



HOBART UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - HOBART, N.Y. 1976

**WE  
HAVE  
THIS  
HERITAGE**

Barbara  
June 1976  
Gardley PA

**WE  
HAVE  
THIS  
HERITAGE**

The Administrative Board  
Hobart United Methodist Church  
Hobart, N.Y., 1976

## DEDICATION

It has been said that the proper study of mankind is man, and in order to really study man we must appreciate history. An understanding of who we are, how we became who we are, and what this understanding reveals about ourselves is vital. As a church we must examine our own history to appreciate our present and to plan for our future.

The efforts of the Reverend William Phinney have made this examination possible. Bill's keen interest in local church history, and his ability to write about it, have been invaluable tools for many area institutions as well as the District Historical Committee. We are richly blessed by Bill's insights and his dedication to the cause of compiling the history of this area.

The service of a lifetime in God's name is ample reason for us to dedicate this work to William Phinney. His gracious efforts on our behalf offer us an added reason for doing so.

So, because your interest and efforts have made this possible; and because your wise and patient leadership has enriched the cause of Methodism, and still does; and because God has blessed many people through you Bill Phinney, we dedicate this volume to God, and to you.

Praise be to God, and for the Reverend William Phinney.

## PREFACE

It has been a distinct privilege to be asked to put together the materials contained herein. The churches concerned, in Stamford Township and in Hobart, have been and still are significant in the New York Conference. Township, as the settlement is popularly known, has the added significance of having been the place of residence of the Bangs family, of whom something has been said in the following pages.

The name Stamford has been retained in the Bangs portion of this writing because the area now referred to as Township was in earlier days known as Stamford; it was there that it was expected the new community would be established. Stamford village did not yet exist: that locality was referred to simply as the Head of the Delaware. Hobart was then Waterville.

The essay dealing with the Rev. John Bangs was originally submitted, in a somewhat expanded form, in a contest conducted on the occasion of the bicentennial of The Methodist Church, in 1966, and is reproduced here with the permission of the Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church.

January, 1976.

William R. Phinney

THE CHURCH IN TOWNSHIP

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## THE CHURCH IN TOWNSHIP

Stamford Township was a planned town, from its beginning in 1787 when on the 21st of April an act of the state legislature made official the boundaries, the lots, streets, and parade lot of the settlement. It did not take its shape from force of circumstance but by design. Perhaps this is the principal reason why it did not develop as its planners hoped and dreamed it would; its location among the mountains precluded this. The settlers were a people who came from Stamford, Connecticut, and its environs. They did not, however, as did many Congregationalists from that state, bring their church with them. There was a sufficiently strong Episcopalian influence among them that a church of this denomination was constructed in Hobart, another settlement in the town of Stamford.

The date of the coming of the Methodist itinerants, and who they were, are not known. About all we find extant at the present time is a detailed account left us by the Rev. Edward White who, while he was pastor in Jefferson in 1884 and 1885, acquainted himself with the history of the numerous churches in the Prattsville District. We cannot do better at this late day than to quote extensively from White's account of the Stamford Township church.

From 1794 to 1810 the Township society was larger than any other in the (Delaware) circuit. A class paper for 1807 is still in existence, and contains the following names: William Stewart, Penuel Stewart, Margaret Stewart, Rachel Stewart, John Olmsted, Abigail Olmsted, Huldah Bangs, Ellen Bangs, Rhoda Duncombe, Charles Duncombe, Mary Duncombe, David Duncombe, Phoebe Duncombe, John Duncombe, Sarah Duncombe, Charles Duncombe, 2d, Mary Moshur, Eunice Moshur, Mary Taylor, Sally Silliman, Amos Norton, Polly Norton, Nicholas Norton, Nathan Norton, Leona Norton, Polly Norton, 2d, Platt Whitlock, and Rebecca Whitlock. This class paper has been preserved for nearly eighty years in the family of Isaac Silliman. . . . It contains the names of the members, their relation to the church, their quarterly contributions, their attendance at class, etc. On the back it has the following endorsement: "Class Paper for the Township Society. David Duncombe, leader; William Stewart, class steward; Alexander Morten, Joseph Willis, preachers." The attendance at class was remark-

ably good, many of the members being marked present every time. The class met on the first Sabbath and the third Tuesday in each month. These were their "meeting days," and the class meeting usually preceded or followed the preaching service. It is said of Rev. Anthony Turk, a Dutchman, who preached here in 1797, that he was a strict disciplinarian, and the first time he met the class he proposed the following questions and insisted on definite answers: "Are you all at peace with each other?" "Have you entire confidence in each other?" The answers being satisfactory, he wrote on the class paper: "Examined this class today; found all in peace and harmony; told them to be watchful and faithful for the time to come, and not bring complaints against each other concerning any matters that occurred previously." He thus kept his books posted every time he went round the circuit. Thomas Duncombe's log cabin was one of the first preaching places in the Township, and subsequently the itinerants preached in the dwellings of David Duncombe, William Stewart and John Olmsted. These places of worship were all small log cabins, but as the settlers were few, they were usually large enough to accommodate the congregations at the regular service. . . . Anthony Turk and William Vredenburg, the Dutch Boanerges; Benjamin Bidlack and Andrew McKean, both eloquent in speech; Stephen Jacob and Arnold Scho(le)field, the great revivalists; Nathan Bangs, the studious, and Joseph Willis, the profound reasoner--these all impressed the people with their spirit and power. John Finnegan is remem-



bered as the shrewd Irish preacher, who had one compartment in his saddle bags for books and another for pills, plasters and ointment, and who, like Luke of old, was both an apostle and a physician. John Blades, the Catskill Mountain local preacher, a most useful man in his day, is remembered as the eccentric bachelor who had such a dislike to children, and who had one boy (Elijah Duncombe) put out of meeting because he twirled his thumbs; and John Kline is spoken of as "the poor preacher." It is said that one night he preached a very weak sermon in Widow Silliman's house, where he lived, and at the close of his discourse, his wife arose in the congregation and said: "Why, John, what ails you? I never heard such preaching. I could preach better than that myself."

A quarterly conference was held by Rev. Freeborn Garrettson in Charles Duncombe's barn, in 1791, and another was held in the same neighborhood by Rev. Elijah Woolsey, in the fall of 1803, and others at later dates by Revs. Henry Stead, Peter(P.) San(d)ford, Daniel Ostrander, and Phineas Rice. . . . The members of the township class, both men and women, were noted for their attendance at quarterly meetings, not only in their own circuit, but in the Otsego, Albany and Herkimer circuits, and they frequently rode to Durham, to Berne and the Mohawk, to Otsego Lake and Schuyler Lake, and to the Butternuts, on these occasions.

Another preaching place, in those days, was Isaac Silliman's house, a small frame building which formerly stood on the south side of the Delaware, on the right of the road leading from Hobart to Stamford, and near where Richard Powell now lives. Here some of the preachers lived and enjoyed the kindly favor of a family famous for their hospitality. Isaac Silliman was never a member of the church, but his wife and children were for many years among the leading Methodists in the community, and their descendants are to-day doing valuable work for the church in the Hobart circuit. (1)

Undoubtedly this society in the beginning was closely linked with the ones in Bloomville and Methodist Hollow, for they were in adjacent settlements and were formed very early. This was the beginning of a period of rapid growth, however, and circuits experienced frequent changes. While Township began on the Delaware Circuit, it was later on included in the Jefferson Circuit. In 1835, it was on the Kortright Circuit which consisted of the following preaching places: Fletcher's Chapel, or Kortright; West Rose's Brook; East Rose's Brook; Bovina Hill; Bovina Center; Hobart; Township of Stamford; Isaac Silliman school house; Head of the Delaware, present day Stamford village; Howard school house; Stone school house. (2) But two of these preaching points were at the time in Methodist churches, Fletcher's Chapel and Township; the Head of

the Delaware society met in the Union Chapel; the remainder met in schools or private dwellings.

It was twenty-nine years after its founding that the Township society acquired its house of worship. The society was at this time on the Jefferson Circuit, which had been formed in 1821.

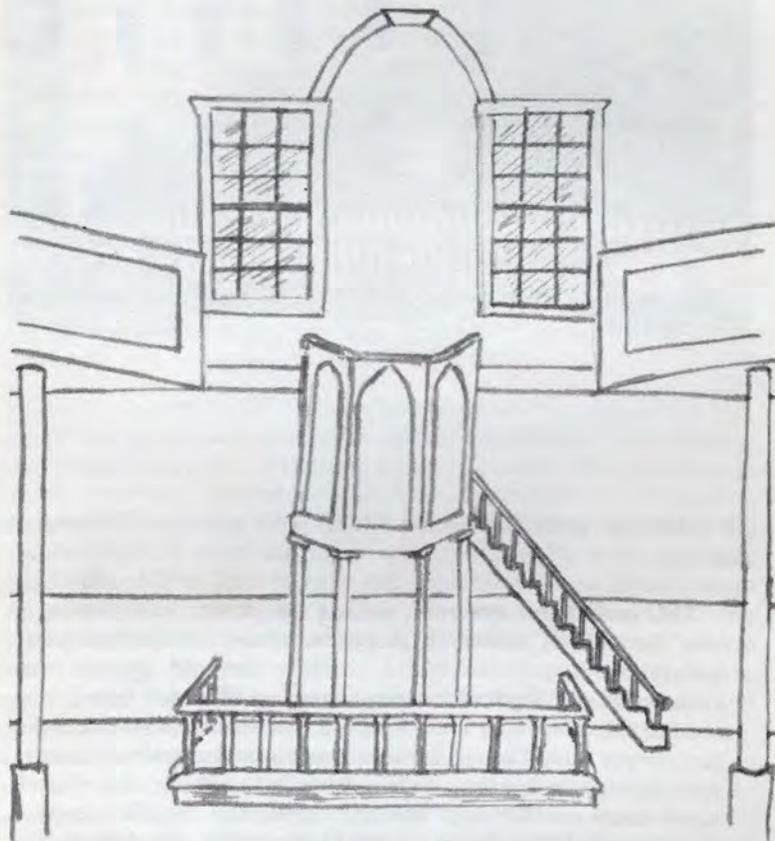
Notices were sent out and the people of the Township neighborhood met on January 13, 1823 at the home of John M. Olmstead and considered the advisability of building a church. It was unanimously voted to build the church, to be known as the Township Methodist Episcopal Church of Stamford. Three trustees were appointed; namely, John M. Olmstead, Joseph Bangs and David Duncomb to carry on the work. (3)

Later that same year the church was constructed on Lot no. 46. The frame was run up and the building enclosed. Rough benches provided the first seating used by the worshipers. The total cost of the structure was about \$500. (4) The framing and construction of the church were superintended by Peter Grant. (5) There were three preachers on the circuit that year, Jesse Pomeroy, Quartus Stewart, and C. Pomeroy, but there is no record of the part they may have had in the building, if any. (6)

Three years later, the church was brought to completion.



On February 6, 1826, the Society met at the home of Levi Olmstead and made plans for furnishing the church and two additional trustees were appointed to undertake this work. They were Burr Skinner and Benjamin Poffer. . . . The present pews are the same ones installed at that time with the only difference being, the cushions, and the partition in the center row of seats having been removed. When the pulpit was originally built, it was at a higher level than it is today. (7)

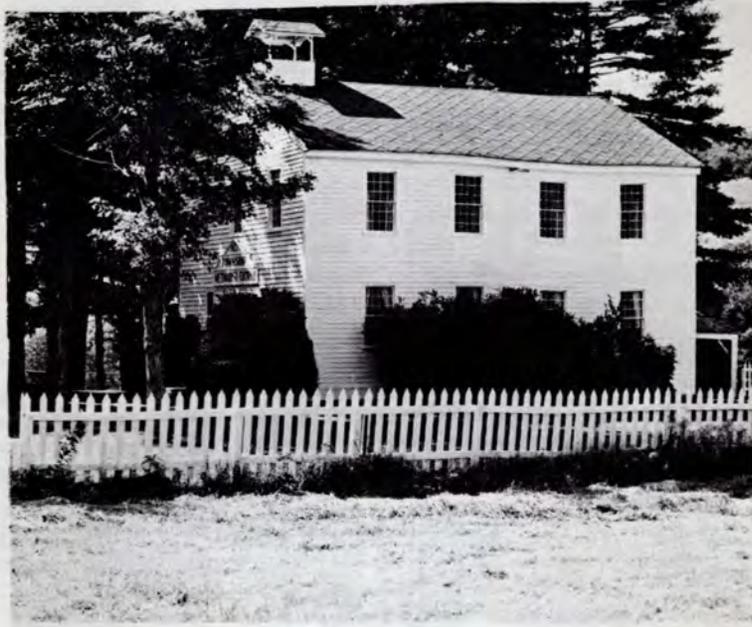


Horse sheds, however, for the accommodation of the worshipers coming from a distance, were not constructed until 1885. (8)

Relatively few changes have been made in the original structure, hence the present day church seems like an echo from the past. One significant addition to the church plant is thus described.

The grove below the church comprising 30 odd trees, of maple and evergreen was set out by John Sturgess and

originally belonged to Mr. and Mrs. C.J. Post. These trees and the ground were deeded to the church in the spring of 1946. (9)



At about the same time some \$3,000 were raised to improve the building.

This included a new roof, raising the church and putting a new foundation under it. A corner stone containing many interesting items was laid.... Then the old plaster was completely removed and a new covering of panel board was used as the new walls. The whole interior was redecorated and a new carpet laid. The old furnace was discarded and an entirely new automatic heating system installed making the church much more comfortable. Electric lights were installed earlier, the fixtures being bought with \$100, which was left to the church by Mrs. Charles Tompkins a few years ago.

The old horseblock which everyone wanted preserved was moved to the front door and became the top step to the entrance.

Another improvement ... was the installing of glass windows between the main room and the galleries. This made fine rooms for the Sunday School classes. Originally the galleries were fitted with seats which were elevated so as to be able to see the minister, but these were removed many years ago. In October of--(1948) ... a fine picket fence was erected around

#### the graded parking lot. (10)

Not until 144 years after the construction of the church did it acquire a bell. Given by Mrs. Maude Sturgess in memory of her husband, Frank Sturgess, it was in 1968 installed in a belfry constructed by the men of the church. (11)

Thus far we have been concerned principally with the establishment of Methodism in Township, with the acquisition of a house of worship, and with the gradual transformation of that house through the years to meet the needs and desires of succeeding generations. The story of the Township church would not be complete without some light being thrown on the activities of the congregation. The record is far from complete, but from the fragments available some idea can be gained of what occurred through the years.

Quarterly Meeting Conferences were high points on Methodist circuits in the early days in particular, and for many decades they were conducted with predictable regularity. These were occasions when the presiding elders made their official visits. Activities in the local societies would be dropped for these occasions and as many of the faithful as could attend would converge on the appointed meeting place for a season of preaching, the administration of the Lord's Supper, a love feast, and a business session.

