**Table of Contents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Here and There</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memoirs of a Circuit Rider</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profile of the Conference</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist Students of Michigan</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishop Thomas Nicholson</td>
<td>8-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Here and There**

Correction: We are very sorry that we inadvertently left out the names of Rev. David Jordan and Rev. Cecelia Jordan, from the list of those attending the Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History at Louisville, Ky., in July. We rejoiced that they were able to be with us. The program featured a paper on Bishop R. E. Jones, our first black bishop, and David spoke adding some details to our picture of the bishop.

We rejoice that Dave Jordan, assisted by his wife Cecelia, is researching and writing a history of our former Lexington Annual Conference. This is a monumental undertaking. The North Central Jurisdiction Council on Ministries and Commission on Archives & History has given Dr. Jordan a grant of $2,000 to help with the expense of this project. With great interest, many people are awaiting the completion and publication of this history.


Among suggestions made at their first meeting are the following: "Take the Bicentennial Observance to the Congregations"; "Promote the Tripartite Theme: 'Claiming the Past, Celebrating the Present, Challenging the Future'"; "To study the book, "Images of the Future": "To provide speakers"; "To get a Drama Committee together to begin work on a drama that could be presented throughout the Area.

The Annual Meeting of our new state Methodist Historical Society will be held again in Lansing on April 29, 1982. Some very interesting papers are projected.

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**Memoirs of a Circuit Rider**

(An excerpt from the autobiography of William McKnight(1815-72), a pioneer Methodist preacher on the central Michigan frontier.)

"In the spring of 1849 I sold out my little farm in Grange to an Englishman for the same that I gave for it, and on the 27th day of April 1849, we had all our things packed up and started for Clinton County, Michigan. The place is called Rochester Colony on the Maple River.

We arrived here on the fourth of May, 1849. I bought me a farm on the Maple River of a Mr. G. Leunsbury, for which I paid him 700 dollars in cash, and two horses and harnesses for 200 more. 80 acres. This summer I hired a man by the name of E.R. Chapin, which came to this state with us. I paid him 12 dollars per month. I worked some myself during the week and preached on the Sabbath, until the fall of 1849.

I am, at this time, in the bounds of the Michigan conference, Grand River District, Mapleton circuit. My license was renewed on this circuit at a Quarterly-meeting held at Duplain July 30th, 1849. Dr. George Bradley was Presiding Elder and presided at the time. In September of this year, I went to the Michigan conference held at Adrian, Lenawee Co. Bishop Hamlin presided. From this conference I commenced traveling under the P. Elder and was sent on to the Rochester circuit as a junior preacher with Wm. Benson. He was my colleague and preacher in charge.

When I got home, I found my oldest boy sick. He had the measles and they left him with a bad cough. He had them in the fore part of the summer and had not got entirely over them when I went to conference. He took cold during my stay at conference. He continued to grow worse until the 27th day of September, 1849, when death released the sufferer and his spirit returned to God that gave it. He was twelve years five months old. He was buried at the Rochester Colony. Discourse by Rev. Wm. Benson of the M.E. church, from first Peter, chapter, 24th verse. All flesh was grass.

This conference year was a year of great interest to the church on this circuit and to my soul. I received this conference year in finances $674.44. We had a good revival this year. At our second Quarterly-meeting ... (Continued page 2)
receive 14; Lakeville with 58 members received 10 new members. In the Upper Peninsula Gladstone with 338 members received 35 new members; Gwinn with 266 members received 57 members; Skandia with 65 received 15; Quinnesec with 55 received 19; Germfask with 43 received 8; Sidnaw with 29 members received 5. Across our Conference there are Churches that are moving ahead and successfully winning people to the Kingdom. May their tribe increase!

MEMOIRS OF A CIRCUIT RIDER (Continued from page 1)

there had fifty-five joined on trial. The Lord continued to pour out His Spirit on this work. I traveled here for a single man's wages, 100 dollars, and at the close of the year all my receipts amounted to some $77 and 44 cents including traveling expenses and everything. This includes some ten dollars my wife rec.'

At our last Quarterly-meeting of this conference year, my case was brought up for a recommend to the Annual Conference to join the traveling connection from this circuit. I was recommended. My license was again renewed at the Qr. meeting held at Rochester Colony, Rochester circuit, Grand River District. George Bradley; Presiding Elder renewed my license July 6th, 1850. My case was presented to the Albion conference and I was received on trial in September, 1850. Bishop Morris presided at this conference. From this place I was read out by the Bishop for Tallmage circuit, alone and in charge of this four week's circuit. This circuit lies in Kent County and Ottawa, on the Grand River, David Burns is my presiding elder this year. This conference year was not like the past. This was a year of severe trial. Very little fruit of all my trial, yet the Lord sustained me by His grace.

