

INTRODUCTION

The Work of Dr. Metcalf

As this work is undertaken, there are two research projects completed already on the history of the early Methodist Church in Colorado. In August, 1948, Dr. Kenneth E. Metcalf completed his dissertation The Beginnings of Methodism in Colorado, treating essentially, the years 1859-1863.¹ Dr. Metcalf has completed a masterful task, made even more difficult by the scarcity of early records, and complete histories of the various churches. He has given new life to many men who had become little more than names in Conference Journals, and new meaning to statistics filed away and almost forgotten. Especially noteworthy was his treating of the early history of the state, that the Methodist development might be seen to unfold in its natural environment, and have coherence, as well as its true relationship to the state's development as a whole.

Perhaps some explanation as to the specific dates which are chosen would be in order. It was on July 3, 1859, that Rev. William H. Goode preached in what is now the city of Denver.² It is following the work of Goode and his associates, Jacob Adrians, that the Methodist Church was permanently organized in Denver. However, a Methodist service had been held several months before (in the fall of 1858) by a George W. Fisher, in cabins, saloons, or preaching in the open air.³

The Rocky Mountain Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized July 10, 1863, with Bishop Edward R. Ames presiding.⁴ It is this most important era of Methodism with which Dr. Metcalf has dealt in great detail.

The Work of Dr. Swan

The second dissertation which the writer has used as background material was completed by Dr. Lowell B. Swan, August, 1951.⁵ In his History of Methodism in Colorado he includes the work done between the dates 1863 and 1876, the latter date was significant in the history of Colorado. It was on July 1, 1876, at a special election, that the Colorado State Constitution was voted upon, and passed by a vote of nearly four to one. Colorado became the thirty-eighth state, the "Centennial" state a month later by Presidential proclamation, August 1, 1876.⁶ Dr. Swan

¹ Kenneth E. Metcalf, Beginnings of Methodism in Colorado (unpublished Th. D. dissertation, the Iliff School of Theology, 1948).

² Peter Winne, "Historical Gleanings," The Trail, from a letter written by Adrians to Winne, VIII, No. 6 (August 1915), p. 12.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, March 23, 1867.

⁴ "Minutes of the Rocky Mountain Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church," July 10, 1863. These minutes were printed following the conference, and they were duplicated again in the Conference Journal of 1913, the Golden Jubilee.

⁵ Lowell B. Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, 1863-1876 (unpublished Th. D. dissertation, The Iliff School of Theology, 1951).

⁶ LeRoy R. Hafen, Colorado and Its People (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Co., 1948), Vol. I, p. 355.

has compiled his many resources in a logical progression, showing the development within the three large areas: Denver and vicinity; Greeley, or the Northern District; and the Southern District. In addition, he has included a summary of the educational work of this same period.

Scope of this Work

The research which is contained in these two completed dissertations has proved invaluable as the basis on which this present work is begun. In a very special way both of these men have given new meaning and clear insight to the work they have undertaken. The present work seeks then, not to be repetitious in any needless way, but should include only summaries of their work to give true perspective to the Denver Methodist churches in 1876. For the brief summaries of the churches before 1876, the writer is indebted to both these men and their work. However, for a complete history of the early periods, the reader is referred to these two theses in their entirety.

As the present work is planned it is with a deep sense of gratitude, both to Dr. Metcalf, and to Dr. Swan, for their pioneering work. As the next section of history is now undertaken, it is with the fond hope that its excellence may measure up in some small way to the goals which they have set and the supreme mastery with which they have compiled and made coherent their histories.

Since Colorado became a state, it has seemed to this writer that Methodism in the whole state has become too diverse and too broad a subject to cover adequately in one dissertation, hence it seems wise to concentrate on one particular portion of the state's development since 1876. The topic chosen includes only those churches of the Metropolitan Denver area, and the special projects and institutions of this same area. The date 1912 includes the developments in Denver to the close of the Episcopacy of Bishop Henry White Warren, whose great influence is felt in every valley and plain within our state. Bishop Warren first came to Colorado in 1880 to conduct his first conference after having been elected to the Episcopacy in that year.¹ In 1884 when an Episcopal Residence was established in Denver, Bishop Warren chose this as his home, and remained here until his retirement and his death, both in 1912.

Thomas Carlyle once said, "The history of the world is but the biography of great men". In the life and the work of Bishop Warren we can again see the truth of this famous saying. In choosing to relate this dissertation closely to Warren's work and influence it is hoped that we shall be able to give him a part of the recognition which he has long deserved, and probably less often received.

Two educational institutions play their great part in the early history of Denver Methodism, namely the University of Denver (Colorado Seminary), and later the Iliff School of Theology. In the case of each of these, only a sketch of their history will be given; but this will let us see their true place in the development of Methodism in the city. A detailed history of

¹ Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, 1880. Hereafter cited as Journal of the Colorado Conference ...

either institution would be a complete work in and of itself, and indeed, there are already two theses dealing with a portion of the developing history of the University of Denver.¹

The work is divided into four major sections. Each date is chosen because of certain events within the stream of the developing history, and the attempt is made to unite the progress of the various churches and institutions around certain major influences within the city and church. Perhaps others might have been chosen, but the scheme adopted here has proved a convenient way to organize the vast amount of material into coordinated sections. The first of these sections includes the history from 1876 to 1884. The former date is the ending of Dr. Swan's work, and the latter marks the establishment of an episcopal residence in Denver with Bishop Warren as Colorado's leader. The second section including the history between 1884 and 1890 ends with the establishment in 1890 of the "City Missions" appointment in Denver which did much to further the church work in the outlying regions of the growing city. The third section ends with the year 1900, chosen in part because that was the beginning of the great work of Dr. Henry A. Buchtel of the University, and chosen in part rather arbitrarily as a convenient breaking point between 1890 and 1912. The fourth section concludes the work of Bishop Warren to his retirement and subsequent death, as has been mentioned earlier.

Limitations as to Sources

At many points in this unfolding story of Denver's Methodism, many questions must go unanswered, because the details in many cases are unobtainable, and perhaps will remain unknown. Much of the material is based on newspaper records, church records, conference minutes, and printed histories. However, there are also many details which have been supplied through interviews with older members in the various churches. In most cases these are not from written records or notes, but are the reminiscences and interesting recollections taking the person interviewed back to his childhood or early adolescence. Such additions from unsubstantiated sources are generally included here, though qualified by the mention of their origin. In many cases also, such recollections add interesting side-lights which would not have been included in records had they been preserved. Often these little human interest items add new life to the facts and statistics which are reported, and help us to feel the true spirit of the times in which our church had its development.

¹ Robert B. Rhode, Governor John Evans, Builder of two Universities (unpublished Master's thesis, the University of Denver, 1952); and Jeannette Joan Dunleavy, Early History of Colorado Seminary and the University of Denver (unpublished Master's thesis, the University of Denver, 1935). The latter of these two is the more comprehensive, though it includes only the history of the school to the year 1880. Mr. Rhode has sketched in the history to the death of John Evans in 1897.

CHAPTER I

A SKETCH OF EARLY DENVER HISTORY

Denver, the “Queen City of the Plains” is not yet one hundred years old. As we look over this growing metropolis today, it is hard to imagine a time when it was only a few tents, or some crude shacks on a plain dotted only with small hills and a few trees along two sources of water; the Platte River, and Cherry Creek. However, Denver does have a colorful history, and one which is as typical of growing America as any. Before one can successfully place the church in a situation, that situation itself must be analyzed to see its problems, difficulties, and possibilities. This is the proper place to begin with any study of the origin of a religious group.