The first quarterly meeting conference of which there is a record, held in Township, occurred on the 18th of September, 1824, with the Rev. Daniel Ostrander, Presiding Elder, in charge. Moses L. Pendel was the Secretary. Undoubtedly the new meeting house was taxed to capacity, galleries and all. Since it was still summer, probably the windows were all open and those who could not be accommodated inside were able at least to hear the preaching. Three formal questions were asked, and answered in the negative: "Are there any applications for recommendation to the District Conference"; "Are there any licenses to renew"; and "Are there any appeals." Question number one referred to the recruitment of preachers, local and itinerant. The second question alluded to local preachers and exhorters. The third question pertained to the attempt at democracy in the church. Discipline was strict; but if any one thought himself to be unjustly judged, he had an avenue of appeal. (12)

Township did not become as intimately involved as a church and as a community as did some other societies in the region in sponsoring camp meetings, perhaps largely because of its remoteness from the developing lines of travel. One of two Hudson River District camp meetings held in 1831 was, however, arranged in Township, on land owned by Burr Silliman. It was announced to open the 22nd of August. The Rev. Marvin Richardson was Presiding Elder in charge. (13) Since the Quarterly Meeting Conference was held on the 24th of August that year at Stamford Township, this event occurred during the course of the camp meeting. (14)

Fewer events of a secular or semi-sacred nature occurred at the

Stamford Township church than in many of the average churches in former days. At least fewer are of public record. In 1872 this notice appeared in the press:

**Mr. H.H. Bolt's Singing School at Stamford Township M.E. Church, closes on Saturday Eve., Feb. 24th, with a Concert. The Hobart cornet Band will be in attendance. The Programme will consist of Choruses, Quartetts, Duetts, Solos, etc., and music from the band. All lovers of music are invited to attend. Admission 25 cts. (15)**

Perhaps this was an isolated incident.

Stamford Township did not grow beyond a certain point for it consisted of a cluster of farms. During a time of farm economy, there could be just so many land owners and no more. One, or at most two, sons might remain at home to take over eventually from the father; the rest of necessity had to look elsewhere for occupations and homes. The turnover in population was at a minimum. Church activities involved these farm families only.

Pastors were persistent in their endeavors to convert and to reclaim and now and again marked success resulted from their efforts.

**In Oct. 1887 the Township church was blessed with a gracious revival. Believers were more firmly grounded in the faith, and sinners saved "from death". Thirty-seven were converted and twenty-nine were received into the church. (16)**

The Rev. F.D. Abrams, assisted by Miss May I. Lindsay, of Irvington-on-the-Hudson, in December, 1908, held a revival in Stamford Township which resulted in twenty-one being received on probation, mostly young men and women. (17)

A Delaware County Sabbath School Association, inter-denominational in its scope, was organized to promote the religious training of the young. A report was released in 1883 to the effect that the Sunday School of the Stamford Township church numbered 36, that there were three conversions, and that the school contributed \$1.60 to missions. (18) In 1897 there was a Stamford Town Association which made awards to encourage the several Sunday Schools within the town. Stamford Township was awarded second prize for average attendance; first prize for per capita contributions; second prize for largest number of home class members; and first prize for percentage of young people's society members (Epworth League). On the basis of these achievements, Stamford Township was awarded the town banner. (19)

Several events of unusual interest occurred during the years. A celebration on September 7 and 8, 1923, marked the centenary of the church building. The Rev. Robert J. Harrison was pastor at the time. Principal speaker for the occasion was Bishop Luther B. Wilson. Several former pastors joined in the festivities, which

attracted a large number of people.

Not until 1946, during the pastorate of the Rev. Kenneth E. Hoover, did the church acquire a cornerstone. (20) At the same time a new furnace was installed. Repairs were made to the sills of



the building, sills which were found to be of seventeen inch square hand-hewn timbers, and to the foundation itself. Once the work, which included the removal of a church shed, the re-decoration of the interior, the building of a picket fence and the planting of shrubbery, was completed, a re-dedication ceremony was arranged in May of 1847, the sermon for the occasion being delivered by the Rev. Burton F. Tarr, Superintendent of the Kingston District.



The year 1948 was made notable by the observance of the 125th anniversary of the church building. Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam delivered the sermon on Sunday, November 21, before a capacity congregation.

The latest celebration, which occurred in August of 1973, during the pastorate of the Rev. J. Philip Gehres, marked the sesquicentennial of the building. The festivities included a barbecue and program on Saturday, the 18th, appropriate to the occasion, as well as a special service the following day.

Even in this age of rapid change and mechanization, the ancient church in the Township valley has not lost its fascination either for those who worship there regularly or who visit it only occasionally. Although its appearance suggests a former day which has long since been passed by, by most of our places of worship, it is now, in this latter portion of the twentieth century, a lively and effective place of worship.

## METHODISM COMES TO HOBART

The Christian faith as Methodists saw it was preached in the vicinity of upper Delaware County some several years before 1800. When the first class or society was formed and by whom we do not know. More than one of the early circuit riders may have been involved. The first society most certainly dates from before 1789, for in that year a Methodist church was built of logs in the town of Kortright, in an area known as Methodist Hollow. This was superseded in 1810 by a frame structure. (1) There was a society in Bloomville which in 1810 acquired a lot for its church building (2); there are two traditions, however, as to the actual date of the building, 1800 and 1808. (3) By the year 1794, there was a society in Stamford Township which until 1810 was said to be larger than any other in the Delaware District. (4)

Undoubtedly there were individual Methodists in the part of Stamford known as Hobart well before the year 1834, when the society is believed to have been begun there. In all probability most of these were part of the Stamford Township society, although a few may have been identified with the society at the Head of the Delaware, which was already in existence. (5) Eighteen thirty-four seems to have been the seminal year for Hobart. That same year the Kortright Circuit was formed, with the Rev. Bezaleel Howe serving as preacher.

**The organization of the Methodist society in Hobart was the result of a protracted meeting held in January, 1834, by the Rev. Bezaleel Howe, preacher in charge. (6)**

The work begun was sufficiently substantial that a church building was projected almost immediately. Before the end of the year the plans of the society had matured to the point that just after the new year dawned, the people were ready to proceed. A document produced at the time reads:

**This is to certify, that at a meeting of a number of the inhabitants of Kortright, Stamford, and Harpersfield, in Delaware County and State of New York legally warned and**

notified; and held at the dwelling house of John Allen in the Village of Hobart on the twenty sixth day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred thirty five.

It was resolved and agreed to form themselves into a religious Society or congregation by the name and stile (sic) of the second Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the town of Stamford; and to elect five trustees to take charge of and manage the temporal concerns of the said Society, church, or congregation.

Whereupon, we Bezaleel Howe and David Denison were chosen inspectors of the election, and judges of the qualifications of voters. And the ballots being taken and counted, it appeared that John Allen, William Champlin, Isaac Silliman, Amos Hinman, and Thomas M. Clark were duly elected the first Trustees of Sd. Society Church or congregation.

In witness whereof, we the said inspectors have hereunto set our hands and Seals this 27 day of January 1835.

Bezaleel Howe  
David Denison L.S.



On 24 Feb. 1835 Bezaleel Howe and David Denison presented the action of this group of people to James G. Redfield, Commissioner of Deeds for Delaware County, who officially recorded the transaction. (7) The way was thus cleared for the society to proceed.

By midsummer a location for the projected church had been secured and the work had gone forward to the extent that on 14 August, in the afternoon, the Rev. Desivignia Starks preached a sermon at the cornerstone laying. (8) There seems to be no record of the construction beyond this notice, not even an announcement of a dedication, which was undoubtedly held.

Some nineteen years later, the church required a thorough renovation to make it suitable for continued use. By May of 1854, the

work was progressing satisfactorily.

Extensive alterations and improvements have been going forward for the last three weeks, in and on this building. All is to be thoroughly "modernized". New pulpit, or desk--new seats, or pews--aisles carpeted--gallery, or orchestra, remodeled--windows venetianed with blinds--repainted, outside and in; besides important improvement of front grounds, accessory steps, etc. (9)

Notice went out almost immediately that the church was ready to be reopened.

The M.E. Church at Hobart, Delaware Co., N.Y., will be reopened for divine service on Wednesday, June 21. Preaching in the morning, at 11 o'clock; and in the evening, at 7½ o'clock. The Rev. L.H. King, of Poughkeepsie, will officiate on the occasion, assisted by the brethren. Ministers and people of the adjoining circuits and stations are respectfully invited to be present. (10)

The pastor of the church at the time was the Rev. William B. Mitchell.

A rather effusive report of the events clustering around the dedication appeared in the press.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, in this village, was reopened for divine worship, on the 21st ultimo. The venerable Elder Phinehas Rice, of the Po'keepsie District, preached the consecration sermon. . . .

Rev. Mr. Crawford, of Fishkill, assisted the Elder in his morning liturgy. . . .

Rev. Lucius King, of Poughkeepsie, by appointment, preached in the afternoon, on Zachariah's prophecy of the Messiah's advent and mission. Mr. K is a favorite in these parts--his father resides in our village. . . .

A talented young minister from Prattsville preached in the evening, when the somewhat gorgeous chandelier lamp, (asterium de romano) and the elegant altar lights were first brought into requisition, and shed over the blanched walls, varnished paint, dressed floor, and spangled, if not pious audience, their mild, abundant and beautiful effulgence.

During the day and evening, the entire obligations of the trustees, which in all amounted to near seven hundred dollars, were fully liquidated; since then, the pews have been sold for enough to meet the prospective requirements of the church for the current year--thus placing the society, at once, upon a sure, comfortable and easy basis. (11)

Although the church through the fifty years of its use as such was on occasion repaired and refurbished, the time finally arrived when more extensive action seemed called for. A letter from the Rev. Sheldon Merchant to the press in 1885 speaks of the first action taken.



Levi Olmstead

**Therefore the old church which was erected fifty years ago, has been deemed inconvenient, and needs thorough repairs, and the increase of the Sunday School demands a lecture room. Consequently at the annual meeting for the election of trustees held in the M.E. Church Jan. 27, 1885. J.M. Olmsted after a very affecting speech, said that he greatly desired to see them have a neat and commodious house of worship, and that his mother, Sarah and himself would give three thousand dollars towards having the church thoroughly renovated and beautified, providing the church would raise one thousand dollars. The church cheerfully responded and in a short time one thousand and thirty dollars were raised. (12)**

Very shortly, however, it was decided to build anew instead of making an attempt to re-fashion the existing structure to meet the needs of the congregation. Action in the matter was speedy enough that by October the new church was ready for dedication. The total cost was \$7,000, half the amount, \$3,500, having been contributed by the Olmsted family, and another \$500 coming from Samuel Andrews of New York. (13) Colonel James Oliver of Andes was the building con-



John Olmstead

tractor. (14) Lumber for the structure was contracted for by J.W. Dickson, of Andes. (15)

When the church was built, a Meneely bell weighing 1,024 pounds was received in September of 1885, to serve the Methodist community by calling the people to worship. (16) The bell, still in use, was given by Eunice P. Van Valkenburg Hanford, in memory of her first husband. A magnificent and valuable memorial window, dedicated to Levi Olmsted, was placed in the end of the church opposite the altar.

The old church, still a substantial structure, was purchased by R. Hume Grant and moved to a spot close to the site of the present fire station. When permission was sought from the railroad company to move it across the track to its intended location, the company refused to grant the privilege. Mr. Grant let it be known he would be out of the community for a time; in fact, he went to Kingston where he stayed over night. Upon his return the next day, he made the discovery that in his absence the church building had been moved across the railroad right of way. It became the building which for many years was known as Grant Hall and which later was occupied as a hardware store by E.T. Van Buren & Sons. (17)

Some years after the moving of the old church to its new location, a search was made of the attic, where the original pulpit was found to be stored. This was cleaned and re-finished and placed in the present church. When the new chancel furniture was secured, it became the stand on which the memorial book is placed.

There appeared in the press, once the church was completed, the following notice:

**Providence permitting, the new Methodist Episcopal Church at Hobart . . . will be dedicated on Thursday, Oct. 15th. Dr. G.H. Gregory, Presiding Elder of the New York District will preach at 10:30 A.M. and Dr. J.M. King at 7 P.M. A.K. Sanford, D.D., will assist in the services. (18)**



Methodist Episcopal Church and Old Parsonage. Now George Stevens House back of Church.

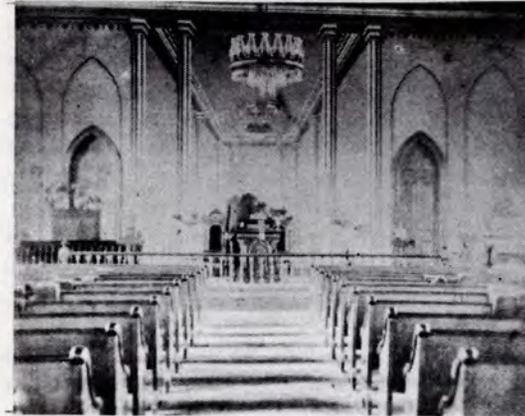
The total cost of the completed church was \$7,725, and the building was declared to be free of debt when at the dedication service \$1,775 was raised. (19)

Four years later the people of the congregation were busy with the redecoration of their new church. By means of a church fair they cleared the sum of \$231, for use for this purpose. (20) In October of that year, J.H. Barlow and W.J. Kniskern were at work repainting the church. (21)

In 1903, additional renovation was undertaken. S.D. Champlin of Stamford was engaged to decorate the interior for the sum of \$185. (22) Since at this particular time the attention of the church was directed toward the new parsonage, the project involving the church building was of less magnitude than it might otherwise have been.

Periodically thereafter re-furbishing was accomplished, in 1913, for example, when H.K. Kniskern redecorated the walls. (23) A

report made the following spring indicates the extent of the changes which were made.



1885  
Sanctuary  
After Remodeling

At Hobart, the auditorium and lecture room have been lighted with electricity, the floors recarpeted, the walls redecorated, and a new pipe organ installed--entire cost \$3,000. Back of the pulpit is a picture eight by ten feet, painted in oil, subject, "Christ Falling Under the Burden of the Cross." The picture is the artistic work, and gift to the church, of the pastor, P. St. J. Colman. (24)



1913  
Sanctuary After  
Organ and Picture  
Were Added.

In 1925, another major project was launched.

**The Methodist Episcopal church at Hobart is raising a fund of over \$4,000 to repair the church. There is to be new flooring, new pews, new chancel and new memorial windows besides a new lighting system and considerable of redecoration. (25)**

When 1934 arrived, a celebration of the centennial of the church was undertaken, during the pastorate of the Rev. S.A. MacCormac.

Festivities began in January and were culminated by an address by Bishop Francis J. McConnell on Sunday, the 25th of March.

During the pastorate of the Rev. Kenneth B. Truran, which extended from 1949 to the spring of 1960, the church, recognizing a need for space in which to carry on an expanding Sunday School and youth program, converted the lecture room area into modern class rooms and a church office. Largely with the help of members of the congregation, excavation work was undertaken to create a full cellar under the church, which allowed not only for furnace space but for an assembly room, modern kitchen, rest rooms, and the Fireside Room, paneled in old wood and graced with a fireplace.

In 1954, chimes were given the church as a memorial to Mr. and Mrs. Fred M. Lyon. (26) These chimes are in the organ chamber, the speakers in the tower. The chimes are operated from the organ console.

Under the leadership of the present pastor, the Rev. J. Philip Gehres, the Estey organ, rebuilt and enlarged by the Chase Organ Company of Worcester, New York, was placed in a room in the church tower in the south-east corner of the church. Immediately after the dawn of the year 1966, a complete renovation of the church was undertaken, which included lowering the ceiling, installing a divided chancel, the replacing of the organ in the chancel, new wall and floor coverings, refinished pews, and new chancel furniture. Before the service of dedication, held in June of that same year, new hymnals were secured.



