August 17, 1780, taking its name from the Barratt's, who were so prominent in its building. It occupies a unique place in history due to two great events, first because it was here that Bishop Coke and Bishop Francis Asbury met; second because it was here, for the first time on American soil, the ordinances were first administered legally by an ordained Methodist minister.

Bethbier Methodist Episcopal Church was on with the Camden Circuit in 1857. Other than that we know nothing.

Bethel Meeting-house, Methodist Episcopal Church, Little Creek Hundred is still standing. It is the brick church to the west of the main highway just north of Cheswold. It was originally called Farrows Meeting-house. The name was taken from one of the prominent families that worshipped there. Other outstanding families that were a part of the organization were the Boggs', Smiths', Jeffersons', and Garrisons'. The church was erected in 1780 and rebuilt in 1853. Bishop Waugh dedicating it on August 6, 1854. It was at this time it changed its name to Bethel. When Cheswold church was built, the organization went to that church. The only services held in old Bethel are the anniversaries.

Bethel Methodist Protestant Church in Mispillion Hundred was one of the very earliest Methodist Protestant Churches in America, having been organized prior to 1830. At that time they had a church erected and were worshipping in it. In 1871 they rebuilt the church and are still using it.

Bethesda Methodist Episcopal Church, West Dover Hundred, was located a little north of the village of Canterbury. It was the former name of the Canterbury Methodist Episcopal Church. For fuller details see Canterbury.

Bethesda Methodist Protestant Church, West Dover Hundred, was built in 1864. The deed for the land was recorded on July 11, 1864. The church was rebuilt in 1883. Before they built the church, they used the Tappahanna Marsh School-house as their home. The ground was given to the church by Mrs. Anna J. Cox, and the first board of trustees consisted of William Virden, J. D. Voshell, P. D. Marvil, and William Slaughter.

Blackiston Chapel, Methodist Episcopal Church, Kenton Hundred, was the mother church of all that section. Methodist itinerants had been preaching there since 1774. The homes of Benjamin Hazel and Benjamin Blackiston were the preaching places. Robert Turner and Lewis Alfree organized the society in the home of Mr. Blackiston in 1778. The Chapel had been planned by Bishop Asbury and it was forty by sixty feet. It was the largest Methodist Church on the Peninsula for many years, exceeding that of Barratt's. Some large and powerful meetings were held in it, it being one of the popular places owned by the Methodists. After the other societies had been built, the trustees consisting of Benjamin Blackiston, Abraham Parsons, Luke Howard, Richard Lockwood, William Kirkley, James Hall, Thomas Wildes, James Stevenson, and Richard Shaw, had the grace to face the fact the church was too large, they rebuilt it in 1787, reducing its size. The congregation built another church in 1847. There are no services in the church now except such anniversaries as are held.

Black Swamp Methodist Episcopal Church was located on the road leading from Harlonville to Felton, and was built prior to eighteen hundred, the exact date being unknown. The Congregation, discovering they had been