Many writers have speculated concerning the reasons for the phenomenal growth of Denver. It is not on a major river, it is not a natural cross-country route, and it is seemingly not a potential for vast industrial resources, manufacturing, or otherwise. However, Denver is at the place where a ferry crossed the Platte River; and it is at this fork where Cherry Creek joins the Platte that the first settlements were made. To be sure, the first pioneers did not think of founding a city; they thought first of the gold which they hoped to find in the nearby mountains, and secondly of getting back to their homes in the East. Indeed, it was said by Washington Irving in his Astoria that:

. . . a great part of it [the plains and mountain region] will form a lawless interval between the abodes of civilized man . . . and . . . be subject to the depredations of the marauder.¹

This prediction was not fulfilled, for Denver did have a great future before it. The first ten years were precarious, but with the coming of the railroads in 1870, and for the next twenty years, Denver mushroomed as have few other cities in American history.²

Gold Discoveries: -- The story is told of two Indian half-breeds in George telling a man named Russell of some gold they found at the place where Cherry Creek empties into the Platte. These Indians were Cherokees, hence unfriendly with the majority of Indians in the Colorado area who were Arapahoe. The Russells had been successful in California, and were eager to learn of any other possibilities for gold discoveries. This explorer had also found gold in a section of the Platte on his trip from California; therefore with his new information, he was anxious to organize a group and head back west.³

At about the same time, there were many stories of gold repeated in eastern Kansas and Nebraska, and western Missouri. These were at first rumors, but then came newspaper confirmations. Various stories were printed painting the glory and the possibilities of the “Pike’s Peak Gold Region,” that the people were conditioned to begin another “Gold Rush”. They began

¹ Washington Irving, Astoria (New York: John B. Alden, Publisher, 1886), p. 168.

² Colorado Writer’s Program of the Work Projects Administration for use in Denver Junior High Schools, A Short History of Denver, Part I: Life in Denver (Denver: Department of Instruction, Denver Public Schools, 1940), p. 5. Hereafter referred to as: Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History . . .

³ Ibid.

to think that there really was some truth to the stories. This was validated when two Indians arrived in Lawrence, Kansas, with some gold dust they had found in the Western area. These Indians also told of finding other evidences of gold in many of the creeks leading into the mountains as they were guides on some of Fremont's expeditions a decade or so earlier.¹

Green Russell Expedition and the founding of Auraria: -- In the few years previous to the founding of the city of Denver, there was some spotty mining, probably discontinued about 1857, and known as "Mexican diggings." Prospecting was also done in 1858 and 1859 by the Lawrence group near the towns called Montana City and St. Charles. General Marcy relates that in May, 1858, he camped at the site now known as Denver, and some of his men accidentally discovered gold nearby.² Hence, he mentioned this in one of his books, which added to the "gold fever" of the midwestern towns.

In the same month, the company of 104 men from Georgia, known as the "Green Russell" expedition, arrived at the junction of Cherry Creek and the Platte River May 22, 1858. The first gold diggings were indeed scant, as they found no more along the place where the Indians had told them. Later they began to look farther up the rivers. One by one the men became discouraged, and deserted the party. Finally, with only twelve faithfuls remaining, they decided that the little gold they found along these creeks had come from farther up the rivers. Hence, their party divided into two groups; the one followed the Platte to its headwaters, and the other went north into what is now southern Wyoming. When winter came, both parties hurried back to the settlement on Cherry Creek with plans for more exploration the next year.³

The Green Russell group from Georgia organized a town along the Platte, west of Cherry Creek, in what is now lower West Denver. After their home town in Georgia, they named it "Auraria," meaning in Latin, "Gold." This town later joined with a newer group known as Denver City, to become the original organization of the present city. A sketch of the first building of the town of "Auraria" is interesting:

These builders erected a rough cabin of good size, with a "shed-roof" covered with earth, upon the right bank of the South Platte, some two hundred yards above the mouth of Cherry Creek. It stood near what is now the N. E. corner of 11th and Wawatta Streets, in West Denver, and which locality has for a number of years been occupied by railway tracks. This cabin was, as far as known, the first habitation build by white men upon the site of pioneer Denver City, but not . . . the first within the present limits of the city.⁴

The Founding of St. Charles: -- Another group also looking for gold soon moved in near Auraria. These men had come from Lawrence, Kansas, by way of Colorado Springs. They had found nothing, and were almost ready to go back home when they heard of the Russell settlement. The Kansas group organized what they called "Montana City" near the place where Evans Avenue now crosses the river. However, this location was not suitable, and in time they moved farther down the river to found the town they called St. Charles, in the present downtown

¹ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver (Denver: The Times-Sun Publishing Co., 1901), pp. 205-6.

² Ibid., p. 206.

³ Ibid., p. 209.

⁴ Ibid., p. 216.

Denver between the 14th Street viaduct (Cherry Creek) and 20th Street viaduct to the east, and stretching south along what is now Broadway. They took into their organization two men who were good friends of the Indians, and who had been here for years; John Smith and “Jack Jones”, (whose real name was William McGaa). This group returned to Kansas that winter, and through various circumstances they lost their claim and their town.¹

General Larimer and the founding of Denver City: -- The story of the beginning of Denver City begins with the decision of the St. Charles founders to return to their Kansas homes. At the time when these men were going home, a group from Leavenworth, Kansas, led by General William Larimer, headed west. Larimer was a shrewd person, and knew business and finances. His party came up the Arkansas to a place near the present town of Pueblo, where he met Ed Wynkoop, surveying the land as the new country of Arapahoe, of the Kansas Territory. Larimer persuaded him to come along to the North, and the two became leaders in founding the new city. As they arrived at the junction of Cherry Creek with the river, November 16, 1858, they found a marker for the town of St. Charles, consisting of four logs laid in a square. The next day, Larimer took charge of the territory, disregarding the St. Charles’ group claim. The only remaining member of the latter organization was Charles Nichols, whose efforts were futile to maintain the company’s claim. However, Larimer thought that perhaps his group would have to fight for a claim if they were challenged; therefore, they named the area Denver City, after Governor James W. Denver of Kansas, hoping that he would support them. At the time, they did not know that James Denver had resigned a month before to become Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The earlier claim of the St. Charles group was recognized by the Kansas legislature, and the new governor. Yet Larimer’s shrewd methods achieved their end as he now offered to effect a merger with the St. Charles organization. The St. Charles group consented, received \$250.00, and became a part of the new Denver City.²

Summary: -- By way of summary we should remember that the first group in Denver was the “Green Russell” group from Georgia, who organized Auraria, on the west side of Cherry Creek. The second group, from Lawrence, Kansas, organized St. Charles on the east bank but left their claim to return home for the winter. The third group, from Leavenworth, Kansas, headed by General Larimer, organized Denver City on the St. Charles claim, and eventually effected the merger with Auraria to make the beginning of the City of Denver.

Religious Beginnings in the Denver area:-- While this confusion was in process concerning the organization of the towns, the first sermon was preached in the area known as Denver on November 21, 1858, by a local Methodist preacher named George W. Fisher, who arrived in Denver with the Larimer party. This minister had not come to found a church however, but probably he himself was a miner, and preached only occasionally. During the winter of 1858 perhaps he came back to Denver where he worked as a carpenter and wagon maker, and held periodic services in the cabins, stores, and other available places.³

¹ Ibid., p. 217.

² Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History . . . p. 10.

³ Kenneth E. Metcalf, Beginnings of Methodism in Colorado (unpublished Th. D. dissertation, the Iliff School of Theology, 1948), pp. 22ff.