Hobart Methodist Church

In the spring of 1966, the church purchased a small dwelling sit-

uated next to the parsonage, from Mrs. Francisco Franco, the purpose being two-fold. The community was in need at the time of an office for a part time doctor; besides, because the building was adjacent to existing church property, it might serve to fill a future need of the congregation. The requirement for a doctor's office proved to be short-lived and the structure, considerably improved by this time, was taken over for church purposes and named Wesley House. The second floor became a small apartment, presently occupied by the choir director. The first floor supplies a meeting room, an office for the pastor, and a room for office equipment. In the summer and early fall of 1975, a modern kitchen was added to the facilities of the building.

The devotion of the Olmsted family, which resulted in the substantial beginning of the church endowment fund, together with the considerable addition from the O'Connor estate, placed the church in a position to become a Christian benefactor of no small note. That Olmsted endowment, amounting to \$17,000, was but the beginning of a fund which has reached to more than a million dollars.

A signal honor was paid the Hobart church in the September, 1974, issue of **The Interpreter**, one of the official publications of The United Methodist Church. Written by Donald B. Moyer and entitled "It Can Be Done", the article tells how the church gave close to \$72,000 for benevolences in 1973.

Benevolent giving by the church in 1960 amounted to \$2,946.71. In 1969 the amount given was \$13,675.74. The total for that period of ten years was \$71,722.07. From 1970 through 1974, the giving amounted to \$190,903.61. The sum of such giving for the fifteen year period, 1960-1974, reached the figure of \$268,625.68. In one year alone, 1973, the giving was \$71,661.60. Few if any churches in American Methodism of the size of the Hobart United Methodist Church have equaled this amount.

The church continues in the present, as it has in the past, to promote a lively program, designed to enrich, to inform, and to inspire its members as well as to make a meaningful impact upon the community where it is situated. Through its United Methodist Women, Church School, and youth fellowships it strives to fulfill its function as a church. By means of study classes and resource personnel from outside the community it strives to be a viable institution in this rapidly changing world.

## THE PARSONAGE

The church acquired a parsonage in 1859. Living accommodations for the preacher previous to this time were apparently rented. The pastor on this occasion, the Rev. William Goss, reported that the church was in the

**... process of erecting a new parsonage, finely located, and have nearly enough on subscription to pay for it when completed. (27)**

That parsonage is now a private dwelling on Pearl Street adjoining the church property. It stood originally on the site of the present parsonage. Although it has sustained alterations and improvements through the years, some idea of its original appearance may still be gained from its present appearance.

At the 1864 Fourth Quarterly Conference, the trustees reported that there was expended

**... about one hundred and Fifty Dollars in building line fence(,) building wood house and repairing and altering the parsonage and some slight repairs on the Church. . . . The Trustees have also added to the parsonage a good Cook Stove. The parsonage furniture now consists of four Stoves (all that is needed) Eight Chairs and one Bedstead. The parsonage premises embrace about one half acre of land, a part of which is under cultivation as a garden and the remainder is a grass plot set out with fruit and ornamental trees. There is a small but comfortable carriage house and an excellent well of water near the house. The land is in a good state of cultivation and the fences in good repair. (28)**

It seems likely from the available evidence that the parsonage was not insured until 1869. At a trustee meeting held the 28th of January of that year, a resolution was adopted to the effect

**That the trustees get this church and parsonage insured at as early a day as practicable (sic) and for such an amount as they think proper & best, and that they levy an assessment on the members of this church to defray said expense of Insuring. (29)**

Insurance coverage at this time seems to have been intermittent, for

at a trustee meeting held 27 Jan. 1885, insurance for the parsonage was again discussed and it was

... voted that trustees Ins. parsonage in some Stock company. (30)

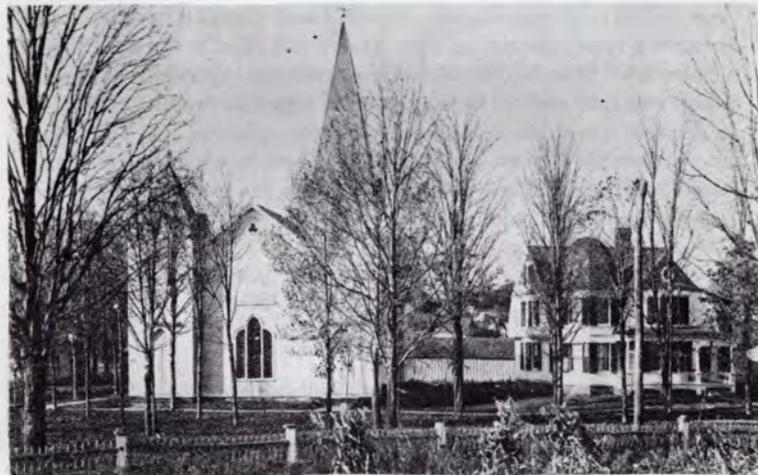
From a report bearing the date 1898 we learn something as to the lack of plumbing in that early parsonage.

**There having been no drainage from the parsonage, a large cess pool has been dug and stoned and tile pipe has been laid in a trench dug from parsonage to garden. A branch "Y" was left in this pipe line near the corner of the church, so that building could be connected at some future time. (31)**

By 1884, long before it was to materialize, a new parsonage was being projected.

**The ladies of the M.E. Church will give an entertainment in the new Store of A.G. Silliman, Hobart, for the benefit of the new Parsonage, Tuesday evening March 25th. (32)**

By 1902 the church was ready to procure a new home for its pastor, spurred on in part by a generous offer from John M. Olmsted. In order to repair the church and to move the parsonage to a lot behind the church sheds, and to build a new parsonage, he would give five dollars to match every dollar raised by the church, the total amount of his giving not to exceed \$4,000. (33) Early in 1903 it was reported that



Methodist Episcopal Church and New Parsonage showing old sheds in back of church.

The church bought of J.M. Olmsted a lot between Robert Thompson's house and the church property, moved the old parsonage on the lot, placing a cellar under the same. W.W. Hubbell of Roxbury contracted for the moving of the parsonage for \$250.00. The work was begun about the first of December and completed about the middle of January. The lot on which the parsonage now stands cost the society \$25.00.

W.W. Hubbell also contracted to move the barn on the church property back two stalls, take off two stalls from each end of the sheds nearest the road and move the sheds nearest the church in line for \$75.00. The society paid him 5.00 extra for new sills and repairs to sheds. (34)

An interesting note has survived concerning the momentous house-moving project.

The work was begun Thanksgiving day 1902. . . . The house containing the household goods was moved on sleds and most of the time fire was kept burning as the pastor occupied the building while moving. The pastor's wife Mrs. G.O. Wisley was entertained at the home of Frank T. Silliman, Township for a period of around two months while the moving was going on. (35)

The old parsonage, once it was in shape to be disposed of, was sold. The records supply us with a somewhat detailed account of the fashioning of the new parsonage.

The contract for excavating the cellar of the new house(,) which stands on the same site very nearly(,) also building the cellar wall(,) was let to Mr. Milton Beesmer of So. Kortright for One Hundred and Ninety Dollars \$190.00. He is to furnish the stone needed above what is in the old cellar(,) also to build rock face wall two feet below the sill of the house.

The cellar is to be seven (7) ft. deep and the top of the cellar wall to be on a line with Mrs. Hanford's cellar wall so that they both are on a line.

Because the face wall was four inches higher than contract called for(,) and for the wall laid through the centre of the cellar for foundations for partitions through the cellar, the sum of \$10.00 extra was voted Mr. Beesmer. He receives \$200.00 for his contract. (36)

The successful bid for constructing the new parsonage was made by George Harris, of Jefferson, for \$2,560. This did not include cellar, plumbing, heating equipment, or painting. (37) The press reported in September, in addition to the information that George Harris drew the plans and specifications, that

The new M.E. parsonage at Hobart is rapidly being finished. The carpenter work was completed this week. When finished it will be one of the finest parsonages on the Kingston district. The interior arrangement is a model design. The finely finished hall and stairway in panel work of oak, the well equipped kitchen and pantry with abundance of cupboard room, the large windows so nicely arranged giving abundance of light, all are a delight. There are so few parsonages of this character in the country, that the pastor, Rev. G.O. Wilsey, must consider himself fortunate to live in such a house. (38)



New Parsonage. Later closed front porch.

It was not long, however, before there were problems connected with the new parsonage, witness the trustees in 1908 authorizing a cold air register for the dining room. (39) Hot air heating systems, while not in their infancy, still left much to be desired. In 1909 concrete floors were poured in both the church and parsonage cellars. (40) The year 1912 was marked by the painting of both the church and the parsonage. A sewer pipe was laid from the parsonage ready to be connected with the sewer main. (41) It must have been a time for all to rejoice when in 1919 the trustees authorized the securing of an estimate on the cost of wiring the pastor's home. (42)

An item of particular human interest involving the pastor and his family is the record of the Rev. A.M. Morgan to the effect that during his final year in Hobart the village was visited with a severe

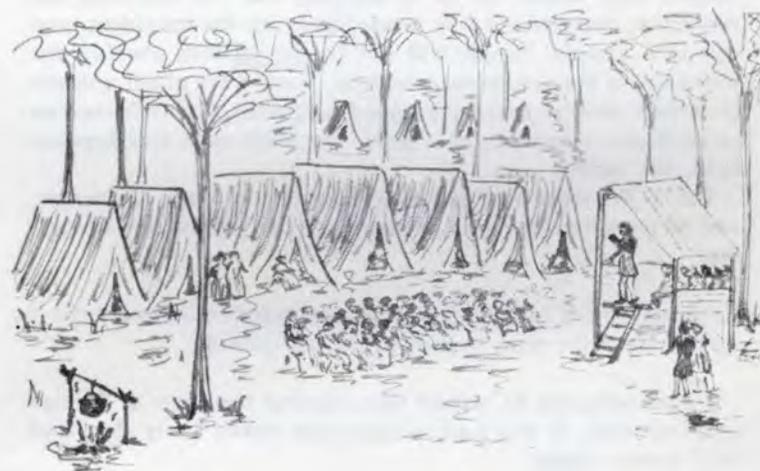
typhoid epidemic, accompanied by, and undoubtedly resulting from, a water shortage.

Every thing froze up tight during the winter. Even now, as I write, April 5th, 1912, the mains are frozen tight and no water save from wells and a few springs. (43)

Was the parsonage well re-activated? We are not given that information. Long unused and generally neglected wells were probably not safe sources of water supply.

The same parsonage, altered many times to keep it in repair and to enable it to be satisfactory in changing times, is in use today. It has continued throughout the years to house the pastors who came to serve the charge, along with their families.

\* \* \* \* \*



### CAMP MEETING

There appears to be record of but one camp meeting having been held in Hobart. Because of its human interest if not for its effectiveness it deserves to be recorded. The year was 1869 and the public press is our source of information.

**The Methodist Camp-Meeting for this year, will be held near Hobart, commencing Sept. 6th, and ending Sept. 11th. (44)**

A later announcement appeared with a few words of instruction.

**Those wishing tents will do well to address me at an early day. E. Tinker, Hobart. (45)**

Farther on in the same issue of the paper appears an additional insert concerning this subject.

**The Camp meeting near Hobart will be held on Mr. Grant's land, on the "Clove road."**

At the close of the meeting there appeared this disparaging account of the proceedings.

**The Methodist Camp Meeting commenced near Hobart, last week Monday, and closed Sunday night. Four days were very inclement, and the attendance was limited. The ground was very poor, and unfit for a meeting of the kind in damp weather. On Sunday there was a fair attendance. We hear that only one conversion is announced. As a whole, it seems to have been a failure. One reason for its ill success, was the fact that the managers commenced war immediately on the outsiders, and this told heavily. People will not be forced into obeying the mandates of broken down preachers. There were about a dozen preachers present, but talent, good judgment, and influence on an audience, seemed to be absent. The fewer such meetings are held, the better.**

**P.S. -- We learn that the converted person made his escape, and no trace can be found of him since the "interesting event." (46)**

Excerpts from a communication to the paper, reinforcing the dismal estimate of the press already noted, are quoted:

**I took occasion to attend this meeting two days of Camp-meeting week. It was bad to have rain nearly every day, and cold damp nights.**

The writer then preaches a sermon on what a good Christian ought to be like. The letter continues:

**With these remarks as a basis, and after witnessing the sour, gruff and ungentlemanly manner in which some of the managers conducted themselves, is it to be wondered at that the result of the meeting was a complete failure? . . . The whole camp was cold. . .**

Before closing his letter, the writer gives this bit of advice concerning any future camp meeting.

**Let the next one open with life; let the members get converted before they pitch their tents. . . . (47)**

Whether or not the none too pleasant memories clustering around this camp meeting account for the absence of additional meetings of this sort we shall probably never know.

## THE BANGS FAMILY

The Lemuel Bangs family came to Stamford in 1791, from Fairfield, Conn. The head of the household, a blacksmith, farmer, part time school teacher and land surveyor, was, singularly enough, a well-read man. He had married twice, first a Miss Hall, by whom he had five children. His second wife was Rebecca Keeler, of Ridgefield, Conn., by whom he had nine children. (1)

Our concern will be principally with four of these, of his second family: Joseph, Nathan, John, and Heman. Their birth dates were as follows:

Joseph, 1776

Nathan, 2 May 1778

John, 1781

Heman, 15 April 1790

All four became preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church: Nathan, John, and Heman, "traveling preachers"; and Joseph, a "local preacher". Joseph remained longer in Stamford than the other three, who lived and served elsewhere. Most of Nathan's ministerial years were spent in or near New York City; most of Heman's, in or near New Haven, Conn.; most of John's, close to Stamford, in or near Harpersfield or the town of Kortright.

The children of Lemuel and Rebecca (Keeler) Bangs became converts to Methodism. Lemuel never withdrew from the Protestant Episcopal Church, with which he had been affiliated since his early days. When asked on one occasion why he too did not become a Methodist, he replied to the effect that he was too old to make any change. Moreover, he could not discover any significant differences between the teachings of Methodism and those of the Episcopal church. Lemuel had at one time held an official position in St. Peter's church, located in his neighborhood.

The trek of the Bangs family to Stamford was preceded by the arrival there, in the autumn of 1791, of Joseph and Nathan, traveling the distance on foot, carrying all their gear in knapsacks. Their purpose was to build a temporary home to accommodate the remainder of the family when they should come. No sooner had they succeeded in erecting a cabin than it was consumed by fire. Their discouragement was somewhat dispelled when their neighbors turned to and helped them replace their loss. Next to come was the father, whose arrival greatly heartened the boys. Still later the mother and the remainder of the children came. Those first years

were filled with almost endless toils, with dangers and anxieties, and with the usual privations common to the frontier of that day.

Lemuel Bangs seems to have been a rather restless man, being satisfied for no great length of time with one specific employment, nor content to live long in any one location. A man of considerable versatility, he appears to have been at home in a variety of occupations. After at least two moves in the State of Connecticut and then to New York State, he took a portion of his family with him to Upper Canada. Two at least of his daughters were married and made their homes there. (2)

We have no way of knowing what Lemuel's wife, Rebecca, contributed to the family. She was a hardy person, obviously, else she could not have endured the rigors of the frontier as long as she did; nor could she otherwise have been a mother as often as she was. How good the rapport was between the father and his preacher sons we cannot tell. He was obviously somewhat older than the average father even in that day would have been, since he had reared one family of children to adulthood prior to his second marriage. He was obviously a person of some mental substance and moral integrity, else there is small likelihood of his having the capability of producing four such sons as Joseph, Nathan, John, and Heman, besides several daughters, who, however, do not enter into our account.