I traveled this year about four thousand miles, the most of it on Horseback and in the sleigh. Our last quarterly-meeting was held on the Grand River at Tallmage. This year our conference held its session at Monroe, Monroe Co. At this conference I asked for a discontinuance, thinking it best from the circumstances that I was discontinued on the account of ill health.

I was placed under location (?) at the time, and being asked to by Br. Burns, my P. Elder, from being rather deficient in my course of study from the hard year's labor that I had on the Tallmage circuit. From the Monroe conference, I went to Detroit, sold my horse to Br. Wm. Benson for 100 dollars. I should of said for my year's labor on the Tallmage circuit, I received in quarterage and table expenses, one hundred and thirty-six dollars, including everything.

After selling my horse in Detroit, I went to Ohio to see my mother and other friends. Stayed about two weeks. Then I moved my things up to my farm from Tallmage circuit, which cost me 15 dollars. I did not travel this year but farmed a little. Br. Eli Westlake traveled here this year. At the last Quarterly-meeting my case was brought up for Deacon's Orders or to be recommended to conference for that purpose. Br. David Burns was Presiding Elder and he examined me before the Conference, and they recommended me and renewed my license at this time on Duplain Circuit, Grand River District.

September 4th, 1852, my case was presented to the conference and they voted that I should be ordained Deacon by the Bishop. Done by Bishop Scott at the Niles Conference on the 19th day of September, 1852. This place is on the Central R.R. In Berrien County also on the St. Joseph River. From the Niles Conference I was sent by the P. Elder of Grand River District, to Flat River circuit, to travel with Br. D. Thomas as junior preacher. This conference year has been a year of some prosperity..."

1 Orange was in Medina County, Ohio, S.S.W. of Cleveland.
2 Single M.E. preachers were entitled to a year's salary of $100; the claim of married men was $200 plus $16 each for children. Seldom did frontier preachers receive their claim. William Benson had received $127.91 of his $200 claim.
3 George Bradley (1810-71) was a missionary to the Indians in the Flint-Saginaw area; & was three times Presiding Elder of a district including Indian missions.
4 This was the Michigan Annual Conference meeting at Albion Sept. 4-10, 1850.
### PROFILE OF THE DETROIT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**THE SIZE OF THE CHURCHES AT THE END OF 1980** (Figures from the 1981 Minutes)

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<th>D. W.</th>
<th>D. E.</th>
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<th>M. H.</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
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No. Churches:
- Largest Church: 1632
- Smallest Church: 29
- Median Church: 221
- Average Church: 306

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<th>Conference Total</th>
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### Analysis

The Detroit Conference continued its melancholy overall record of recent years, and lost members again in 1980—a loss of 1,670.

However the Ann Arbor and Port Huron Districts made a slight gain in membership in 1980, and the Flint District held even. Two hundred and twenty-two Churches gained members; 250 Churches lost members; and 35 Churches stayed even. It appears that we are reversing the trend. We have a crying need to rekindle our evangelistic passion, and our concern for people and their needs.

Actually many of our Churches are doing very well. Many Churches have enthusiastic attendance, well over 50% of their membership regularly. On the Ann Arbor District we note Brighton with a membership of 442 and an average attendance of 280; Ogden with 114 members and attendance of 88; LaSalle with 108 members and attendance of 87; Chelsea with 474 members and attendance of 255. Many Churches have experienced a fine ingathering of new members amounting to over 10% of their members. On the Ann Arbor District, South Lyon with 324 members received 59 new members! Saline with 383 members received 55; St. Matthews Ypsilanti with 221 received 43; East Raisinville with 66 members received 22; Cherry Hill with 158 members received 23; Rollin Center with 47 members received 7 new members; Novi with 230 members received 35; Hardy with 202 received 26; Brighton with 442 received 58...

On the Port Huron District we rejoice that our new Church at New Baltimore received 48 members, to make a gain of 46; they raised their membership to 138 members on Jan. 1, 1981. Dryden with 124 members received 22 new members; Shabbona with 88 members

(Concluded at the top of page 2)
His career and character can perhaps be best summed up in the resolution of appreciation presented at the 1931 session of the Detroit Annual Conference, written by Reinhard Niemann, John Yeoman, and Sidney D. Eva.