As far as the Methodist church is concerned, the summer of 1859 was an important time, as regularly appointed preachers arrived on the scene. According to Goode,¹ he and Jacob Adriance arrived in Denver on June 28, after having been appointed to the Pike's Peak and Cherry Creek Mission. Goode preached July 3, 1859, in the Pollock Hotel, on 11th Street between Wazee and Market. Adriance preached that afternoon. These two preachers founded the St. James Methodist church at Central City on July 10, and the church at Golden on July 17, 1859. The next month, on August 2, the church group was officially organized in Denver as the Auraria-Denver City Mission. Goode and Adriance were the first preachers who were officially representatives of any denomination to arrive in Denver and the mining regions, and consequently the first to establish official churches. The future of the Denver organization even at that time did not look very favorable, and but for slight turns of circumstance, might have perished without a record.

The Development of Denver City and Auraria

The first streets were laid out in Auraria, parallel to the creek, as Ferry Street (now 11th); Cherry Street (along the creek, now 12th); and St. Louis Street (now 10th). First Street was at the extreme northern end of town, and is now called Wewatta, though it consists of little more than railroad yards today.

At the same time that Auraria was becoming an organized town, Denver City was attempting to keep pace. Larimer had laid out Wynkoop, Wazee, Blake, McGaa (now Market), Larimer, Lawrence, and Arapahoe Streets, the latter being outside the city limits. It is noted that each of these names has a significance except possible Wazee. Wynkoop and Larimer were early leaders; Blake, the first merchant; McGaa, a trader and trapper; Lawrence for the Kansas town of the same name; and Arapahoe for the Indians who signed their land away. Wazee is an Indian name, possibly for a squaw, who may have been McGaa's "wife", but unknown to us today.² At the same time, the cross streets were E, F, and G, now 14th, 15th, and 16th, respectively. It is interesting to note the pattern of Denver, with the central part lying on a diagonal. The first streets were laid parallel to Cherry Creek, and not until the town extended to greater dimensions did the founders decide to follow compass lines, with streets running North and South, East and West.

It is said that 125 houses were built in Auraria during the first winter of 1858.³ Business houses also gradually moved into the new town of Auraria, and before the first of January the next year (1859), most necessities were provided for in the local stores. Denver City-Auraria soon became a trading center for persons going back and forth to the mountains, and also those traveling for other reasons, north and south in Colorado. Blake and Williams was the pioneer store in the area, followed by Kinna and Nye. "Uncle Dick" Wooten astonished all people as he constructed a store 20 x 32 feet in size, which had a real wooden floor. Most of the buildings then had only dirt floors.⁴ Tom Pollock opened a blacksmith shop in Auraria in December,

¹ William H. Goode, Outposts of Zion (Cincinnati: Pow and Hitchcock, 1864), p. 424. This is verified by the Adriance Diary, unpublished, which is in the possession of the Denver Public Library.

² Colorado Writer's Program, A Short History . . . , p. 17.

³ W. B. Vickers, History of the City of Denver (Chicago: O. L. Baskin and Co., Historical publishers, 1880), p. 185.

⁴ Ibid., p. 186.

1858. The Denver-Auraria directory for 1859 contains a list of 251 individuals and firms among which we note “Fenton, Auld and Iliff, dealers in groceries, provisions and clothing, Larimer Street between F and G, Denver City”.¹ This was the John Wesley Iliff who later became one of the leading ranchers in the state, and whose family and fortune were so completely devoted to the church and the school they founded, the Iliff School of Theology.

The first saw-mill came to Denver in early 1859, and the first load of lumber from this mill arrived in Denver April 21, 1859. Tom Pollock and “Uncle Dick” Wooten bought much of this lumber, and these were the first structures built along the creek. Also on April 21, 1859, William N. Byers came in with his printing equipment to begin publishing The Rocky Mountain News. It was in “Uncle Dick” Wooten’s store that The Rocky Mountain News was first published. The Pollock Hotel was the earliest building of its kind in the area. A lodge of the Masons was established in Denver in January, 1859, and the Odd Fellows soon after; however, neither thought it expedient to construct a building in this temporary town.²

March 28, 1859 was the date given for the first election of county officers in the area. The rivalry between Auraria and Denver City was very marked in this election, with Auraria outvoting Denver City 231 to 144 votes.

The growth of the infant “twin cities” was amazing. In just a little more than a year, (by the fall of 1859), the population was reported to be approximately 1,000 persons.³

In the midst of this growth of the towns, many of the pioneers returned to their home states the fall of 1859 as they had had meager success in finding gold. They also thought that the area might have a sever winter. The whole expedition was then termed “The Pike’s Peak Hoax.”

The tide was turned, however, by the findings in the fall of 1859, by Jackson in the vicinity of Idaho Springs; and by Gregory, near Central City and Blackhawk. Then the rush really began, and some who had been discouraged on their way back home, stampeded again to Denver and to Clear Creek canyon. There was danger, so some thought, that the two struggling towns on Cherry Creek would become merely stopping places for prospectors on the way to the mines. In early days the Platte River had four times as much water as today, and the ferry maintained at Auraria was necessary for the travelers. With the boom, stores sprang up, business developed rapidly, supplies of all types were made available in Denver. As might be expected, saloons and gambling houses were built; and in time it was said that those who stayed in Denver in the various businesses got more of the gold than those who did the digging.⁴

The importance of the founding of the “Leavenworth and Pike’s Peak Express” can hardly be overestimated. This brought regular service to Denver, beginning in Ma, 1859. Its cargo was mail, freight and passengers, and it was a connecting link with “civilization” 700 miles distant. In looking over the gold fields, and finding encouragement there, one of the first

¹ The Brand Book, official publication of “The Westerners”, Denver, Colorado. August 1950. This publication contains a biography of John Wesley Iliff, especially from the standpoint of his cattle interests.

² W. B. Vickers, History of the City of Denver, p. 15.

³ Ibid., p. 192.

⁴ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History . . . , p. 17.

passengers of this new Express, Horace Greeley, is supposed to have popularized his famous words, “Go west, young man, go West”.¹

The publicity which Greeley gave the Gregory findings did much to develop the area even more. He returned to Denver and stayed in the newest hotel, “The Denver House” later named “The Elephant Corral.” In addition to being the newest hotel, this was the largest gambling place, and it is not surprising that Greeley would add the other side of the Denver picture:

[1859] There are more brawls, more fights, more pistol shots with criminal intent in this log city of 150 dwellings, not three-fourths of them completed, nor two-thirds inhabited, nor one-third fit to be, than in any community of equal numbers on earth.²

Some of the stabilizing forces which emerged about this time and which pointed toward the permanency of these settlements were the beginnings of schools, a newspaper, the mint, a literary society and other churches. The first school teacher in the city was “Professor” O. H. Goldrick, who was also a “reporter” on The Rocky Mountain News. His cultured dress and speech seemed to be out of keeping with a primitive and pioneering west, but his efforts at establishing schools were successful.³

William N. Byers, as has been mentioned, moved into Denver City to begin his publishing work in April, 1859. The first issue of the News was published in “Uncle Dick” Wooten’s store, and later moved into a cabin. It is said that he did not want to show partiality to either Auraria or Denver City, so his printing shop was later located in the middle of Sherry Creek, that is, until the flood of 1864 washed it away.⁴

Gold-dust was the medium of exchange for money, until in 1860 three men, Austin M. Clark, Milton E. Clark, and C. H. Gruber, organized a bank and a mint. It is said that in less than two years, this mint had circulated more than three million dollars.⁵ Though space does not permit, it would be interesting to follow the arguments for and against Denver’s getting a mint. St. Louis, Omaha, Chicago, and Indianapolis were fighting for the right to have this government office established in their cities. In the year 1862, the New Orleans mint was reopened, and Colorado was invited to send its gold to New Orleans to be minted. However, Colorado rejected the offer, and in the end became the largest single producer of bullion. The mint was first opened in Denver, April 16, 1862, as a branch of the Philadelphia mint.⁶

Mrs. William N. Byers, one of the few women of the area, founded the first Literary Society in January 1860, and was an active socialite until she died in 1920.⁷

¹ Ibid., p. 17.