Lemuel, the Episcopalian, fathered four sons who became Methodist preachers. They in turn brought forth six Methodist preacher sons.

## JOSEPH BANGS

The oldest and least well known of the four Bangs brothers who became Methodist preachers was Joseph. A son of Lemuel Bangs, he was born in Stratford, Connecticut, in 1776, and died 7 January 1848, aged 72, in Tecumseh, Michigan. (1) Joseph Bangs became a farmer, occupying Lot no. 179 of Great Lot no. 42 of the Hardenburgh Patent. (2) That farm, in Stamford Township, is known today as the Walter Brockway place. Joseph married Hulda, daughter of Burr Silliman (3), a prominent Methodist in Stamford. It is stated that Joseph was converted at the age of 25. (4) The circumstances of his conversion have been thus detailed:

**He was converted to God through the instrumentality of his brother Nathan, who had been led to the Saviour while teaching school in Canada. Immediately after his conversion, he wrote his brother Joseph an account of his experience, occupying several sheets of paper. While reading this, Joseph was awakened to a sense of his sins and a need of a Saviour, and was soon after converted. . . . (5)**

It is thoroughly understandable that a deep regard should have prevailed between Nathan and Joseph during the remainder of their lives. Nathan could not but have been sensible of this fact: that Joseph was not only his blood brother, but his spiritual "son", in the usual acceptance of the term, as well. Joseph, in turn, possessed until the end of his days a regard for his younger brother, a more than filial regard, because of his instrumentality in pointing out to him the Christian way, of an unusual depth.

A converted Joseph Bangs was not content to be a nominal Christian. How soon he became identified with the affairs of the circuit which included the society to which he belonged we do not know. His brother Nathan was licensed to preach in August of 1801 and began circuit work immediately. (6) This event undoubtedly had its effect on Joseph.

The 1815 session of the New York Conference was held in May, in Albany, with Bishop William M'Kendree presiding. Bishop Asbury, very feeble and within a year of his death, was present and officiated at the ordination ceremonies. Among the local preachers elected that year to receive deacon's orders were Joseph Bangs and his brother, John. Joseph had been recommended from the Delaware

Circuit and John, from the Kortright Circuit. (7) Ordination took place on the 20th of May. It was not until 1837, however, that Joseph Bangs was ordained elder, at Detroit, Michigan, by Bishop Robert R. Roberts. (8)

No record has apparently survived concerning the official acts of Joseph Bangs within the church until the year 1824, when the Jefferson Stewards' Journal was begun. Joseph Bangs was listed as one of three stewards, the other two being Harvey Brown and Moses L. Pendel. (9) At the quarterly conference, conducted on the camp ground 10 July 1824, Joseph Bangs was elected a member of the committee to estimate the "table expense and fuel necessary for the preachers on this circuit for this year." (10) In December of that same year, at the quarterly conference conducted in Jefferson, he was chosen, along with Talcott Starr and David Sage, to be a member of the "committee to provide house or houses for the preachers next year." (11)

Joseph Bangs continued to serve on these two committees until 1828. At the quarterly meeting conference held on the 2nd of August of that year, at Stamford Township, Joseph Bangs presented his resignation as circuit steward, his place being filled by George Frisbie. At the same time the following resolution was adopted:

**Resolved that Br Joseph Bangs be recommended as a useful and acceptable Local Preacher. (12)**

The records contain no further reference to this man. The inference to be drawn is that he was shortly expecting to move away from the circuit.

There were certain civic responsibilities with which Joseph Bangs was charged during his residence in Stamford Township. There were ten road masters in the town of Stamford in 1800, and Joseph Bangs was one of these. There is record that he held this office again in 1813. (13)

There is no clue as to Joseph Bangs' reason for leaving Stamford Township, which he did in the fall of 1828. To be sure, his brothers, sisters, and father went elsewhere to live, but most of them stayed fairly close. Besides, his wife's family continued to reside in Stamford. The most reasonable conjecture seems to be that he, like his father, was imbued with something of the pioneering spirit which prompted them to move periodically in search of richer, more workable soil. Joseph was, after all, a farmer, who would be well aware of the difficulties and excellences of farm land. A letter to the **Christian Advocate**, sent 24 July 1829, nearly a year after his departure from Stamford Township, dated from Tecumseh, Michigan Territory, seems to bear out this assessment of Joseph Bangs' principal reason for emigrating.

**I rejoice that I feel as if the 'lines had fallen to me in pleasant places.' The situation of this country is extremely pleasant,**

**the soil remarkably rich and fertile, well watered, and the climate healthful. This township, which was a complete wilderness five years ago, now contains about 500 inhabitants, and emigrants (sic) from different parts are coming in fast. There are two Christian societies gathered here, a Presbyterian and a Methodist, and they appear much united. I preach generally once or twice every Sabbath; but there is great need of faithful labourers, as our circuit preachers seldom visit us. I hope, however, the Lord will not forsake us, but visit us with the showers of his grace. (14)**

Tecumseh continued to be his home for the remainder of his days.

Joseph Bangs was not a man to recount his own activities, and there is scant record of what he did. The journal of James Gilruth, Presiding Elder of the Detroit District of the Ohio Conference, gives two glimpses of this local preacher. He wrote on 4 October 1834,

**After Meeting I went with Br Bangs to a Sister Johars & took supper: her husband is a universalian & lives as might be expected: he was once a Presbyterian & then a Methodist & now a sinner--Held prayer Meeting at candle light which was a comfortable season. . . . (15)**

On the 6th of October, a Monday, he penned:

**Spent the morning till 8 at Br Foots. Set out for home & rode to Br Joseph Bangs & dined. . . . (16)**

It was not uncommon for a circuit or a local preacher to accompany the Presiding Elder on his official visits in a locality with which the preacher was familiar, to assist, to guide, and to introduce the Presiding Elder to strangers. Inns were often non-existent, and even when they were to be found, preachers traveling availed themselves of friendly homes whenever they could, not the least of which would be the homes of the local preachers.

While Joseph Bangs in his western home was separated by distance from most of his family, the family ties were preserved as far as it was possible to preserve them in that pioneering day. Lemuel M'Kendree Bangs, son of Joseph's brother, the Rev. John Bangs, went to Michigan to live either with or near his uncle. The **Christian Advocate** in 1837 reported the death of this young man, aged 23, in Joseph Bangs' home after his return to Michigan from a visit to his parental home in Kortright, Delaware County, New York. He was stricken with a fever shortly after his arrival back in Tecumseh and did not survive. (17)

Joseph Bangs had two sons who entered the itinerancy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, one, Francis B. Bangs, who at least on one occasion, in 1852, was a General Conference delegate from the

Michigan Conference. It is worth noting that at this same session of the General Conference, two of his uncles, brothers of his father, were also delegates: Nathan and Heman Bangs, both representing the New York East Conference. It is possible that no other single family has had this amount of representation at a single session of this august body. Another son, William H. Bangs, joined the New York Conference and died in 1880. (18)

There appears to be no record of Joseph Bangs ever having returned to Stamford. His occupation as farmer held him close to the land. His commitment to the ministry absorbed all the energy and time he could muster for the work. The type and scope of service which he was able to render does not of course resemble the accomplishments of his two most illustrious brothers, Nathan and Heman. He probably did not have the energy and drive of his brother John, but such as he had he gave freely in the Gospel ministry.

## NATHAN BANGS

Aside from Francis Asbury, Freeborn Garrettson, and Jesse Lee, no man in American Methodism was better known in his day than Nathan Bangs. His biographer, Abel Stevens, opens his definitive account thus:

**Dr. Nathan Bangs was not only a public but a representative man, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, for more than half a century. During nearly sixty years he appeared almost constantly in its pulpits. He was the founder of its periodical literature, and of its "Conference course" of ministerial study, and one of the founders of its present system of educational institutions. He was the first missionary secretary appointed by its General Conference, the first clerical editor of its General Conference newspaper press, the first editor of its Quarterly Review, and, for many years, the chief editor of its Monthly Magazine and its book publications. He may be pronounced the principal founder of the American literature of Methodism; a literature now remarkable for its extent, and of no inconsiderable intrinsic value. Besides his innumerable miscellaneous writings for its periodicals, he wrote more volumes in defense or illustration of his denomination than any other man. He became its recognized historian. He was one of the founders of its Missionary Society, he wrote the Constitution and first Circular Appeal of that great cause, and through sixteen years, prior to the organization of its secretaryship as a salaried function, he labored indefatigably and gratuitously for the society, as its vice-president, secretary, or treasurer. During more than twenty years he wrote all its Annual Reports. After his appointment as its resident secretary he devoted to it his entire energies, conducting its correspondence, seeking missionaries for it, planning its mission fields, pleading for it, in the Churches, and representing it in the Conferences. (1)**

So wrote one who was himself an able historian and biographer, in the year 1863. The account goes on to say that Nathan Bangs has been ranked "next to Asbury in historical importance in his Church."

As has already been noted, the object of this sketch was born May 2, 1778, in Stratford, Conn. He was thus but a boy of thirteen when the Bangs family removed to the town of Stamford. Nathan, a stalwart lad by that time and well schooled for his age, gave great promise for the years to come.

At the age of 17, Nathan was employed as private tutor in the household of Esquire Hardenburgh, who was so well pleased with the young man that he recommended him to be a public school teacher. He was engaged in this capacity to teach in a school on the east branch of the Delaware, near Roxbury. His knowledge of surveying caused him to be called on frequently to exercise his capability during his free time. It was while he was teaching that he had his first contact with Methodist preaching. A small Methodist class met in the neighborhood, which he frequently attended.

Not content to remain as a teacher in a rural school, he determined to follow a brother-in-law, Seth Smith, to Upper Canada. His parents consenting to the removal, he left home on the 9th of May, 1799, shortly after entering his twenty-first year. The trip was arduous and at times hazardous.

Not finding ready employment as a surveyor, Nathan "took a school" some six miles from Niagara Falls, on the Canadian side. This was a time of serious spiritual searching for him. He became acquainted with a family possessing a small library of excellent books, and he was given free access to these treasures. It was his contact with the Rev. James Coleman, one of the early circuit preachers who volunteered for labors in Upper Canada, that enabled Nathan Bangs to find his way into the Christian faith. The culmination of this time of mental and spiritual searching determined him for the Methodist itinerancy. Abel Stevens says of him:

**He had prided himself on his fine personal appearance, and had dressed in the full fashion of the times, with ruffled shirt, and long hair in a cue. He now ordered his laundress to take off his ruffles; his long hair shared the same fate, not, however, without the remonstrances of his pious sister. . . . (2)**

What Mr. Bangs spoke of as the "perfect love which casteth out fear" came to him Feb. 6, 1801, while he was visiting a pious family of his acquaintance.

Close upon this deep religious experience came Nathan Bangs' call to preach. Licensed to exhort, he was in August of 1801 licensed to preach and went immediately on the Niagara Circuit with the Rev. William Anson. In December, Long Point was detached and Mr. Bangs was given the responsibility of building a new circuit.

The 1802 session of the New York Conference was held in June in New York City. Mr. Bangs attended and was assigned to the Bay of Quinte Circuit, in Upper Canada, along with the Rev. Joseph Sawyer and the Rev. Peter Vannest. He made a side trip to visit his family,

whom he had not seen in five years. He comments:

**"They all received me joyfully. As my father was in the field, I went out to find him, and met him on the way, but was so overcome that I could not speak for some time. After recovering myself, I spoke a few words, and then asked him if I might preach in his house that evening. He gave his consent. Word being sent around, the house was filled at an early hour, and my father, who was much prejudiced against the Methodists, occupied an adjoining room. I gave out the following words: 'Come and hear all ye that pass by, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.' After a brief introduction, I related my Christian experience, and God abundantly blessed my soul, and enlarged my heart, and gave me liberty of utterance. When I concluded my sermon, I asked if any one was present who would close the meeting, and who should arise but my eldest brother Joseph, who had been made a partaker of divine grace in my absence, and who was now a licensed exhorter." (3)**

There were other occasions when Nathan Bangs returned to Stamford, after his father had moved away and Joseph remained behind to operate his farm. Such visits were precious to this busy churchman, who enjoyed the respite from pressing duties and the companionship of Joseph, to whom he was deeply attached.

At the June, 1804, session of the New York Conference Mr. Bangs was ordained deacon and received as a full conference member. Two days later he was ordained elder. Bishop Francis Asbury acted in this irregular manner for the reason that Nathan Bangs was to return to Canada upon what was conceived to be a mission field and needed all the ecclesiastical backing he could be given. On the 27th of April, 1806, he was married to Miss Mary Bolton, of the town of Edwardsburgh, Upper Canada.

Mr. Bangs visited his brother, Joseph, in Stamford, in 1808. He has left us an amusing anecdote arising from this visit.

**"In no instance was I badly treated, except once on the west branch of the Delaware, where, after attending a quarterly meeting in Delhi, I came to the Protestant Episcopal Church, a few miles above, at which an appointment had been given out for me; but on my arrival I found the church closed against me. As, however, the people had assembled, I stood in a wagon and delivered my message; some opposers attempting meanwhile to drown my voice by ringing the bell, a useless attempt against any itinerant whose voice had been toned amid the storms of Canada." (4)**

The Protestant Episcopal Church referred to was St. Peter's in Hobart.

The Conference that year met in Amenia; Nathan Bangs was assigned to the Delaware Circuit, which brought him to the very area where his parents and most of his brothers and sisters were still living. He attended the General Conference that same year, at Baltimore, and found the experience exciting and stimulating.

During his itinerancy on the Delaware Circuit, Nathan left his wife at the home of his brother, Joseph. He had some thirty appointments to meet in four weeks. The year was made memorable for him by two camp meetings, one held in the town of Kortright and the other, in Blenheim. This was the year in which his brother Heman joined the church.

From this time onward, Nathan Bangs became increasingly active in conference affairs, and in controversies with the Calvinists. He began to write for publication and to hold office in various agencies of the Church. He was a General Conference delegate in 1808, in 1812, and with but one exception served in this capacity for nearly fifty years. In 1813 he became presiding elder (the earlier equivalent of district superintendent) of the Rhinebeck District.

Mr. Bangs' vigor continued until the end. Superannuated in 1852, he died one day after his 84th birthday, 3 May 1862. He contributed a son to the Methodist ministry, the Rev. William M'Kendree Bangs. He had eleven children, six sons and five daughters.

Since little is presently known in the locality concerning Nathan Bangs, it seems entirely fitting that attention should be called to him. Although he achieved his renown elsewhere than in Delaware County, he might well not have reached the height he did had he not received the training and rigorous discipline of the pioneer home where he was reared and from which he went out into what was to be an illustrious career.