"Finally we pledge the full measure of our affection to our Bishop, Thomas Nicholson, who comes to the close of another quadrennium with an enviable record of achievement and service. The glow of his spirituality, the fulness of his labors, the richness of his sympathies, together with the sturdiness of his statesmanship stir our hearts with admiration and inspire us to the exercise of our best powers. We pay our highest tribute to Bishop Nicholson when we pledge ourselves to emulate his Christian virtues and devote our finest loyalty to the high mission of the Church and the Kingdom of God. His name is written indelibly into the history of worldwide Methodism and will ever command the appreciation of Methodism's millions. Detroit Area is sturdier in its spiritual life and more efficient in all its undertakings for the leadership of Bishop Nicholson. We pledge him our loyal support in the enterprise of our great Church and the Kingdom of God."

"M. E. STUDENTS OF STATE OPEN MEETING HERE
250 Hear Bishop Nicholson, Dr. J. L. Seaton
At Opening Session

(Editor's Note: Through the thoughtfulness of Floy L. Haight, one of our Life Members of the Friends, we print herewith an article that appeared in the Dec. 6, 1924 issue of the Kalamazoo Gazette. This illustrates that Bishop Nicholson (See pages 5-6-4), like his predecessor, Bishop Henderson, was active in a ministry to college students.)

"Methodist students of Michigan opened their first annual state conference Friday night in the First Methodist Church here. The conference will last two days and a half, closing Sunday night.

About 250 were in attendance at the opening meeting, and it was announced that every college in Michigan was represented. More delegates were coming in Saturday, and at subsequent sessions an attendance of over 400 is anticipated.

Bishop Thomas Nicholson, head of the Detroit area of the Methodist church which embraces the entire state, was a speaker, at the Friday evening meeting. Dr. John L. Seaton, president of Albion College, was another speaker. Both took the same topic, "Methodism", and told what young people of the denomination can do for the advancement of Christianity. An open forum discussion followed the addresses and closed the meeting.

Saturday forenoon, the second session of the conference was held. Addresses were scheduled to be given by Leonard Kercher, social science professor; H. E. Lucock, contributing editor of the Methodist Church and one of the foremost writers in the denomination, and others.

Delegates to the conference Saturday noon were to be the guests of Jacob Kindleberger at the Kalamazoo Vegetable Parchment Company. Dinner was to be served in the Parchment Community House, after which a trip of inspection was to be taken through the mill. Saturday afternoon, in the community house Mr. Kindleberger will give an address on "The Value of Christian Principles in Business." J. P. Mavety, corresponding secretary of the Board of Negro Education also will speak.

"War" will be the general theme of the meeting Saturday evening. Addresses are scheduled by Howard Pecker, editor of the student Challenge, and Mrs. Evelyn Riley Nicholson, chairman of the Commission for Peace.

Three sessions will be held Sunday, at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., and at 3:00 p.m. During these meetings it is expected that the students will form a state organization, to have charge of arranging the annual conferences."
(Bishop Thomas Nicholson was Michigan Methodism's second resident bishop. He followed dynamic Bishop Theodore Henderson, and served two terms from 1924 to 1932. He had had outstanding success in two Michigan parishes at the end of the century. He then served as President of Cornell College in Iowa and Dakota Wesleyan University in South Dakota, and for eight years as general Secretary of the Board of Education. In 1916 he was elected Bishop and assigned to Chicago. We continue with the second half of a paper given by Rev. Allen Gray to the Conference Commission on Archives and History in 1978.)

He had a great wife. In the Encyclopedia of World Methodism, her picture and biography take up more room than the Bishop's. Born into a parsonage in Jackson, Minnesota, she was educated at DePauw University. After teaching Latin in Florida and Indiana, she became Professor of Latin at Cornell College in 1901, serving until her marriage in 1917. She was especially interested in women's work and foreign missions. She served as President of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society from 1921 to 1940. In 1923, Helen Kim of Korea, suggested to her that Christian Women of the world ought to unite to promote world peace and for betterment of all mankind. Together they joined forces which led to the organization of the World Federation of Methodist women in 1939. She received three honorary degrees, was a delegate to General Conference in 1928, 1936, and 1940, and her book "The Way to a Warless World" was placed in the cornerstone of the Church Peace Center at the United Nations Plaza. A remarkable woman indeed.

While Bishop in Chicago, occurred that event alluded to in the second sentence of this paper. There was in the Rock River Conference, a minister by the name of John Thompson. He had one burning ambition which was somewhat reluctantly shared by his fellow ministers and laymen, and frowned upon by the politicians of the city. He wanted to construct in the heart of the loop an edifice which would combine worship and commerce, in other words, a church surrounded by an office building whose rental would help pay for the church and on its top, which would be the highest structure to be seen in the city, a cross. Now if you journey to the Loop in Chicago today, it is hard to visualize that the Cross on top of Chicago Temple was at one time one of the highest and most visible sights in that area. Even in my seminary days of the early forties, it stood out far more prominently than it does today.