² Ibid., p. 19.

³ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver (Denver: The Times-Sun publishing Co., 1901), p. 732.

⁴ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History. . . , p. 22.

⁵ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 811. This was a private Colorado mint, the Clark, Gruber and Company.

⁶ W. H. Vickers, History of the City of Denver, p. 199.

⁷ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History ... p. 23.

Other churches organize: -- In 1860 four more church groups were organized in Denver: The Catholics under Bishop Miede of Leavenworth, Kansas, soon to be succeeded by Father Machebauf sent by Bishop Lamy of Santa Fe, New Mexico; the Episcopalians, under the leadership of Father Kehler; the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, under the leadership of Rev. Bradford; and the Presbyterians under Rev. A. K. Rankin. The first three denominations (including all Methodists together) were destined to be the three strongest religious bodies in Denver for many years to come. The original Methodist organization was the forerunner of Trinity Methodist Church; the Episcopal organization was the forerunner of St. John's Episcopal Church "in the wilderness"; the Catholics of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral; the Southern Methodists of the church called St. Paul; and the Presbyterian organization of Central Presbyterian Church. The Baptists seem not to have come to Denver permanently until 1863.¹ The Congregational Church was not established until 1864.²

Organized crime in Denver: -- The negative side of the picture was equally strong. There were gangs which wandered about raiding the newspaper office to try to kill the editor, indulging in murder, robbery, and riots; for protection, many citizens carried guns. These were the lawless riff-raff which tended to make Denver "Wild and wooly, and proud of it." Lawlessness however, was not tolerated and in time the law-abiding element was so strong that many of those who would not obey the laws left the city and migrated to other areas.

The Emergence of Denver as a City and of Colorado as a State

On April 3, 1860, a special election was called for the purpose of deciding a merger of Denver City and Auraria. The vote was overwhelming to unite the two towns and consolidate their efforts. The people ratified the decision the same evening and rejoiced at the bridge on Larimer Street which joined the two towns. Thus the name of Auraria perished in favor of the name of the former Governor James Denver of Kansas Territory.³ With this decision the name of Denver City and Auraria Mission of the Methodist Church was changed to the Denver Mission. The decision to unite the two towns was listed as an "act" of the "Territory of Jefferson", but was not legal until the Territorial legislature of "Colorado" met in 1861.

Of the merger, the Rocky Mountain News wrote:

All matters of general and public interest are by this change finally united; and hereafter our fair city will send forth a united influence for the prosperity and advancement.⁴

Development of government in Denver: -- During 1859 Denver City's influence had steadily grown. One of their activities was the forming of a Constitution for the State of Jefferson, as they wished to call the territory. Why the name Colorado was later chosen, we cannot say exactly, since Jefferson would have seemed appropriate. Part of the state was in the Louisiana Purchase, and there is a county of Jefferson bordering Denver County. Somewhat

¹ Clarence W. Kemper, The Story of Old First or Seventy-five years of First Baptist Church of Denver. Published by the church, 1938. p. 10.

² Handwritten copy of "Congregational History in Colorado" in the Colorado Congregational Headquarters, Denver.

³ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, (4: Chicago: The Blakely Printing Co., 1889), II, 25.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, April 6, 1860.

later, a Territorial government was organized, which was usually recognized by the citizens of the area, though not the national government; this was still a part of the Kansas Territory.

Finally on February 26, 1861, Congress passed a bill allowing this area to be called the “Territory of Colorado.” The state began its development as Governor Gilpin arrived in Denver May 29, 1861, as its first territorial leader. This legislature granted the first city charter of the state to the city of Denver, on November 7, 1861, superceding territorial “incorporation” of two years before.

The second territorial governor, John Evans, arrived May 17, 1862, and began a career that carried him into many phases of public life as governor, as senator, railroad builder, civic leader, religious organizer, educator and one of the founders of Colorado Seminary, and as philanthropist. Because of differences with President Johnson, Evans was relieved of his position as governor in 1865, and became a private citizen.

Much more could be said about Colorado’s and especially Denver’s beginnings, but perhaps this is sufficient of the very early period to paint the background in which the church found itself. The people were gold-hunters, not God-hunters; they were looking for a wealth, not spiritual poise; they were out to make a fortune and return home, not to establish a permanent settlement in the “arid plains”; they were isolated from “civilization” by miles of open country and dangerous Indian settlements. In short, the people in Denver during its early years, were indeed hard-workers, and the situations which they faced from day to day were extremely difficult. The pioneering spirit did much to mold their attitudes and their outlook.

Methodist Growth: -- Despite all these seeming difficulties, the Denver Mission became the First Methodist Church of Denver in 1864, and the next year the congregation moved into their new church building on Lawrence Street. As we shall see in our discussion specifically of this church organization, the various difficulties which were faced in this new territory were not sufficient to make the Methodists build anything but a fine example of architecture, and a landmark in their city. It was a credit to their God as well as to their denomination.

Another Methodist mile-stone of the year 1864 was the founding of the Colorado Seminary, later known as the University of Denver. The building was almost completed in the summer of 1864 with total costs listed at \$14,000 by the Colorado Conference of the same year.¹ The first students enrolled in the new school November 14, 1864. Such was the beginning of the “Pioneer” school of higher education in Colorado.

Railroads: --Early in its history, Denver became conscious of one of her greatest limitations: she had no railroads. Without railroad transportation, the city was thought to be doomed to remaining a small town, far removed from any industry, commerce, or “culture”. During the 1860’s, several business people decided that they ought to move out of Denver to more promising locations, especially the new towns established along the railroad in western Nebraska.²

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, November 14, 1864.

² Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, p. 416.

We can imagine the enthusiasm and the encouragement which came to the people in this Western land as they received word in 1867 that two railroads were coming to Denver. Much of this had been a result of the work of John Evans, who had the money as well as the personal interest in the project to carry it through. Ground was broken for the Denver-Pacific Railroad on May 18, 1868,¹ which the townspeople pushed to completion in 1870. This railroad came directly into Denver from Kansas, approximately where the Union Pacific comes today. Another railroad enterprise was also engaged in at this time with John Evans as a leader of this also. A branch had been built down from Cheyenne as far as Evans, Colorado. To get more service into Denver, John Evans and other interested people built a railroad from Denver to Evans, and hence in 1870 had two railroad connections with the East.

Failure to gain statehood: -- In 1867 President Johnson vetoed the bill to give statehood to Colorado. This was followed by an unsuccessful move to over-ride the veto. Had this act passed, Denver, as well as the state as a whole might have been optimistic about the future. However, soon Denver achieved another importance locally. Up to 1867, the capitol had been located at Golden, fifteen miles to the west of Denver. When the territorial legislature met at Golden, December 2, 1867, they decided to change the seat of the capitol to Denver.

The first meeting in the latter town was held December 6, 1867. It is mentioned by Dr. Swan² in his dissertation that the legislature met for a time in the old Colorado Seminary building, then unused. Plans were made for erection of a permanent capitol building on land deeded to the State by H. C. Brown, Esq., who owned most of what is now known as Capitol Hill.

Industry, commerce and agriculture: -- The impetus to business began with the coming of the railroads, and Denver took on the appearances of a progressive, growing medium sized western town. Soon after the completion of the first railroad into Denver, near the junction of the east and the northern branches, a smelter was built. This was named Swansea, and the town which was plotted around the smelter area took the same name. As is to be expected, the financial prosperity of this small town fluctuated as did that of the mining industry and the smelter. Almost immediately, another smelter was opened in the little town of Argo, directly west of Swansea.³ In Argo a Methodist Church was organized in 1880 and existed for over fifty years. These industries and others, give us the basis for Hall's statement that in 1870 the business of Denver was twice that of the preceding year.⁴

In addition to industry and commerce, agriculture was being established in the Denver area. Prior to the coming of the railroads, most of the farming consisted of truck gardens and light crops. However, in 1870 the Union colony was organized at Greeley and regular farming on a wider scale was undertaken.⁵ Through irrigation procedures, the arid land began to produce abundantly, supporting many people within the area, including Denver proper. Denver, being the largest city, became the natural market center for these products. Optimism was running

¹ W. B. Vickers, History of the City of Denver, p. 217.