## JOHN BANGS: "APOSTLE TO THE MOUNTAINS"

Through the counties of Delaware, Schoharie, Otsego and Greene, for long years, no name, perhaps, was more familiar than . . . that of John Bangs. His giant frame arrested the eye, and his trumpet voice still rings in the ears of those who heard him. Long rides over hill and mountains, through storms, were so long a common experience with him, as scarcely to elicit a word. He accepted the toil of his calling as a matter of course, and no murmur, no complaint--he was above that. His salary, necessary as it was, was passed as an incidental matter. The one intense object of his life was to win souls and see the cause of God prosper. That was his study and his work--his sphere, which gave full scope to all his powers of body and of mind; and in it he was cheerful, happy, buoyant. (1)

So wrote the Rev. Joseph Hartwell, who as a boy knew John Bangs and later on was associated with him as a fellow preacher in the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

There were four Bangs brothers who were Methodist preachers: Joseph, a farmer and blacksmith, who for many years rendered signal service as a local preacher; Heman who

**spent thirty-three years in the strictly pastoral work. Three years he was agent for the Wesleyan University, and eighteen years he was Presiding Elder. . . . (2)**

and who was a member of the New York East Conference at the time of his death; Nathan, of whom Abel Stevens remarks.

**It has been justly said that he ranks next to Asbury in historical importance to his Church; (3)**

and John, the subject of this essay.

John Bangs was born in 1781 in Stratford, Conn.; when he was eleven years of age, his family moved to the town of Stamford, N.Y. His father, Lemuel Bangs, was variously a school teacher, land surveyor, and blacksmith. When John was seventeen, he went to live

in Harpersfield, in the home of David Wilcox, a blacksmith, where he served as an apprentice until he was twenty-one. While becoming proficient in the trade by which he was to earn his livelihood in subsequent years, he formed a liking for dancing and for profanity which resulted in a lingering regret once he answered the call to become a Christian, and to an abhorrence of these as long as he lived.

After a brief visit to Canada, consuming about three months, he returned and the following year married Mary Rickey, of Harpersfield, January 2, 1804, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. Stephen Fenn, Presbyterian pastor there. The young couple established their home in the town of Kortright, where he practiced his trade of blacksmithing; there he resided more than forty years. Mrs. Bangs died March 12, 1845, in Harpersfield, aged 62 years. She had come from a Presbyterian family; converted a short time after her husband, she became a faithful Methodist. Seven months after the death of his first wife, John Bangs married, October 7, 1845, Mrs. Arethusa Palmer, of Maryland, Otsego County.

John Bangs was licensed to exhort by the Rev. Henry Stead, the one who is credited with his conversion. His license to preach was signed by the Rev. Elijah Woolsey. Bangs has supplied us with singularly little information regarding his own affairs; but from other sources we learn that his license to preach was probably issued in 1806. He was ordained deacon, along with his older brother, Joseph, on May 20, 1815, in the city of Albany, by Bishop Francis Asbury. It was not until 1819, however, that he applied for admission to the New York Conference; his first assignment was to Sharon Circuit. When the Jefferson Circuit was formed from part of the Sharon Circuit, in 1821, he and Henry Eames were placed in charge. This new circuit consisted of 42 appointments, involving a 400 mile trek, which was designed to be covered in six weeks.

For health reasons Bangs was made supernumerary in 1835 and continued in this relationship to the conference for the remainder of his life. His death came as the result of a severe attack of diarrhoea, for which he sought no proper treatment. Dying on Sunday, February 4, 1849, he was buried in Stamford. Seen in bare outline, the career of John Bangs appears to be what was typically experienced by the average Methodist itinerant of his day. Seen in detail, that career is discovered to have been singularly unique.

It will be noted that when in 1819 John Bangs was received into the New York Conference, he was 38 years of age. Many itinerants of his day had finished their work and had been claimed by death before they were that old. While nearly half his thirty years in the conference were spent as a supernumerary, his ministerial record and all contemporary accounts witness to his labor and devotion even during those years when he did not take full pastoral responsibility.

From the Coeymans Circuit in the north to the Franklin Circuit in the south is but a comparatively short distance, not more than eighty

air miles. Within a rough circle of this diameter, this early circuit rider, from 1806, when he became a local preacher, until his death in 1849, spent approximately 42 years of an intensive and fruitful ministry. Small wonder that this man should have won for himself the sobriquet: "Apostle of the Mountains."

John Bangs's ministry stretched across the beginning and flowering of the era of camp meetings. During this period, because of his inevitable involvement in these front line activities of the church, he must have known virtually every person living in the region embraced by the circuits he served.

The subject of this paper was perhaps best known because of his camp meeting activities, into which he entered with great gusto.

**In 1808 the first camp meeting on the western side of the Catskills was held in a valley then known as Methodist Hollow, but now called Betta's Brook, in the town of Kortright, Delaware County, N.Y.**

The place of meeting was on land now owned by Avery Gallup, a short distance north of his house and by the side of the road leading from Harpersfield Centre to South Kortright. The camp ground, which was rough and rocky, is still covered with woods, and probably presents much the same appearance as when the memorable meeting was held.

The Bangs family were especially active in preparing for the event. Nathan, who had attended the great meeting on the Bay of Quinte Circuit, in Upper Canada, was present as one of the circuit preachers. His brother John lived near by, and was just commencing his remarkable career as a Methodist preacher. Another brother, Heman, lived with John; and these three brothers were themselves a host. Nathan and Heman afterward became distinguished in the history of our church. . . . For many years he (John) was the most famous preacher in this region, and it will be long ere his name shall be forgotten. Nathan, John and Heman Bangs all labored with their own hands to prepare the ground for the camp meeting, and they received all the help they needed from the members of the Methodist class and their neighbors. . . . It was a rainy week and the weather was cold, but the people came from all directions, and the roads leading to the place were crowded with vehicles of all descriptions (4)

It was at this camp meeting that Heman was converted.

**It was rumored that "Heman was among the mourners." My brother Nathan came and prayed for me, and brother John soon learned, to the joy of his heart, that Heman had come to pray, and not to trifle. (5)**

There were other camp meetings, many of them, in which John

participated. The Rev. George Coles, an Englishman to whom this means of evangelism was strange and new and wonderful, has left us a vivid and detailed description of a camp meeting which began on Thursday afternoon, September 28, 1820, in which John Bangs and his brother Joseph played prominent parts. Coles says of John Bangs:

**(Doctor Parker)... made some very profitable remarks, addressed chiefly to believers--which were followed by a rousing exhortation from brother John Bangs. The good man was then in his element, as he had been all through the meeting, and indeed before the meeting began. Sometimes, he was to be seen swinging the ax, cutting down a sapling, helping to raise a tent, fixing the benches, giving directions to the hewers of wood and drawers of water; then after the meeting began he might be heard warning the unruly, comforting the feeble-minded, and with a voice like a lion exhorting sinners to repent, or praying for mourners, with a fervor bordering on enthusiasm. (6)**

On August 17, 1821, a camp meeting was begun in Conesville, on the Jefferson Circuit, with Heman and John Bangs in charge.

**Some ungodly men endeavored to disturb the meeting, and one evening when a prayer meeting was held in front of the stand, a stone thrown at John Bangs and missing him, struck a lady near by and she fell to the ground seriously injured. (7)**

On June 27, 1822, between West Jefferson and Stamford, on the Jefferson Circuit, a camp meeting was begun at which Henry Eames, John Bangs, Roswell Kelly, Jesse Pomeroy, Quartus Stewart, Eben Smith, and others preached with great success. In 1823, in the same place, another such meeting was held, memorable enough that John Bangs has left us his own description of the event. Again in 1824 in this same place, the Humphrey Treadwell farm, a meeting was held where John Bangs nearly lost his life. He describes the incident as follows:

**At this meeting there was a large four-horse wagon which came from the town of Windham, with a numerous company of men, who were more like savages and heathens than human beings. As it fell to my lot to take the principal charge of the order of the meeting, I was frequently called in places of danger. One evening, knowing that there was much improper conduct going on, I took a friend's horse, and rode out to examine this rude company... I rode from the camp ground down the road to a certain barn, where there was a huckster's shop, of which I made an observation, and turned about with a view to go back. This was the last that I can remember, until I was near the edge of the camp ground, with my arm through**

**the bridle, leading my horse, with my hat-band wound round my fingers. Some of the brethren met me, and inquired what was the matter; but I was in such a condition as not to be able to tell them. My overcoat was torn to the extent of the size of a man's hand, just above the blade of the arm, as though some one had violently grasped me there. The joint of one of my thumbs was badly injured. On one of my temples there was a considerable soreness. My ears, mouth, face, and clothes, were besmeared with dirt and mud....**

**I was conducted to a tent where I spent the night. There were much solicitude and attention manifested and bestowed upon me, as I afterward learned, and the prayers of the church were constantly offered in my behalf through the night, especially by my worthy presiding elder. The first thing that I noticed, after this catastrophe, was the language of my daughter, who had sat by me through the whole night; and this language she had continued to repeat all night. About sunrise I heard her exclaiming, "Father! father!" From this time I began gradually to come to my senses. (8)**

The sequel to this episode was a sobering one. Bangs states:

**In consequence of the injury I received from the above maltreatment, my head was for a long time seriously affected, so much so, that, at times, my mind has been entirely absent. I know of once riding in my wagon, a distance of two miles, without observing things around, and without any knowledge whatever. I have frequently had my text and arrangements made for public worship, and when arriving there, have not been able to recall either; so that I could not collect my ideas, nor offer a subject that would be satisfactory either to myself or the congregation. It was on this account that I applied for and obtained a supernumerary relation to the conference. (9)**

He held this relationship for two years, when he was restored to the active ranks. His injury was more severe than he at first realized and its effects necessitated his becoming once again a supernumerary, which standing in the conference he occupied until his death.

The next camp meeting on the Jefferson Circuit began the 10th of September, 1829, and was held on the Starr farm in West Jefferson. John Bangs was in charge, in the absence of the presiding elder. A company of light infantry (militia) came from Middletown (Margaretville). One of their number who later became a minister in the conference, Russel S. Scott, was converted there.

To John Bangs goes the credit for the conversion of Harvey Brown, who, after entering the New York Conference as an itinerant, made a noteworthy record.

**A camp meeting was held in the town of Sharon, under the**

direction of Eben Smith, P.E., and John Bangs preacher in charge. A company of rude people from Summit had erected a tent and intended to stay over the Sabbath. Their conduct made their removal necessary, and Bangs with others took down their tent and removed them from the encampment. Some damage was done, and one of the party took out a warrant for Bangs, and a constable served it at one of his appointments, three miles from Summit. After preaching three times and meeting three classes, he went to the place appointed for trial, which was a bar-room, and found a crowd of persons waiting to see the Methodist preacher tried. Harvey Brown was the justice, and he was sent for. In the meantime, many hard speeches and curses were heaped upon the calm and undisturbed preacher. When the justice arrived, court was opened, and the plaintiff offered to settle for 75 cents. Bangs thought it would be better to suffer wrong than to put the community to the cost of an expensive trial, so he paid the costs. The squire, in accordance with the custom of the times, called for rum to treat the crowd. It at once occurred to Bangs that he should pray, and he asked the justice if he would wait a moment before he brought the rum, and the justice said, "No objection." Then Bangs said to the landlord, "May I pray in your house?" Again the answer was, "No objection." So the hats of the company were taken off. Bangs and a few of his brethren knelt down, and he prayed, while solemnity rested on the audience. After the prayer, the justice seemed a little disturbed. He said that before then he had thought his moral excellence as good as Bangs' pharisaical prayers, but when the preacher had been praying, he felt rum would not taste good, and when the prayer was ended, he realized that one of the props of his infidelity had fallen out. It being midnight, Bangs called for his horse (the landlord would take no pay), and he bade the justice good-bye, and rode four miles to the house of a friend. There seems to have been no preaching at Summit Four Corners, previous to this time, for Bangs says, in his autobiography, "When I came around near the place where the constable arrested me on warrant, I left an appointment with the people that I would preach at Summit Four Corners, and left appointment for four weeks after." After preaching, he invited all who wanted religion to come forward, and the first to come was the justice, Harvey Brown. When he came round to that appointment again, many were seeking religion, and the justice among the rest. He took Bangs home with him and said he thought he should die. But he soon found peace and became an active member of the church, then a class leader and local preacher, and afterward a shining light in the ministry in the New York Conference. Bangs testifies that all the persons who were removed from the camp ground at Sharon were afterward converted except one. (10)

The record left us by Bangs himself of societies or churches organized is inadequate; but from other sources we can construct a partial list. He does state that while he was a local preacher he established three churches, two of which survived; the one at Davenport Center and the one at Harpersfield. In 1820, while he was on the Sharon Circuit, he founded the church at Richmondville. In 1823, he is said to have established the church at Franklin; and in October of that same year, the one at Croton, now known as Treadwell.

John Bangs did not establish the Brimstone church on Blenheim Hill, the church made famous during the Anti-Rent war of the 1840's, but the record shows that he was instrumental in completing the building which for some years had remained in a half finished condition. The story is told thus by John Bangs:

The house had become so out of order and deranged, that but a very small congregation could be seated. I requested the brethren to prepare seats with boards, so that when I came again the congregation could be accommodated. They went at it like "men of function," and it was done. We occupied it until cold weather came on. After preaching one day, with my handkerchief over my head, and cloak on, the congregation remained. I detained them with a view of taking a survey of the house, after which I said, "You have a very substantial frame here, and this house might with ease be made comfortable; but, as it is, it will be necessary for us to abandon it. And it is certainly a disgrace to community and the town in which you live. If you do not do something about it, I shouldn't wonder if the Almighty should send thunder and lightning, and burn it up."

Some short time after, I was requested to appoint trustees, as their charter had run out. After they were appointed, and a secretary, I said, "Now draw up a subscription to pay off the old debt, and finish the house." The principal man of the church put his name down with fifty dollars. There were thirteen men present; they all put their names down, ranging from fifty dollars to five each. There was one man present who had not subscribed anything, whose name was Sheldon Peasley. He, upon the suggestion of the subject, frankly took up the pen and signed fifty dollars. Thought I, that man will yet make something in the service of the Lord; he is now a local preacher. In consequence of these and other efforts, the church was soon fully repaired, and put in complete order for comfortable worship. (11)

In West Conesville, or Strykersville as it was known then, the Methodists had no place of worship and were refused the use of the Dutch Reformed property. This refusal seems to have fostered a de-

sire among the Methodists to build their own place of worship. This was while John Bangs was on the Jefferson Circuit. He tells of an invitation from the Methodists to explain to them the proceedings for acquiring a church.