But in that day it was to be quite an innovation and needed to clear the city council which was composed of Irish ward healers and other ethnic background representatives least likely to be persuaded in favor of a protestant church. There was quite a struggle of which Bishop Nicholson was fond of relating. That there was a successful and happy conclusion to the story probably sparked his interest in promoting Boulevard Temple when he moved to Detroit. This edifice was built at a cost of over a million dollars, likewise with apartment and office space as well as a church. The fate of the Boulevard Temple was not as happy as the Chicago Temple however, when the Retirement Homes took it over in 1962, there was still a debt of over $100,000. The Chicago Temple is still thriving in the Loop and everyday you are downtown at noon, you can still hear the carillon playing Christian hymns amid the rush of traffic. Bishop Nicholson's appearance at this time was quite austere with his VanDyke beard, and Ben Holme who was ordained by him at Garrett remembers looking up in those awesome moments of the ordination service when your mind is supposed to be on holy things, and thinking to himself, "I am being ordained by a Jewish rabbi".

In 1924 he was assigned to the Detroit Area. I can recall attending a meeting at Central Church Pontiac some years ago just prior to Bishop Reed's retirement. There were several other bishops there promoting some cause that has slipped the mind but I do remember a remark of one of them which was "God help the man who succeeds Marshall Reed." The same impradation for Divine assistance could have been made for
Thomas Nicholson succeeding Theodore Henderson. The two men were very dissimilar. Henderson was gregarious, outgoing, seemingly everywhere all at once. Nicholson was rather remote and as someone grumbled, didn't know the Boundaries of the Detroit Conference went beyond Eight Mile Road. He was a man of many interests and causes which consumed much of his time. He was national president of the Anti-Saloon League which took up much of his time. Together with his wife, he attended several conferences abroad. Likewise, according to the system of the day, Bishops did not preside over their own Conferences. Out of the two quadrenniums he was in residence, he presided over Conference only four times.

The first four years of his tenure were marked by great prosperity with new congregations being formed and Boulevard Temple being built. The last four years were times of struggle through the gathering and finally descended depression. Laverne Finch remembers how he was to graduate from seminary during this time and be eligible for appointment. He had written the bishop of his intentions and had been told that churches were very scarce since associates were being dropped by larger churches and wanted their own, likewise men on detached service were scourring for cover, and there was little likelihood of an appointment being available. Then one day he received a note from the Bishop, that he was to be in Boston and would like to see him at his hotel. There followed a rather lengthy conversation in which it was obvious that the Bishop was "sizing up" Laverne. This was in April, seminary did not get out until June and Conference wasn't until September. However Laverne must have passed muster because the Bishop told him that if he could arrange to be released from the seminary within a week, there was a church in the Michigan Conference where the pastor had just left because of pastoral malpractice and the congregation as well as the community was still reeling from an explosion in the school house, which had left many children dead and injured. So within a week, Laverne had taken what tests he could and finished the rest on the train heading west to Bath.

Nicholson lacked the executive punch of Bishop Henderson and was pretty well directed by the Cabinet, which at that time had a very strong Detroit D.S. Detroit at that time was growing while the rural and mining areas were declining so there was an increased tension between Detroit and "Outstate" evidenced in the legislature as well as the church. Bishop Nicholson did not visit the churches outstate too often though it is said he knew the name and face of every minister in the conference. He and his wife were very appreciative of young ministers and entertained at their Virginia Park residence quite frequently. Some feel that we did know him at his full strength and power and the crippling disease which was ultimately to all but immobilize him was beginning to take its toll. Despite this, he kept up a constant pace of travel, journeying to Korea in 1930, attending to his duties as President of the Board of Hospitals and Homes, member of the executive committee of the Federal Council of Churches, as well as the Anti-Saloon League previously mentioned.

Another far reaching appointment of his tenure was to secure the services of Fred Poole to head up Christian Education first in the area and later only the Detroit Conference. On Jan. 1, 1928, he dedicated the first building of Bronson Hospital. In 1932 General Conference was in Atlantic City and when Bishop Nicholson arrived, he knew he would be retiring though he could have served another four years. However, his retirement had not cleared the Committee on Episcopacy by the time the retirements were announced and so his came in a most dramatic fashion on the floor of the conference. Hugh Kennedy, John Thompson, and Merton S. Rice spoke words of appreciation representing the three conferences he had held residential responsibility for. He and Mrs. Nicholson retired to Mt. Vernon, Iowa, and lived near the campus of Cornell. He kept his extensive library of over 7,000 volumes and spent most of his days writing and reading, topping off each day with a walk to the downtown section of Mt. Vernon.

(Concluded at the top of page 4.)