² Lowell B. Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, 1863-1876 (unpublished Th. D. dissertation, The Iliff School of Theology, 1951), p. 97.

³ W. B. Vickers, History of the City of Denver, p. 219.

⁴ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, p. 495.

⁵ Colorado Writer's Program, A Short History. . . , p. 46.

high, as it is recorded that in March 1870 the City Council passed a resolution that they would invite the capitol of the United States to be located in Denver, because of this western city's proximity to the geographic center of the nation.¹

With these various developments, Denver ceased to be the rough frontier town that it had been before, and appeared to have a great destiny before it. A visitor in 1869 wrote:

Denver is a clever place and has clever, substantial, thrifty people. They have gone through the severest ordeal, and have come out purified in the crucible of sad experiences. They have seen the day when gamblers, cut-throats, and thieves controlled everything. . . . Today, Denver is as free from open outrages upon public morals as any other Western place of the same size. Indeed, I regret it is far in advance of most of them. On Sunday the city was quiet and orderly . . . and the number of elegant churches, schools, including a convent, reading rooms, etc., leave no room to doubt that Denver has a moral tone controlling its social life quite above the average of new cities.²

Yet it is also recorded that every section of Denver had its share of bars with its churches. They were in competition on Sunday mornings.

Building expansion: --Further development of Denver is recorded in the fact that in June 1870 there were but 1,128 buildings of all classes in the city, mostly cheap frame structures. By December 1871, eighteen months later, there were 2,752 buildings, or more than doubled within these few months. This is probably explained by the enthusiasm brought in with the railroads.³

The first foreign-speaking Methodist Church was founded in 1871 by the German people. This was a part of the West German Conference, covering parts of six states in the mid-west. The second English-speaking Methodist Church in Denver was the California Street church, organized the same year as the German, 1871. Some interesting data of the city are recorded at this particular time:

In those days [1870-1880] it was not the Canaanite that was still in the land; it was the Indian. The site of the Brown Palace hotel was a regular camping place for one tribe. Another camped near this church at the corner of 25th Avenue and Clarkson. Even as late as 1883-4 elk, buffalo, deer, antelope and bear meat was to be had in the markets of Denver. But the Indian was gone. The white man had taken his place.⁴

As Denver had progressed as a city, it had also made friends with the Indians, for there were practically no Indian uprisings after 1869 when the plains Indians agreed to move to Indian territory.

¹ Ibid., p. 46.

² Ibid., p. 46.

³ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, p. 28.

⁴ Folder published on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Colorado Methodism, by First German Society, 1934.

Silver boom: --One further phase of Denver's history prior to the attaining of statehood is the silver boom beginning in 1873. While many parts of the nation were having a panic of depression, the Colorado miners found that they were making more money on silver than they had ever made on gold. Denver again expanded with the increase of trade, smelting, and other forms of commerce. It was in this period of "boom" that the state received the name of the "Silver State".

Such has been the varied history of the city of Denver up to the time that Colorado became a state. This is included here only as a background for the future work dealing specifically with the churches themselves. Without some understanding of the development of the city, the place of the church would not be seen in a realistic setting. At the beginning of each section of the following material, a brief sketch will be given of the history of Denver itself, in order that we may understand the church's growth in relationship to the vanishing frontier and the growing urban center.

SECTION I (1876-1884)

Chapter II Denver 1876-1884

Chapter III Denver Methodism

Chapter IV The University of Denver
(Colorado Seminary)

CHAPTER II

DENVER 1876-1884

Suburban Growth

During this period of eight years, Denver developed in many ways. Chief among these were the suburban communities, industry, further mining profits, many new and major buildings, and the immigration of foreign-speaking people. Denver was well on its way to becoming a “city” with all the earmarks of a metropolis.

H. C. Brown had previously bought most of the land later termed “Capitol Hill” for \$1.25 per acre in pure speculation.¹ He later gave some of this to the state, including the land on which the present capitol building stands. Following 1878 that land became very valuable, and upon it were built some of the finest homes of the city. Real estate developments extended out to include the Evans addition which included the present City and County building and the Civic Center. John Evans had acquired much land just to the south of Denver (at that time Colfax Avenue was the city limits), which consequently took his name. In the few years previous to 1878 there were some people living in the area of Evans’ addition, and the Presiding Elder, B. T. Vincent, with a leading layman of the Lawrence Street Church, Peter Winne, helped to organize a Sunday School in this area, in 1874. As we shall see later, John Evans was approached and finally gave the permanent Evans Chapel to be the first home of this new Sunday School organization. This chapel was built to honor the daughter of John Evans, Josephine Evans Elbert who had died in 1868.

By 1879 the complexion of the community had changed considerably, and the group built their larger sanctuary and changed the name from the Evans Chapel to Grace Methodist Episcopal Church, both buildings of which still stand on their original corner, South Bannock at Thirteenth Avenue.

The shift in population, and especially the wealth of Denver, to the south, explained the extremely wealthy congregation of Evans Chapel, and the new Grace Church until well after the turn of the century. As the population extended east of the Capitol building, the need for a church on the east side was seen; though the organization of the Capitol Hill Methodist Church came not until in 1900.

The original town of Denver had gone west only as far as the river, for on farther, along what is now the Colfax viaduct, was the first town called “Highlands” by General Larimer, incorporated 1859. Had this area developed, the difference would no doubt have been registered in St. James Church, but this did not occur. The population did not move westward, and the plans of this town did not materialize. Rather, the movement was farther south and east.

Around Denver there grew several suburbs that became incorporated in their own right; the most important in this period was probably the second town of “Highlands” planned in the early 1870’s and bounded by the present streets of West 38th, Sheridan Boulevard, West Colfax,

¹ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, I, 495.

and Zuni Street. This was then mostly north of the first city called by the same name. Highlands was incorporated as a village April 8, 1875, and in 1885 incorporated as a city. They built a city hall which still stands at the corner of West 32nd and Zuni Street. Within the bounds of this second town of Highlands were to emerge later on, two Methodist churches which have a continuous history down to the present time. These are Highlands, organized 1891, and Merritt Memorial, organized as a mission the same year.

Along the river on the north there grew a part of the city called North Denver, in which the church of the same name was organized, first in 1872, and permanently in 1880. This church later took the name of Asbury Methodist. Of this early part of Denver, Mr. Gildersleeve has told in his reminiscences of the early development here:

The main business section of Denver in 1878 was from Champa Street north to the Platte River, and 18th Street west to 11th. Horse-drawn cars were on Larimer Street from 20th to 6th in North Denver. From Champa Street on 15th to the north side, from Larimer Street and 15th to Broadway to Alameda in south Denver.¹

The coming of Industry – With the mining “boom” in Leadville in 1878, Denver again had a forward surge. A larger smelter was constructed in the suburb of Argo, and a new plant in the section known as Globeville. Also the Grant smelter was constructed, the stack of which has only recently (1951) been removed. Through these years of the late 1870’s the total profit taken from the gold and silver mines continued to increase. It is said that in 1870 the value of both metals mined in the state was slightly more than two and one-half million dollars.² Within ten years both of these new smelting suburbs felt the need for churches of their own, and we see the Methodists organized in Argo in 1881, and the Globeville (Greenwood Methodist Church), 1890.