**I inquired whether it was necessary? They gave me a unanimous vote in favor. I then inquired if they were able, and how many would give us their aid and influence? Here, too, I had general approbation. I appointed a committee to fix on the site, and estimate the value. When I came to that place again I appointed trustees; they each one took a subscription paper, and shortly had the amount of nine hundred dollars signed. I then told the trustees if they would allow me I would get the timber, and have it hewn and drawn to the ground. A gentleman in the neighborhood, by the name of Striker, gave us the privilege of getting what timber we needed. I accordingly gave notice publicly in the different appointments around, that on such a day, at nine o'clock in the morning, we would wish all the people, saints and sinners, to meet us with their axes and dinner, on this piece of ground, for the purpose of aiding in getting out timber to build the temple of God. At the time appointed the people came together prepared, like unto a flock of bees; and after prayers they went to work as though every one was interested, and by night the timber was nearly all ready for drawing. They worked very promptly, and one day more brought the work to a consummation. Previous to this the Presbyterian minister had said, sneeringly: "The Methodists going to build a church! They no more want a church than we want a gate to keep the Schohariekill river from running under the Bow bridge." Said I, "Credit him fifty dollars; that's worth so much to us." He further said: "They have got the timber on the ground, but it will never go up." Whereat I exclaimed: "Put him down another fifty dollars, for he has helped us to the extent of one hundred dollars at least." Perhaps this gentleman was of the same opinion with some others, whom (sic), forty years ago, I had heard say: "Let the Methodists work, for in four years more there will be none of them in the country." The house went up, and is now finished and stands on the ground given by the late John Striker, Esq., who also subscribed thirty dollars, and painted it at his own expense. (12)**

Wherever John Bangs went, he was generally respected. The Rev. A.C. Morehouse confessed something of his debt to John Bangs by erecting a stained glass window to his memory in the North Blenheim church. Morehouse describes the circumstance thus:

**And the encouragement given by Rev. John Bangs, a local preacher, was so helpful that when in after years the old church**

**where he let me go into the love feast was reconstructed, I put a memorial window in to perpetuate his memory. (13)**

But not every one revered John Bangs. The **Autobiography** relates an incident occurring while Bangs was living at home with his family in Kortright. He awoke one night to discover the barn on fire.

**I wish here to relate a circumstance, to show the depravity of human nature, from the effects of rum. In the commencement of the conflagration there were two stage-drivers in sight, who saw the lightning when it struck the barn, I heard them pass my house, and they did not apprise me of the fire. They stated, when they got to the head of the Delaware (present day Stamford village), their reasons; which were, that they supposed I was in bed, and, with an oath, they averred that they would not have made it known if it had burnt me up and all that I had. (14)**

At one of the Jefferson camp meetings, where some twenty converts were made,

**One of them was a man who had said that his horse-shed, which stood near the church, was free for the horse of any minister except one,--that was John Bangs; but so changed did his feelings become, that he cheerfully welcomed that ambassador of Jesus to his hospitality. (15)**

John Bangs had two sons who entered the itinerancy: John D. Bangs, who was admitted to the New York Conference in 1836 and who served until his death two years later, from scarlet fever, and a second son, whom he does not name in his autobiography.

**I have a son, living, who is an itinerant minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He is my youngest child, being now in his twenty-fourth year (16)**

That son was Nathan H. Bangs, a member of the New York Conference.

Financially John Bangs could not year after year have rendered the quantity and quality of service to the Church which he did render had he not continued his work as blacksmith. He gives us this testimony:

**I was never allowed anything for house rent, except during two years, in all my itinerancy. No committee ever allowed me over seventy dollars for table expenses. Never did I receive the disciplinary allowance for any one year. (17)**

A large family of boys and an invalid wife required heavy ex-

penditures.

**From the small amount of property, which was estimated at about sixteen hundred dollars when I began to travel, in the course of some six years I was obliged to abstract from this sum about two hundred dollars a year to make my family comfortable. (18)**

The Stewards' book for the Coeymans Circuit bears out Bangs' statement. For the year 1827, first quarter: \$.00; second quarter, \$9.65; third quarter, \$.00; fourth quarter, \$.67. The total amount John Bangs received that year for expenses was thus \$10.32.

After the death of his first wife, John Bangs undertook a new enterprise. His friends furnished him with a team and carriage and in June of 1845 he commenced traveling in this new venture: to make a special effort to reach children in the interest of religion and temperance.

**From that time to this I have traveled, incessantly, in the two conferences of New York and Oneida, nearly two thousand miles, passed through about forty towns, preached and held about seventy religious meetings; the fruit of which has been, probably, the conversion of more than fifty souls. My attention has been more particularly directed to the children. (19)**

Bangs goes on to say:

**(Friends in New York) . . . furnished me with a large supply of second-hand books, and funds to purchase new ones--the amount and value of which were probably fifty dollars. The book agents also furnished me with some little assistance, and forwarded the whole to Catskill for me. They came safely to hand. I awaited their arrival, and loaded them on my carriage, and started on my way to my field of labor, with unspeakable delight and gratitude both to God and man. (20)**

In one instance, four meetings were held in sparsely settled neighborhoods and a total of 325 children were reached; of these, 251 signed the pledge.

John Bangs was not a noted preacher. He shone, rather, in the camp meetings and revivals, especially in the prayer periods. Virtually all the schooling he had was what he was able through his own initiative as an adult to attain. Although the preface to his **Autobiography** is signed with his name, the style of those few pages is noticeably superior to that of the book itself, suggesting that it is the work of another hand. He was a blacksmith turned preacher in a day when scholastic attainments were not expected in an itinerant. But he knew how to work and to pray; whatever fears he had he conquered or suppressed. The conference would have heard much more

of him had his health permitted him to be longer than he was in the active ministry. He was far from idle during his supernumerary years, but he was limited by health and by the distance he could move from his own home in Kortright and by his necessity to earn a living by his trade.

The Rev. Joseph Hartwell, who knew John Bangs well, speaks lovingly of him:

**It seems but as yesterday that the broad shoulders of John Bangs, under his broad brimmed hat, were moving among us, or that he, in his carriage, drawn by "Old Pomp", might have been seen hurrying to his "next appointment", in a school house, in a barn, or in a grove, where his deep voice was heard, preaching from the text--"Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." And now, perhaps, after the sermon, a prayer meeting is held for weeping penitents, in which souls were indeed converted. And if this be not the last meeting for the day, he and "Old Pomp" must start for "the next appointment." (21)**

In Methodism John was overshadowed by his brother Nathan; in the New York Conference he was by no means as well known as his brother Heman; but in the region of the Catskills where he labored throughout his ministry, Methodists who have never heard of either Nathan or Heman know of John, and revere his memory.

## HEMAN BANGS

Best known among the four Bangs brothers, three of whom became itinerants and one who was a local preacher, was Nathan Bangs. Of the three others--Heman, John, and Joseph--Heman attained the largest fame, although today his name is familiar only to those who study American Methodist history with some degree of seriousness. Joseph, the oldest of the brothers, was the local preacher.

Heman Bangs was born 15 April 1790, in Fairfield, Connecticut, the son of Lemuel and Rebecca (Keeler) Bangs. He tells us comparatively little of his early years, giving only now and then a glimpse of what transpired.

**When in my fifteenth year, my father bound me as an apprentice until the age of twenty-one, to my brother John, who had just completed his apprenticeship, and commenced business for himself. (1)**

His conversion took place at a camp meeting conducted in July of 1808, in his neighborhood. Some two years later he was licensed as an exhorter. (2)

Heman Bangs goes on to tell his own story:

**On the 20th of August, 1811, I married Sally Burritt, with whom I had been acquainted from childhood. I bought a little house, and in November following we commenced house-keeping. After a time, my employer offered to sell me the shop, tools and stock, and allow me to work on my own responsibility. I bought him out, and God gave me good health, plenty of work, and good customers. In one year, by the blessing of Providence, and by diligent attention to business, I was able to purchase a house, and ten acres of improved land. Here I built me a shop and barn, and added eighteen acres of wood-land. (3)**

For all his prosperity, he was not content. He experienced an inner urge to enter the ministry, but hesitated to respond favorably to that urge.

**In the summer of 1814 I made a tent, and invited all I could, to go with me to a Camp-meeting: there my soul was wonder-**

fully blest by the Lord Jesus Christ. (4)

It was at this meeting that his decision was finally and firmly made to enter the itinerancy.

In order to embark upon this new way of life, it was needful that he discharge his apprentice, sell his business, and settle his accounts. He goes on with his recitation:

**At our last Quarterly Meeting before the Conference of 1815, I received a regular license as a local-preacher, and a recommendation to the New York Annual Conference, which was held that year in the city of Albany, N.Y. I attended it with my two older brothers, Joseph and John, who were both ordained Deacons by the venerable Bishop Asbury. This was the last time the good old Bishop attended the New York Conference. (5)**

Heman was admitted on trial and assigned to the Delaware Circuit, with Stephen Jacobs as his colleague.

Heman Bangs' 1816 assignment was to the Sharon Circuit, with John Goodsell as his partner. Speaking of this Circuit, he comments:

**It embraced a part of my old ground, and was about one hundred and fifty miles around, which we traveled once in four weeks. I went quite around before I could find a house for my family, and finally was compelled to take a log hut with but one room. It had long been abandoned as a dwelling, and been used as a sheep-cot, and then as a cooper's shop. I took mud from the road and filled the cracks, and whitewashed the inside. Here I put my young wife and one child, frequently leaving them for two weeks at a time: but there was no complaining; we had given all for Christ, and were content. (6)**

In 1817, at the annual session of the Conference, held in Middlebury, Vermont, he was ordained deacon by Bishop George. (7) His assignment was to the Newburgh Circuit.

Heman Bangs' autobiography ends at this point and is followed by bits and pieces of a journal which may well represent a selection of items from a somewhat larger account, perhaps a personal diary. The journal ends with an entry for the 4th of August, 1869. The autobiography gives little more than a sketch of the boyhood and early itinerant days of the Rev. Heman Bangs. The great bulk of his work was done after he completed that 1817 assignment to the Newburgh Circuit.

Some idea of the extent of his labors may be gained from a **Christian Advocate** editorial appearing after his death, which occurred in 1869.

**He remained in the active work of the ministry fifty-four**

**consecutive years, retiring only last spring. Of these years thirty-three were devoted to the regular pastoral work; during eighteen years he filled the office of Presiding Elder, and for three years he served as Financial Agent of the Wesleyan University. (8)**

One of his colleagues has said of him,

**Heman Bangs, the brother of Nathan, was a conspicuous figure, six feet high, with bony frame, nervous and active, a prodigious worker. He was the very soul of honor. (9)**

Aside from the scraps of information which are to be found in the journal section of Heman Bangs' autobiography, we have but a few anecdotes from his many years as an itinerating and stationed preacher. He was too busy doing to trouble himself with recording what he was doing. Even his journal suggests "emotion recollected in tranquillity" rather than a record of immediate experience.

A local account preserved by the Ashokan church vividly portrays the difficulties of travel through a wilderness only partially tamed.

**The Circuit Riders, Elijah Woolsey and Heman Bangs preached in this area in 1817-18. It was Heman Bangs who, having preached to the people of Yankee Town (Wittenberg) tramped over the mountain in bitter cold and deep snow to the home of Andrew Hill in Shokan. He arrived there badly frost bitten but requested Mr. Hill to take him by sleigh to Tongore, the next place of preaching. Neither heat nor cold nor storm could keep these brave men from their work for God. (10)**

To the itinerants of that day, this was just an episode in another round of service in their chosen Christian calling.

How many churches Heman Bangs organized we do not know. Not all the information which may still be in existence has been ferreted out. He did establish a church in Milford, Connecticut, of which there is report.

**The Church in this beautiful New England town was organized by Rev. Heman Bangs when he was in the glowing morning of his ministerial life. . . . The tasteful church in which they still worship was completed and dedicated in 1843, a wonder in its day of the persistent, determined purpose of young Methodism to live and grow. (11)**

This item appeared in 1871.

When Heman Bangs in 1852 was leaving the New Haven District where he had served as Presiding Elder for a term of four years, resolutions of respect were drawn up and read at the Preachers' Association meeting. He, in replying, stated that during his term of

service he had traveled 10,741 miles, attended 452 quarterly meetings, and preached 872 sermons. (12)

The Rev. Heman Bangs made a considerable impact upon Methodism in the city of New Haven, both as a pastor and as a presiding elder. He was assigned there in 1825, and again in 1835. The Rev. George W. Woodruff, in an address which he prepared and delivered concerning New Haven Methodism, in 1859, had this to say, and it needs to be remembered that Mr. Bangs was still living at that time and was to return later on to serve further in that city:

**The Rev. Heman Bangs has served seven years in the pastor's office in this city,--a longer period than any one person in the history of the Society; and, in addition to this, has been for six years the Presiding Elder of the New Haven District: thus sustaining, to the brethren in this place, an official relation of thirteen years. More than one quarter of all his long ministry of forty-four years, has been spent with you.**

**To Mr. Bangs belongs the credit and responsibility of Methodistic extension in this city, he having originated both the St. John street and the George street Methodist Churches,--the former while he was pastor of the old church, and the latter while he was Presiding Elder of the District.**

**In 1836, Brother Bangs secured a subscription of \$14,000, and the lots upon which to build a second church; but the commercial disasters of that period delayed the project for three or four years. In 1844 he was appointed the pastor of the second Society; and during the three years he remained with them, the pleasant church and comfortable parsonage that they now have were built. (13)**

People never seemed to tire of paying tribute to the virtues and labors of Heman Bangs. What transpired when he was about to leave the Allen Street Methodist Episcopal Church, in New York, for his new pastoral charge is typical. A set of resolutions composed for the occasion praise him especially for

**his efficient pulpit ministrations--his faithfulness in attending the prayer and class-meetings--his unremitting attention to the sick and bereaved--his hearty co-operation to advance the interests of the Bible, missionary, Tract, and Sunday-school cause, and his indefatigable efforts to promote the interests of the Church generally, he has secured to us, as a Church and congregation, not only a high position among our sister Churches, but also of peace and prosperity in our own borders. . . . (14)**

A purse containing \$200 in gold was presented to him on this occasion and a gift of \$50 in gold was given by the women to Mrs. Bangs.

Robbery figured in one of Heman Bangs' experiences. This was in 1867.

**On Sunday, Sept. 8, Rev. Heman Bangs, now seventy-seven years of age, and filling his fifty-third annual appointment from the bishop, (his seventeenth as presiding elder,) preached three sermons, administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to a large congregation, conducted one love-feast, presided at one quarterly conference, and rode nine miles between services, and on Monday morning was early at the Preachers' Meeting, feeling, as he pleasantly assured us at the close, as vigorous in body and as happy in spirit as any of the younger preachers present. While on this way, on Saturday morning, from New Haven to his appointment on his district he was robbed of his watch and purse while sleeping in his berth in the steamer. . . . (15)**

Fortunately, there was a happy sequel to this episode.

**Rev. Heman Bangs, who was robbed a few days ago of his silver watch and purse, has been made the recipient of a gold watch and a larger purse, the grateful gifts of a few excellent and generous friends. (16)**

Some four years after his death, Heman Bangs had the distinction of having a church named for him. The Heman Bangs Memorial Church at Branford, Connecticut, was dedicated the 18th of December, 1873. (17) How long this church survived is not presently known; its fate appears to constitute a lost chapter in the Methodist history of that vicinity.

The retirement of Heman Bangs after a term of service running far beyond that of most men who enter the itinerancy was a momentous and moving occasion, taking place at the 1869 session of the New York East Conference, held that year at Middletown, Connecticut. Of his seventy-six years, he had spent fifty-four of them in the Methodist ministry. The **Christian Advocate** reported:

**Among the incidents (of the retirement proceedings) was the presentation to Mr. Bangs of a purse of three thousand dollars, one thousand of which was the gift of his ministerial brethren, and the remaining two thousand the gift of a few generous Methodist laymen of New York, Brooklyn, and other places. (18)**

The **Advocate** commented editorially:

**As he there stood among his younger brethren, he appeared to our fancy like some old, worn, and battle-scarred warrior,**

**laying down his arms, and undergirding his armor for the last time, after a thousand conflicts and victories. (19)**

Heman Bangs was within but a few months of the final end of his itinerancy, for death came to him in the evening of the 2nd of November of that same year.

The funeral service of the Rev. Heman Bangs was conducted on Friday, the 5th of November, 1869, in the First Methodist Episcopal Church of New Haven, Connecticut. The autobiography, published after the decease of Heman Bangs, quotes a press report which appeared at the time.

**He retained to the last the old-time costume of the Methodist preacher; yet his mind was not antiquated. He was fresh, progressive, and forward-looking to the end. A champion of education, though not cultured himself; an earnest, self-sacrificing, heroic man-strong in simplicity and truth, he has won a crown of immortality. (20)**

So ended the earthly career of country blacksmith, nurtured in the Catskills, who lived to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ for more than a half century.

## APPENDIX

### List of Pastors

Stamford Township and Hobart have always been linked together on the same circuit or pastoral charge. Although the name of the circuit varied from time to time, and in the early days many more than two preaching places were included, there has been an unbroken relationship between these two societies, even extending back before the formal organization of the Hobart society in 1834. In the early days, the names of the circuit changed from Delaware to Jefferson to Kortright.

1794	Robert Dillon, David Buck
1795	David Bartine, Jeremiah Ballard
1796	Zenas Conger, Daniel Crouch
1797	Anthony Turk, John Robinson
1798	John Robinson, William Vredenburgh
1799	Daniel Higby, Nathan Smith
1800	Thomas Dodson, Jonathan Newman
1801	John Leach, Benjamin Bidlack, William Williams
1802	Matthias Swaim, Stephen G. Whitehead
1803	Zenas Covell
1804	Henry Steele, Andrew McKean
1805	John Crawford, Jesse Davis
1806	Alex. Martin, Nehemiah U. Tompkins
1807	Joseph Willis, William Snow
1808	Nathan Bangs, Robert Dillon
1809	Hugh Armstrong, Cyprian H. Gridley
1810	John Kline, Abner Chase
1811	Samuel Fowler, Elijah Hibbard
1812	Bela Smith, Alex. Dunbar, Hawley Sanford
1813	John Finnegan, Elisha P. Jacobs, Henry Hobby
1814	Stephen Jacob, Beardsley Northrup
1815	Stephen Jacob, Heman Bangs
1816	Bela Smith, Horace Weston
1817	W.M. Stillwell, Isaac Lent
1818	Arnold Scholefield, James Young
1819	Arnold Scholefield, Henry Hadfield, Nathan Rice
1820	John Finnegan, James Quinlan

1821 John Bangs, Henry Eames  
 1822 John Bangs, Roswell Kelly  
 1823 Jesse Pomeroy, Quartus Stewart, C. Pomeroy  
 1824 Daniel I. Wright, Quartus Stewart  
 1825 Daniel I. Wright, John Wait  
 1826 Friend W. Smith, D. Poor, John Finnegan, Sup.  
 1827 Cyrus Silliman, Alex. Calder, John Finnegan, Sup.  
 1828 Alex. Calder, Philo Ferris, John Finnegan, Sup.  
 1829 Philo Ferris, John Bangs  
 1830 Eli Denniston, Paul R. Brown  
 1831 Eli Denniston, Paul R. Brown  
 1832 Harvey Brown  
 1834 Bezaleel Howe  
 1835 Desivignia Starks  
 1837 Reuben H. Bloomer  
 1839 James Floy  
 1840 William Lull  
 1842 David Turner  
 1844 Addi Lee  
 1845 Russell S. Scott  
 1847 Hiram Lamont  
 1849 Jason Wells  
 1851 William Smith  
 1853 William Mitchell  
 1855 Ira Ferris  
 1857 Aaron Rodgers  
 1858 William Goss  
 1860 Robert Kerr  
 1862 Sanford I. Ferguson  
 1864 W.F. Harris  
 1866 A.G. Gale  
 1868 William D. Fero  
 1869 Ezra Tucker  
 1870 I.R. VanDewater  
 1873 Charles B. Landon  
 1876 Charles C. Miller  
 1879 Lyman W. Wadsworth  
 1880 Orrin P. Dales  
 1883 Sheldon Merchant  
 1886 A.M. Gay  
 1890 A.E. Lord  
 1893 John W. Bohlman  
 1895 Augustine A. Walker  
 1899 William C. Oliver  
 1901 George O. Wilsey  
 1905 Frank D. Abrams  
 1909 Alpheus M. Morgan  
 1912 P. St. John Colman

1917 Alfred M. Wilkins  
 1921 Robert J. Harrison  
 1923 Luther K. Hannum  
 1929 James V. Taylor  
 1930 Samuel Art MacCormac  
 1936 Herbert Killinder  
 1939 W.H. Quinn  
 1943 Kenneth E. Hoover  
 1949 Kenneth B. Truran  
 1960 J. Philip Gehres

#### Pastoral Record of the Rev. Nathan Bangs

1801 Niagara Circuit, Canada, Supply with Joseph Sawyer and Seth Crowell.  
 1802 Bay of Quinte and Home District, Canada, with Joseph Sawyer and Peter Vannest.  
 1803 Bay of Quinte and Home District, with Joseph Sawyer and Thomas Madden.  
 1804 River Le Trench, Canada.  
 1805 Oswegatchie Circuit, Canada, with Sylvanus Keeler.  
 1806 Quebec, Canada.  
 1807 Niagara Circuit, Canada, with T. Whitehead and N. Holmes.  
 1808 Delaware Circuit, with Robert Dillon.  
 1809 Albany Circuit, with I. B. Smith.  
 1810 New York, with Eben Smith, J. Robertson, James M. Smith, and Peter P. Sandford.  
 1811 New York, with William Phoebus, Laban Clark, William Blagborne, James M. Smith, and Peter P. Sandford.  
 1812 Montreal, Canada. (Could not go because of the war.)  
 1813-16 Presiding Elder, Rhinebeck District.  
 1817 New York, with Daniel Ostrander, Seth Crowell, and S. Howe.  
 1818 New York, with Laban Clark, Seth Crowell S. Howe, and T. Thorp.  
 1819 Presiding Elder, New York District.  
 1820-23 Senior Book Agent, with Thomas Mason.  
 1824-27 Senior Book Agent, with John Emory.  
 1828-31 Editor, "Christian Advocate".  
 1832-35 Editor, "Methodist Quarterly Review" and the books of the General Catalogue.  
 1836-40 Corresponding Secretary, Missionary Society.  
 1841-42 President, Wesleyan University.  
 1843 New York, Second-street.  
 1844-45 New York, Greene-street.

1917 Alfred M. Wilkins 1990-'04 Richard Elder  
 1921 Robert J. Harrison '04-'13 Lorraine Cascia -  
 1923 Luther K. Hannum Ackerman  
 1929 James V. Taylor  
 1930 Samuel Art MacCormac 2013-'16 Romana Abalova +  
 1936 Herbert Killinder David Collins  
 1939 W.H. Quinn  
 1943-49 Kenneth E. Hoover 2016-2019 DEE STEVENS  
 1949-'60 Kenneth B. Truran 2019-2022 KWANG-IL KIM  
 1960-78 J. Philip Gehres 2022- PASTOR TEE  
 1979-84 Howard Newton  
 1984-86 Henry Hobbs  
 1986-90 David Young

**Pastoral Record of the Rev. Nathan Bangs**

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- 1802 Bay of Quinte and Home District, Canada, with Joseph Sawyer and Peter Vannest.
- 1803 Bay of Quinte and Home District, with Joseph Sawyer and Thomas Madden.
- 1804 River Le Trench, Canada.
- 1805 Oswegatchie Circuit, Canada, with Sylvanus Keeler.
- 1806 Quebec, Canada.
- 1807 Niagara Circuit, Canada, with T. Whitehead and N. Holmes.
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- 1828-31 Editor, "Christian Advocate".
- 1832-35 Editor, "Methodist Quarterly Review" and the books of the General Catalogue.
- 1836-40 Corresponding Secretary, Missionary Society.
- 1841-42 President, Wesleyan University.
- 1843 New York, Second-street.
- 1844-45 New York, Greene-street.

- 1846 Brooklyn, Sands-street, with J. C. Tackaberry, Super-  
numerary.  
1847 Brooklyn, Sands-street, with J. B. Merwin.  
1848-51 Presiding Elder, New York District (New York East Con-  
ference).  
1852-62 Superannuated.

#### Pastoral Record of the Rev. John Bangs

- 1819 Sharon Circuit John Finnegan, John Bangs  
1820 Sharon Circuit John Bangs, Horace Weston  
1821 Jefferson Circuit John Bangs, Henry Eames  
1822 Jefferson Circuit John Bangs, Roswell Kelley  
1823 Delaware Circuit John Bangs, Ira Ferris  
1824 Delaware Circuit John Bangs, Bezaleel Howe  
1825 Delaware Circuit Cyrus Silliman, Bezaleel Howe,  
John Bangs, Supernumerary  
1826 Delaware Circuit Cyrus Silliman, Philo Ferris,  
John Bangs, Sup.  
1827 Coeymans Circuit Jesse Hunt, John Bangs  
1828 Coeymans Circuit John Bangs, Harvey Brown  
1829 Jefferson Circuit Philo Ferris, John Bangs  
1830 Durham Circuit Phineas Cook, H. Wing, John Bangs  
1831 Durham Circuit Phineas Cook, David Terry, John Bangs  
1832 Delaware Circuit Noah Sullivan, John Bangs  
1833 Broome Circuit John Bangs, William Hill  
1834 Jefferson Circuit Desivignia Starks, John Bangs  
1835 Jefferson Circuit Elbert Osborn, John Bangs, R. H.  
Bloomer  
1836 Bloomville Circuit S.M. Knapp, John Bangs, Sup.  
1837 Charlotte Circuit Matthew Van Dusen, John Bangs, Sup.  
1838 Bloomville Circuit Joseph H. Frost, Arad S. Lakin, John  
Bangs, Sup.  
1839 Franklin Circuit R. H. Bloomer, John Bangs, Sup.  
1840 Kortright Circuit J. D. Bouton, W. Lull, John Bangs, Sup.  
1841 Kortright Circuit William Lull, John Davies, John Bangs,  
Sup.  
1842 Kortright Circuit David B. Turner, Charles T. Mallory,  
John Bangs, Sup.  
1843 Kortright Circuit David B. Turner, Benjamin M.  
Genung, John Bangs, Sup.  
1844 Kortright Circuit Charles T. Mallory, Addi Lee, John  
Bangs, Sup.  
1845 Jefferson Circuit Addi Lee, one to be supplied, John  
Bangs, Sup.  
1846 Charlotte Circuit Addi Lee, John Bangs, Sup.

- 1847 Charlotte Circuit Russell S. Scott, John Bangs, Sup.  
1848 Franklin Circuit Addi Lee, one to be supplied, John  
Bangs, Sup.

When a preacher was designated as a supernumerary, he was not given a full time pastoral assignment by the conference. He was attached to a circuit, however, and was expected to lend whatever assistance he could to the preachers. John Bangs, for health reasons, had to be given a supernumerary relationship for several years.

#### Pastoral Record of the Rev. Heman Bangs

The appended list of appointments may not be completely correct; but it is the best list available at the time of writing.

##### New York Conference.

- 1815 Delaware Circuit.  
1816 Sharon Circuit.  
1817-18 Newburgh.  
1819-20 New Windsor.  
1821-22 New York, John Street.  
1823-24 New Rochelle.  
1825-26 New Haven, Conn.  
1827-28 Middletown, Conn.  
1829-30 New York.  
1831 Derby Circuit, Conn.  
1832-33 Presiding Elder, New Haven District.  
1834 Agent, Wesleyan University.  
1835-36 New Haven, Conn.  
1837-38 Hartford, Conn.  
1839 Presiding Elder, New Haven District.  
1840-41 New York, Greene-street.  
1842-43 New York, Forsyth-street.  
1844-45 New Haven, Second Street  
1846 New Haven, St. John's Street  
1847 Bridgeport, Conn.

##### New York East Conference.

- 1848-51 Presiding Elder, New Haven District.  
1852-53 Presiding Elder, New York East District.  
1854 New York, Norfolk Street; Agent to Wesleyan University\*  
1855-56 New York, Allen-street.  
1857-58 Brooklyn, Centenary.  
1859-60 Presiding Elder, New York East District.  
1861-64 Presiding Elder, New Haven District.

1865-66 Presiding Elder, New York District.  
1867-68 Presiding Elder, North Long Island District.  
1869 Superannuated.

\* Evidently Heman Bangs was dissatisfied with his relationship with the trustees of Wesleyan University. In a letter dated 22 July 1853 and addressed to the Rev. Laban Clark, he complains because the trustees appear to be endeavoring to eradicate clergy influence at the University. He writes in no uncertain terms: "If we cannot have a religious education I desire no education at all. An infidel education I consider as worse than no education." (*Methodist History*, V. XI, no. 1, Oct., 1972, p. 41.)

## THE HEMAN BANGS FAMILY

Heman Bangs had two sons, the elder of whom, Aaron Coke Bangs, was a school teacher. In the summer of 1837, he was at his parental home; that October, when he was returning to the South to resume his teaching, he was drowned in the wreck of the steamer "Home", off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. (1) A second son, Stephen Beekman Bangs, was born in New York, 15 March 1823. At fourteen, he entered Wilbraham Academy. (2) In 1843 he was graduated from New York University, with honor. Licensed to preach in 1844 and admitted into the New York Conference, he died 20 March 1846. (3)

A daughter of Heman Bangs, Rachel A.W. Bangs, was married in Forsyth-Street Church, New York, on the 11th of June, 1844, to the Rev. Benjamin Jones, of the Mississippi Annual Conference. (4) This daughter died in Wesson, Mississippi, 3 June 1868. (5) She had been born in Warwick, New York, 1 November 1820. (6)

Two daughters managed the Eldrage Seminary, in New Haven, Connecticut. (7) They were apparently unmarried, and continued in their relation to this seminary for some years. (8) There were two other daughters, one of whom married Professor W.H.N. Magruder, of Centenary College, Brandon, Mississippi. It was while Rachel was visiting this married sister that she met her husband to be, the Rev. Benjamin Jones. (9)

Something is known of Mrs. Heman Bangs, largely because a memorial essay was prepared in which numerous details were related. (10) Mrs. Sally Burritt Bangs was born in Danbury, Connecticut, the daughter of Philip and Rachel Burritt, 3 August 1789. While she was very young the family moved to Delaware County, New York. She died 19 August 1864, aged 75. Mrs. Bangs was the mother of ten children, four of whom died in infancy. Four daughters survived her. (11)

## Notes:

### Notes: Township

1 **Prattsville District Register**, periodical edited and published in Jefferson, N.Y., V. 2, no. 2, Feb., 1885, pp. 17, 18.

2 "Reminiscences of the Past", Desivignia Starks, **Pratts. Dist. Reg.**, V. 2, no. 3, Mar., 1885, p. 37.

3 This information was drawn from a manuscript account of the Stamford Township church prepared by Mrs. Maude E. Sturgess in November, 1948. John M. Olmsted was probably the most financially able man of the settlement. Joseph Bangs was a local preacher. (See below.)