In the year 1878, in addition to smelting, Denver “came alive” with agriculture, real estate sales, much building, more business, and more manufacturing. It is reported that the crops of the year previous were the largest yet, and that the population was also the largest on record.³ In the same year Evans Chapel at West 13th and Bannock, was finished and dedicated.

The Rocky Mountain News pictured the growth of Denver:

The history of 1879 contains the clearly written records of a steady, safe, and general advance in business, nowhere more marvelous than in the metropolis of the Rocky Mountain slope. The percentage of increase in Denver, comparing 1879 with the year preceding runs from 10% in farm implements to 800% in mining machinery. Based on hard money and on everlasting mines, the business book is by no means temporary or deceptive.⁴

¹ Gildersleeve memoirs, unpublished, property of Asbury Methodist Church. Mr. Gildersleeve was an early member of this church, and has only recently died.

² Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History. . , p. 48.

³ Frank Hall, A History of the State of Colorado, II, 80.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, January 1, 1880.

The article emphasized increased trade and a growth in the area served. As we know, the city was not to have “everlasting mines” nor continued “hard money” derived from these mines. But for the year 1880, the outlook was certainly encouraging.

Building developments: -- Progress of the period was registered in the many fine buildings which were erected within a very few years: the Windsor Hotel, known all over the nation; the Tabor Block including the Opera House and the Theatre. Of the Tabor building we read that “it was the city’s first expensive structure, the tallest (three stories) and the first constructed of dressed stone.”¹ The elaborate construction of the Tabor Opera House is further noted in that persons were sent abroad to obtain plans and styles of European buildings; cherry wood was brought from Japan to decorate the interior; and tapestries, silks, and marble came from Europe.² It was opened September 5, 1881.

Probably Tabor’s buildings were mainly responsible for the development of Denver’s main business houses on 16th Street. Before this, business had centered on Larimer Street, and some on Lawrence. Soon the Old Customs House (then the Federal Building and Post Office) was built on its corner of 16th and Arapahoe, and the Court House was located on the block between 15th and 16th and between Court Place and Tremont. In this same period there were several homes valued at \$30,000 to \$45,000.³

Denver was one of the first cities to be lighted by electric street lights, as they were placed several blocks apart in the business district. Also, the experimenting which finally brought the first electric trolley cars to Denver was conducted by a Denver University Professor, Sidney Short.⁴

Foreign speaking people: --The various industries, factories and other business establishments in and around Denver brought in Eastern money, but also brought in foreign-speaking peoples from all areas of the nation. Chief of these were the Germans, the Swedish people and the Italians, each group of which later organized a Methodist Society. The census for the year 1870 had shown a population of 4,759, while in 1880 the population had jumped to 35,629. It can be seen that business, residences, food, government, churches and employment were all needed to support and serve such a quick jump in population.

Following such a brilliant burst of activity, it is not surprising that the city found itself in a period of depression from 1882 to 1885, during which time the glowing progress, the building, and growing population, all receded. Thousands of carpenters, bricklayers, and builders of other types were unemployed, and many moved to other cities. This period of discouragement did not stem the forward tide long however, for again Denver was on the move.

Summary: -- In the 1870’s and 1880’s, Denver developed rapidly, beginning to take on the appearance of a “city”. Business, trade, industry, and residential areas all were in the stream of progress. New areas of the city were being developed as suburbs or later additions to the city.

¹ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History . . . , p. 49.

² Ibid., p. 49.

³ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History . . . , p. 49.

⁴ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, p. 32.

In this hustle and bustle of activity, we must now see the activity of the churches which were previously established, and also those which were new organizations appearing before Colorado had an episcopal residence.

CHAPTER III

DENVER METHODISM 1876-1884

By way of summary, we should note that when Colorado became a state, there were four Methodist Episcopal church organizations in the city of Denver: Lawrence Street, California Street, St. James, and Evans Chapel. In addition to these organizations of the Colorado Conference, there was a church of the German speaking people, a part of the West German Conference, yet an integral part of the Methodist Episcopal denomination. Also there was an organization related to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Outside Denver proper there were two suburban churches organized in Arvada and in Wheatridge. The former was a small settlement located eight miles north-west of the center of Denver, near what is now 54th and Wadsworth Avenues. Wheatridge was a small farming community located immediately to the west of Highlands, along what is now West 38th Avenue between Sheridan Boulevard and Wadsworth Avenue.

We shall summarize briefly each of these churches up to 1876, and then continue their history to the year 1884.

During this eight-year period there were six more congregations organized, each of which must take some discussion, to put them into their rightful place in this march of the church's development. The new organizations were North Denver, organized 1880; Morrison Chapel (Methodist Episcopal Church, South) 1880; Argo Church, in the smelter region, 1880; Simpson Mission, 1881; Beckwourth Street Mission in West Denver, 1882; and the Swedish speaking congregation, 1883. Such a summary gives us a glimpse of the progress of the movement of Methodism during these early years of our state's history.

Churches Previous to 1876

Lawrence Street Church

Dr. Metcalf has already called our attention to the beginnings of the Lawrence Street Church, the first church organization in what is now called Denver. William H. Goode and Jacob Adriance had arrived as missionaries from the Kansas and Nebraska Conference, and organized the church August 2, 1859.¹ This was then known as the Denver City and Auraria Mission. In 1863 the church rented a portion of a carpenter shop, which was washed away in the Cherry Creek flood of 1864. In 1864 the group was incorporated as the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Denver. Bishop Ames, leading the Conference in 1863, realized the need of a larger church and began encouraging building, giving \$1,000 to the project.² The building went forward, and was first occupied by the congregation, February 12, 1865.³ The new building,

¹ Kenneth E. Metcalf, Beginnings of Methodism in Colorado, p. 59.

² Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain (Cincinnati: Curts and Jennings, 1898), p. 361.

³ Peter Winne, unpublished history in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society. Dated, Denver, January 7, 1894.

located on the corner of 14th and Lawrence Streets, was something of which all people of the city were justifiably proud. B. T. Vincent, in his report as Presiding Elder at the Conference of 1871, has given his impression, "The present fine edifice for beauty inside and out is not excelled in church architecture west of the Mississippi."¹ (see Fig. 3.) The newspapers of the time gave an equally glowing description of this event in Denver's history:

The church as now completed cost \$21,000, which already has been all paid for, by the liberality of our citizens conspicuous among whom, for their constant aid and efforts, we would name without intent of envious comparison, his excellency, Governor Evans, Colonel Chivington and Rev. O. A. Willard. The original contractor and architect was A. J. Gill, Esq. The church can comfortably seat 475 persons (75 in the gallery and 400 below).

.....
The building stands on the northeast corner of east 14th and Lawrence and faces the great mountains westward. Its dimensions are 86 feet from front to rear and 44 in width. It is of the Gothic style of architecture, with external ornaments, towers, turrets, cut-stone and carved wood auxiliaries to make it please the eye, a model of beauty yet of chaste combination and harmonious design.²

Of some interest is the item in the Rocky Mountain News for February 18, 1865, to the effect that John Evans had bought in New York City, four large windows of stained glass, which in reality turned out to be glass painted buff or sandstone color. After the error was noticed, the donor promised to replace them with the quality of glass which he at first had ordered. Thirteen years later a notice tells of the newly acquired stained-glass windows which had been duly installed in the Lawrence Street Church.³

In his report for the Conference year, 1870, B. T. Vincent mentioned the parsonage which had been added to the Lawrence Street property during that year:

A parsonage has been built at Denver. Ministerial and lay efficiency have united in bringing about a very happy success. This parsonage is of brick, two stories high, with the luxuries of five bay windows; is handsomely constructed inside and out, its parlor I believe furnished by the ladies for permanence, and I am persuaded that now even Father Dyer would consent to be appointed to Denver.⁴

The parsonage was mentioned by him again in 1872, but only that their debt on the parsonage had been heavy, and that during the year it had been reduced from \$5,000 to "about" "1,000."