4 Information supplied by Mrs. Sturgess.

5 Murray, David, **Delaware County, New York, History of the Century**, Delhi, N.Y., William Clark, 1898, p. 563.

6 John Bangs and Roswell Kelly were preachers on the circuit in 1822 and the fore part of 1823. They may have had something to do with laying the groundwork for the church. The Rev. John Bangs had earlier resided in the family home in the town of Stamford, where he moved as a boy of eleven in 1792.

7 Mrs. Maude E. Sturgess. The high pulpit, which would be an annoyance to present day worshipers, was desirable at a time when large gatherings made necessary the use of the gallery, which flanked both sides and the end opposite the pulpit: the preacher had better command of the congregation from this vantage point than he would have had from a location only slightly elevated from the floor of the church.

8 **Pratts. Dist. Reg.**, V. 2, no. 8, Aug., 1885, p. 109. Mr. Everett Post, presently a resident in Township, stated (Feb., 1972) that originally the sheds, located back of the church, contained 14 or 16 stalls, built in the shape of the letter U. Because of their poor condition, all save two double stalls were demolished in 1923. These two were moved so as to face in a direction opposite to their original direction.

9 Mrs. Maude E. Sturgess.

10 **Ibid.**

11 Stamford **Mirror-Recorder**, weekly newspaper published in Stamford, N.Y., 17 Jan. 1968. When asked whence the bell came, Mrs. Sturgess could not tell. Her husband, who often attended

auctions and who knew his wife wanted the church to be equipped with a bell, obtained it at one of these auctions.

12 Jefferson Circuit Register, 1824. Manuscript in the possession of Reginald Clay, Richmondville, N.Y. This Register contains the record of additional Quarterly Meeting Conferences for the several years in which Township was included in the Jefferson Circuit.

10 Dec. 1825	6 June 1829
10 Sept. 1826	29 May 1830
24 Nov. 1827	24 Aug. 1831
2 Aug. 1828	7 Jul. 1832

13 **Christian Advocate and Journal**, V. 5, no. 48, 29 Jul., 1831, p. 191.

14 Jefferson Circuit Register, 1824.

15 Stamford and Bloomville **Mirror**, weekly newspaper published in Stamford, N.Y., 20 Feb. 1872.

16 Church Record, Hobart and Township, From 1879 to April 1, 1897.

17 **Ibid.**

18 Stamford **Mirror**, 5 June 1883.

19 Stamford **Recorder**, weekly newspaper published in Stamford, N.Y. 17 July 1897.

20 Stamford **Mirror-Recorder**, 10 Oct. 1946.

#### Notes: Hobart

1 Munsell, W.W., **History of Delaware County, N.Y.**, New York, 1880, p. 242.

2 Deed, Book C, p. 185, Delaware County Clerk's Office, Delhi, N.Y.

3 Murray, David, **Delaware County, New York, History of the Century**, Delhi, N.Y., 1898, pp. 466, 467, gives the 1800 date. Munsell, **Op. Cit.**, gives the 1808 date. It was not uncommon for churches, at this time, to be built several years prior to the giving of a deed.

4 **Prattville District Register**, periodical edited and published at Jefferson, N.Y., V. 2, no. 2, Feb., 1885, p. 17.

5 Munsell, **Op. Cit.**, p. 299, gives 1800 as the probable date of the formation of a society in what was to be Stamford village, but this is probably too early. It would be more realistic to suggest a date nearer to 1820.

6 Munsell, **Op. Cit.**, p. 302.

7 Recorded the Liber B of Church Certificates, pp. 50, 51, 6 Apr. 1835, Delaware County Clerk's Office, Delhi, N.Y.

8 **Christian Advocate**, V. 10, no. 1, 28 Aug. 1835, p. 2.

9 Bloomville **Mirror**, weekly newspaper published in Bloomville, N.Y., 16 May 1854.

10 **Christian Advocate**, V. 29, no. 24, 15 June 1854, p. 95.

11 Bloomville **Mirror**, 4 July 1854.

12 Windham **Journal**, weekly newspaper published in Windham, N.Y., 5 Feb. 1885.

13 Hobart-Township Church Record, 1879-1897.

14 Stamford **Mirror**, weekly newspaper published in Stamford, N.Y., 24 Mar. 1885.

15 **Ibid.**, 31 Mar. 1885.

16 Information supplied by the Rev. J. Philip Gehres, from the church records, and by Kehn's Bell Service, of Troy, N.Y., successors to the Meneely company. A Meneely bell consists of 78 parts copper and 22 parts tin.

17 Hobart-Township Church Record, 1879-1897.

18 Windham **Journal**, 15 Oct. 1885.

19 Stamford **Mirror**, 27 Oct. 1885.

20 **Ibid.**, 3 Sept. 1889.

21 **Ibid.**, 8 Oct. 1889.

22 Gilboa **Monitor**, weekly newspaper published in Gilboa, N.Y., 30 Jul. 1903.

23 Windham **Journal**, 19 Sept. 1913.

24 **New York Conference Minutes**, 1914, p. 84.

25 Windham **Journal**, 15 Oct. 1925.

26 The donors were Mr. Lyon, his sons William, Frank, and Donald, and Judge and Mrs. A.L. O'Connor, Arthur Van Buren, Harold Barber, and Marshall Mayes.

27 **Christian Advocate**, V. 34, no. 12, 24 Mar. 1859, p. 47.

28 Kortright Circuit Stewards' Book, in the possession of the Hobart United Methodist Church, p. 27.

29 Hobart Trustees' Record.

30 **Ibid.**

31 Fourth Quarterly Conference Report, 5 Feb. 1898.

32 Stamford **Mirror**, 18 Mar. 1884.

33 Second Quarterly Conference Report, 21 Sept. 1902.

34 Fourth Quarterly Conference Report, 13 Feb. 1903.

35 Fourth Quarterly Conference Report, 18 Jan. 1904.

36 See Note no. 34, **Ibid.**

37 Stamford **Mirror**, 10 Mar. 1903.

38 Jefferson **Courier**, weekly newspaper published in Jefferson, N.Y., 10 Sept. 1903.

39 Hobart Trustees' Record, 27 Feb. 1908.

40 **Ibid.**, 25 June 1909.

41 **Ibid.**, 30 Aug. 1912.

42 **Ibid.**, 25 Feb. 1919.

43 Hobart-Township Church Record, 1879-1897.

44 Bloomville **Mirror**, 6 July 1869.

45 **Ibid.**, 24 Aug. 1869.

46 **Ibid.**, 14 Sept. 1869.

47 **Ibid.**, 21 Sept. 1869.

The Rev. Desivignia Starks, pastor on the Kortright Circuit in

1835, the year the Hobart church was built, speaks of Dr. Howard, a practicing physician in Hobart, a Baptist, thus:

"He attended our church in Hobart, when his professional duties would admit, and led the singing for us. . . . One season while I was on that circuit, it was very sickly. Typhoid fever raged terribly through that region, and especially in Hobart village. There were many deaths. When my friend, the doctor, had a patient dangerous, he called upon me to visit them. I remember visiting fourteen in one day, and some daily for some time. In some instances, those who watched with the sick and with corpses, after death, took the fever and died with it. . . ." "Reminiscences of the Past", D. Starks, *Pratts. Dist. Reg.*, V. 2, no. 3, Mar., 1885, p. 38.

#### Notes: Bangs Family

- 1 Bangs, Heman, *The Autobiography and Journal of the Rev. Heman Bangs*, New-York: N. Tibbals & Son, 1872, p. 2.
- 2 Carroll, John, *Case and His Cotemporaries*, Toronto: Wesleyan Printing Establishment, 1867, V. 1, p. 224.

#### Notes: Joseph Bangs

- 1 Pilcher, Elijah H., *Protestantism in Michigan*, Detroit, Mich., 1878, p. 245. Joseph Bangs' obituary is to be found in the *Christian Advocate*, V. 23, no. 12, 22 Mar. 1848, p. 48.
- 2 Don McPherson's Notes, in MS., V. 1, in Stamford (New York) Village Library.
- 3 *Ibid.*, quoting from the Silliman family records.
- 4 *Christian Advocate*, *Op. Cit.*
- 5 Pilcher, *Op. Cit.*, p. 245.
- 6 Stevens, Abel, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs, D.D.*, N.Y.: Carlton & Porter, 1863, p. 65.
- 7 *New York Conference Minutes*, 1815, MS. on deposit in the New York Public Library.
- 8 *Christian Advocate*, *Op. Cit.*
- 9 Jefferson Circuit Record, MS. volume dated 1824, in the possession of Reginald Clay, Richmondville, N.Y.
- 10 *Ibid.* The camp ground that year was situated on the Humphrey Treadwell farm, located on the road leading from West Jefferson to Stamford, N.Y.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 *Ibid.* The "Presbyterian minister" referred to was in reality a Dutch Reformed clergyman.
- 13 McPherson Notes, pp. 18 and 30. There is a distinct possibility that he held this position at other times, perhaps continually during his residence in Stamford.

- 14 *Christian Advocate*, V. 3, no. 49, 7 Aug. 1829, p. 194.
- 15 Sweet, William Warren, *Religion on the American Frontier, 1783-1840*, V. 4, "The Methodists", Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1946, p. 400.
- 16 *Ibid.*, p. 401.
- 17 *Christian Advocate*, V. 12, no. 18, 22 Dec. 1837, p. 68.
- 18 *Ibid.*, V. 55, no. 45, 4 Nov. 1880, p. 714.

#### Notes: Nathan Bangs

- 1 Stevens, Abel, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs, D.D.*, New York: Carlton & Porter, 1863, pp. 13, 14. All the remainder of the details of Nathan Bangs' life and experience have been drawn from this biography.
- 2 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 125, 126.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 165.

#### Notes: John Bangs

- 1 *The Prattsville District Register*, v. 2, no. 9, Sept., 1885, p. 125. Periodical edited and published by the Rev. Edward White, first in Jefferson, N.Y., and later in Palenville, N.Y. Quotation from a letter of Rev. Joseph Hartwell.
- 2 Bangs, Heman, *The Autobiography and Journal of Rev. Heman Bangs, N.Y.*, N. Tibbals & Son, 1872. Introduction by Bishop E. S. Janes, p. xvi.
- 3 Stevens, Abel, *Life and Times of Nathan Bangs, D.D.*, N.Y., Carlton & Porter, 1863, p. 14.
- 4 *Pratts. Dist. Reg.*, v. 1, no. 6, June, 1884, p. 82.
- 5 Bangs, Heman, *Autobiog.*, p. 10.
- 6 Coles, Rev. George, *My First Seven Years in America*, N.Y., Carlton and Phillips, 1852, p. 202.
- 7 *Pratts. Dist. Reg.*, v. 1, no. 8, Aug., 1884, pp. 126, 127.
- 8 Bangs, John, *Auto-Biography of Rev. John Bangs, N.Y.*, Printed for the Author, 1846, pp. 161-163.
- 9 *Ibid.*, pp. 164, 165.
- 10 *Pratts. Dist. Reg.*, v. 2, no. 6-7, June-July, 1885, p. 94. Condensed from Bangs, *Autobiog.*, pp. 112-115.
- 11 *Ibid.*, v. 2, no. 9, Sept., 1885, p. 127. Condensed from Bangs, *Autobiog.*, pp. 129, 130.
- 12 Bangs, *Autobiog.*, pp. 125, 126. Bangs made no attempt to distinguish between Reformed and Presbyterian.
- 13 Morehouse, A.C., *Autobiography of A.C. Morehouse, N.Y.*, Tibbals Book Co., 1895, pp. 18, 19.
- 14 Bangs, *Autobiog.* p. 191.
- 15 Osborn, Elbert, *Autobiography of Elbert Osborn*, in two parts, N.Y., Pub. for the Author, 1865, Part II, p. 70.

- 16 Bangs, **Autobiog.** p. 59.
- 17 **Ibid.**, p. 150.
- 18 **Ibid.**, pp. 150-151.
- 19 **Ibid.**, pp. 209-210.
- 20 **Ibid.**, p. 212.
- 21 **Pratts. Dist. Reg.** v. 2, no. 9, Sept., 1885, p. 126. Letter of Rev. Joseph Hartwell.

**Notes: Heman Bangs**

- 1 Bangs, Heman, **The Autobiography and Journal of Rev. Heman Bangs**, New York: N. Tibbals & Son, 1872, p. 6
  - 2 **Ibid.**, p. 22.
  - 3 **Ibid.**, pp. 22, 23.
  - 4 **Ibid.**, p. 25.
  - 5. **Ibid.**, p. 28. Bishop Asbury died the following year.
  - 6 **Ibid.**, pp. 29, 30.
  - 7 **Ibid.**, p. 31.
  - 8 **Christian Advocate**, V. 44, no. 45, 11 Nov. 1869, p. 356.
  - 9 **New York Conference Minutes**, 1890, p. 133. Semi-Centennial Address of the Rev. M. D'C. Crawford, D.D.
  - 10 Pamphlet History, 1913-1963. Ashokan Methodist Church, pp. 2,3.
  - 11 **Christian Advocate**, V. 46, no. 12, 23 Mar. 1871, p. 90. Singularly enough, the Rev. Stephen Beekman Bangs, son of Heman Bangs, was assigned to Milford, Conn., in 1845.
  - 12 **Ibid.**, V. 27, no. 23, 3 June 1852, p. 91.
  - 13 Woodruff, George W., **History of Methodism in New Haven**, New Haven: 1859, p. 19. (Pamphlet)
  - 14 **Christian Advocate**, V. 32, no. 20, 14 May 1857 p. 79.
  - 15 **Ibid.**, V. 42, no. 38, 19 Sept. 1867, p. 301.
  - 16 **Ibid.**, V. 42, no. 47, 21 Nov. 1867, p. 373.
  - 17 **Ibid.**, V. 49, no. 2, 8 Jan. 1874, p. 13.
- What seems strange is that in 1966 a new congregation was established in Branford which finally constructed a church. The pastor was in 1972 appealed to for information concerning the earlier building and was completely mystified by the request. He could find no one with any knowledge of a previously existing Methodist society there.
- 18 **Ibid.**, V. 44, no. 15, 15 Apr. 1869, p. 117.
  - 19 Bangs, Heman, **Autobiography**, p. 377, quoting the **Advocate**.
  - 20 **Ibid.**, p. 384.

**Notes: The Heman Bangs Family**

- 1 Bangs, Heman, **The Autobiography and Journal of Rev. Heman Bangs**, New York: N. Tibbals & Son, 1872, p. 198.
- 2 Magruder, W.H.N., **The Young Minister**, New York: Carlton &

- Phillips, 1853, pp. 15, 16.
- 3. Simpson, Matthew, **Cyclopaedia of Methodism**, Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1882, p. 86.
- 4 **Christian Advocate**, V. 18, no. 46, 26 June 1844, p. 183.
- 5 **Ibid.**, V. 43, no. 24, 11 June 1868, p. 189.
- 6 **Ibid.**, V. 43, no. 45, 5 Nov. 1868, p. 355.
- 7 **Ibid.**, V. 52, no. 1, 4 Jan. 1877, p. 5.
- 8 Stamford **Recorder**, weekly newspaper published in Stamford, N.Y., 10 June 1893.
- 9 **Christian Advocate**, V. 43, no. 45, 5 Nov. 1868, p. 355.
- 10 Bangs, Heman, **Autobiography**, Memorial as an Appendix, p. 8.
- 11 **Christian Advocate**, V. 39, no. 49, 8 Dec. 1864, p. 390.