In May 1872 the name of this church was changed to the Lawrence Street Methodist Episcopal Church, to avoid any controversy as to who would be "First" Church. The

¹ B. T. Vincent, unpublished papers in the Colorado Historical Society Library, Presiding Elder Reports, 1871.

² The Rocky Mountain News, February 18, 1865.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, March 29, 1879.

⁴ B. T. Vincent, unpublished papers in Colorado Historical Society Library, Presiding Elder Reports, 1869-

Presbyterians were having a heated discussion on this problem, and the far-sighted Methodists moved wisely to make such confusion unnecessary.

The Lawrence Street Church continued to grow, as we note from their membership, their Sunday School attendance, and their ministers' salary. When they built their new church, 1865, their membership stood at 50, their Sunday School at 200, and they paid a salary of \$1466.00. Four years later, 1869, these three items are listed at 114, 363, and \$2,000, respectively. By 1875 their membership is recorded as 335, their Sunday School attendance, 350; and their salary \$2,360. In 1880, David H. Moore, later to be bishop, was the minister, in addition to being Chancellor of the University of Denver. In spite of his heavy duties at the University, at the end of the year he reported 504 members, 605 in Sunday School and a salary of \$3,500. By 1885, the salary stood yet at \$3,500 while the membership had climbed to 766, and the Sunday School attendance had dropped a bit, to 556. A part of this drop in Sunday School attendance in the midst of a rising membership is probably explained in part by the fact that Lawrence Street Church was encouraging and supporting three other Sunday Schools, which grew to become three more churches. These no doubt took some of the children, as well as adults, who would otherwise be registered at Lawrence Street.

While the membership grew, and the city expanded, and Lawrence Street Church found itself more of a "downtown" church than it had been previously, the people began to think in terms of a larger building, and perhaps in another area of the city. The Rocky Mountain News records the action taken on this wish to move to a new location. The church bought some land at 18th and Broadway, the cost of which was \$15,000. No building plans were to be drawn until the money was secured to pay for it. However, optimists thought that they might be ready to build "next year" (1884).¹

Two particularly significant phases of the Lawrence Street work are to be mentioned: their interest in starting mission Sunday Schools, and other phases of Christian outreach and church extension; and their cultural taste, especially that of music.

Dr. Swan has dealt with the four missions which were begun by Lawrence Street Church people:² West Denver, on the corner of West Colfax at 9th Avenue, which grew into St. James Church; North Denver, immediately across the river north of Denver's center, which after a slight period of inactivity was reorganized as Asbury Church; the Evans Mission, previously mentioned as having been organized at the corner of West 13th and Bannock Streets, which became Grace Church; and the work with the colored people, from which was organized the Zion Baptist Church, and the Shorter African Methodist Episcopal Church (originally called St. John's A. M. E.).

The Lawrence Street Church people were likewise "missionaries" in other ways. From the very beginning they had been interested in the Colorado Seminary, and felt that its future was their ultimate concern. This had been the earliest venture in higher education in the Colorado territory, organized 1864, but due to financial difficulties, temporarily closed in 1867. In fact, the main leaders of the Lawrence Street Church had also been the leaders of the Colorado

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, December 16, 1883.

² Lowell B. Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, 1863-76, p. 42.

Seminary project. So strongly were the Lawrence Street people in favor of higher education that Dr. Merritt's Presiding Elder's report for 1880 reads thus: "The efforts of the Lawrence Street members are largely devoted to re-establishing the Colorado Seminary."¹ As is to be expected, when the Seminary re-opened in 1879-80 as the University of Denver, it was the Lawrence Street people who gave much time, and devotion to the cause.

Another "missionary" activity of this church was its leadership. John Evans, who had been active in organizing both the Lawrence Street Church and the Colorado Seminary, was active also in organizing the Evans Mission, later called Grace Church. He was also the largest donor toward erection of the Asbury Methodist Church in North Denver.² As we shall note later, with this religious interest, he was also active in the First German Church, and was the Chairman of its first Board of Trustees. His philanthropic interests carried him into the position of high esteem in all these churches, as well as the University.

In addition to John Evans, we must mention the names of Henry Reitze and Peter Winne. The former was originally a member of the Lawrence Street Church, but later became a leader in both California Street Church and the First German Society. Peter Winne was a layman of the Lawrence Street Church, a leader in their Sunday School; he was also the head of an organization in West Denver, and hence was a part of the mission which later became St. James Church. McMechen states that Peter Winne with Dr. B. T. Vincent, approached John Evans about the new church to built in the Evans Addition located west of Broadway and immediately south of Colfax Avenue.³ Of course the outcome of this encounter was the gift by Mr. Evans of the Chapel named in memory of his daughter.

As for the cultural interests of Lawrence Street Church, we note especially their musical leadership. Baber Pathorne, in his Musical History of Colorado has given special mention to the high grade of music which became a regular part of the Lawrence Street Church.⁴ There seems to have been little interest in church music in Colorado until the choir was organized for the dedication services of the new Lawrence Street Church, 1865. Pathorne states that there was an effort made to continuing the choir for regular services, and to establish a school to improve the music. This did not work out as had been planned, for "it [the school] consisted simply in getting the congregation together to practice well-known hymn tunes."⁵ The interest was not sufficiently stimulated to maintain volunteer choirs, and the music for a few years was only by outside singers who gave benefit concerts for one cause or another, under the auspices of the church.

A Mr. W. E. Reid came to Colorado in 1868, and from this time on the music was more organized. He took charge of both the orchestral and the choral music of the Lawrence Street Church. His reputation followed him of course, and his group of friends was large and interested. Due to his influence a regular quartette sang in the church, and the choir sang many fine anthems "with the help of Mr. Reid's cornet."

¹ Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 444.

² Edgar C. McMechen, Life of Governor John Evans (Denver: The Wahlgreen Publishers, 1924), p. 213.

³ Edgar, Life of Governor John Evans, p. 213.

⁴ Baber Pathorne, Musical History of Colorado (Denver: The Rocky Mountain News Printing Co., 1889), pp. 94-6.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 94-6.

In 1872 Mr. Reid resigned from active leadership of the music, but continued with his cornet. At this time Rev. B. T. Vincent took charge of the choir and the music, “himself a very fine singer and organist.”¹ Pathorne laments however, “the life of this choir was of short duration, only three months; Dr. Vincent, preferring congregational singing, dismissed them.”²

Mr. Reid left for California in 1879, and it is here that we leave the history of music at Lawrence Church. Pathorne intimates however, that there was little continuation of the musical heritage that had been developed for almost ten years. Only as the new Trinity Church was in its planning stages did their musical heritage resume.

Such are some of the highlights of the Lawrence Street Church history up to the time that the Episcopal Residence was established in Denver. As is to be expected, this church was the recognized leader in the city even at this early date.

California Street Church

To get us into the feeling of Denver of 1871, we note a statement made in a recent folder of Christ (formerly California Street) Church:

When the California Street Methodist Episcopal Church was organized December we [sic], 1871, only 13 years had passed since the first cabin was erected in the Denver (Auraria City) [sic.] Only one year before the organization of the church the first railroad came into Denver. Six days previously the first horse-drawn street-car service was inaugurated. Denver was not to have its first library for three years, and telephone service was not inaugurated until 1879.³

Truly this is one of the historic churches of the city, and as Dr. Swan points out, this was the second Methodist Episcopal organization of the city.⁴

Rev. H. J. Shaffner was appointed to the “Denver Circuit” in 1871, which circuit included Arvada, West Denver, and Bennet’s School house (near the present intersection of South Broadway and Evans Avenue).⁵ The parsonage of this circuit was in Arvada, but in the spring of 1872, Rev. Shaffner moved to a partly finished home on the south-west corner of California and “P” (Twenty-fifth) Streets.⁶ Soon a small church building was erected on the north-east corner of California and Twenty-fourth Streets. (see Fig. 4). The church was incorporated July 30, 1872⁷ and at the time of the dedication of their humble frame building, October, 1872, the membership stood at twenty-seven. By the end of Rev. Shaffner’s ministry there, August 1874, the membership had grown to 72 members with twenty-two probationers. At the time of the

¹ Ibid., pp. 94-6.

² Ibid.

³ Folder published on the occasion of the Christ Church 75th anniversary, 1946.

⁴ Lowell B. Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, 1863-1876, p. 44.

⁵ Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 331.

⁶ Ibid., p. 368.

⁷ Christ Church Chimes, September, 1900. A newspaper published by the church.

opening of this little church, it is recorded that seats were borrowed from the Lawrence Street Church and not until a few weeks later did they secure their own equipment.¹

In the meantime there had been organized in connection with this church, a Sunday School in a “little shanty used as a school house, owned by Judge Miller, corner of Curtis and Twenty-third.”²

Rev. H. J. Shaffner, who had originally organized California Street Church was asked later to write his own account and reminiscences of the occasion. His letter, written in 1900, from his home in Los Angeles read:

In replying to your kind note requesting me to write something about the organization of Christ Church, I hardly know how to say little enough, for in that year death came to my home and bereft me, and my continued fight with asthma stamped everything connected with the beginning of that church indelibly on my mind.

I bought the ground, built the church, and saw every dollar paid on it, and the Lord blest the work with a gracious revival, so that I was able to leave a good membership which has long since outgrown the old church, and in a more desirable place built them a magnificent home.

I am glad that Christ Church has kept its doors open for the salvation of men.

With kindest regards to all who have the honor of being members of Christ Church, I pray God be with you till we meet again.³

Henry J. Shaffner was minister here from July 1871 to August 1874, when he was followed by J. R. Eads who stayed a year, to August 1875; R. L. Hartford was minister for only seven months to March 1876; H. Sinsabaugh remained from April 1876 to March 1878 when he was succeeded by J. E. Miller who stayed only three months. F. C. Millington became minister in August 1878 and remained until August 1881. During Millington’s ministry a parsonage was conceived, built and paid for. In the fall of 1879 he started a subscription for the purpose of building the parsonage, and he moved into the parsonage, debt-free, that same fall (December 1879).⁴ As if this were not enough, during two of his years as minister at the growing California Street Church, Millington conducted a Sunday School in Ashland School in North Denver, and preached there regularly. Some members of this group later organized the North Denver Methodist Episcopal Church, now known as Asbury Church.⁵

California Street Church had grown from twenty-seven members in 1872, to seventy-two in 1875, to one hundred twenty at the end of the ministry of Millington, at the Conference of 1881. The same conference statistics show that his Sunday School had grown to one hundred fifty-five.

¹ Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 369.

² Ibid., pp. 368-369.

³ Christ Church Chimes, September, 1900. On file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society. A memoir of Mrs. Shaffner appears in the Conference Journal of 1873.

⁴ Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 369.

⁵ Ibid., p. 326.

O. L. Fisher became the minister in 1881 and stayed three years. During his pastorate it is noted that he had several revival services, gained many members, and repaired and improved the church building. In addition, he added two rooms to the parsonage. However, he was not satisfied with confining himself to the California Street Church, but during these three years he organized the Simpson Mission, 1881, and helped them pay for their first church which stood on Ames Street.¹ At the end of his ministry the membership stood at one hundred seventy-two, and the Sunday School at four hundred thirty-five. The increase in three years was 52 members and 280 Sunday School pupils.

At the Conference of 1884 O. L. Fisher was succeeded by John Wilson.

Evans Chapel

Dr. Swan has summarized the beginnings of the Evans Chapel in the section known as "Evans" Sub-division, west of Broadway and immediately south of Colfax Avenue, the corner where the present civic center and the City and County Building stands.² The usual date for the beginning of this school is 1874,³ while B. T. Vincent was minister of the Lawrence Street Church. He was assisted by Mr. H. H. Mund, Mrs. Elsie Mund, Mrs. Luther Coggins, and Mr. Robert Davis. However, there is a discrepant date, for in the Evans Evangel we notice:

It was in fact, May 26, 1873, at 9:30, Mr. H. H. Mund, Mrs. Elsie Mund, Mrs. Luther Coggins, Mr. Robert Davis, and ten children gathered in a room of Cecil A. Deane's Ice house. Dr. B. T. Vincent, who was pastor at that time of Lawrence Street Church, had helped plan the undertaking.⁴

The same date of 1873 appears in two other sources.⁵

One further discrepancy has appeared. Mr. Harold B. Deane of Fort Collins, Colorado, son of Cecil A. Deane, has stated that the exact place of the Sunday School's beginning was not in the ice-house, but in a reconditioned barn located at what is now 1353 Delaware Street (then "D" Street). Nevertheless we do know that this Sunday School was begun as a project of the Lawrence Street Church, and only after population started shifting south did it seem necessary to build a church in that area.

An interesting item as far as background for this little mission is noted in The Rocky Mountain News of January 9, 1888.⁶ It seems that in about the year 1870 a Mr. Hiram Witter was talking with John Evans. The former talked of the challenge to build two new churches, one in each of their respective neighborhoods. Mr. Evans took up the challenge, and from this

¹ Christ Church Chimes, September, 1900.

² Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, p. 50.

³ Ibid., p. 50; also Edgar C. McMechen, Life of Governor Evans, p. 213.

⁴ Evans Evangel, published by that church, October 10, 1878. The same information is re-printed in the Grace Church Call of March 14, 1943.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, June 28, 1953; corroborated by a letter written by Rev. Wahlberg of Grace Church in 1933, on file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁶ From a sermon by Gilbert de LaMatyr, minister of the church, 1888.

chance conversation arose two of our churches, Evans Memorial (Grace), and Simpson Chapel. H. Witter's addition is the territory bounded by 32nd and 36th and Blake and Larimer.¹

Because of various inconveniences in the meeting place of the early Sunday School, some of the people asked ex-Governor Evans if he would not help them erect a cheap and temporary building. About the same time Dr. B. T. Vincent and Peter Winne seem to have approached Evans also about a building.² The outcome was that Evans decided not to build a temporary building, but a permanent construction in memory of his daughter, Josephine Evans Elbert, who had died in 1868.

Construction on the chapel was begun in 1873, but was delayed because of financial problems of that year.³ In the year 1875, F. C. Millington, while a minister of St. James Church, helped raise some of the funds for the new Evans Chapel, by selling some lots belonging to Ex-Governor Evans, and applying the money to the finishing of the church.⁴

In 1878 the Evans Chapel was finally completed at a cost of \$13,000.⁵ (see Fig. 6). Evans asked the Methodist Conference to supply it with a minister, which they did in the person of H. S. Hilton. For two years Hilton served St. James and Evans Chapel as one charge. St. James had been organized to the west of Evans, from a Sunday School group.

The Denver Tribune records the opening and dedication of the "pretty little church edifice on the corner of Olive and South Fourteenth Streets".⁶ The dedication ceremony included the following words: "Erected by John Evans, A. D. 1878, in memory of his daughter, Josephine Elbert, died October 22, 1868, age 24."

The Colorado Conference, in session at Golden, received on August 7, 1878, the following letter from John Evans, addressed to F. C. Millington:

Dear Brother: I desire to present my thanks for the timely and efficient assistance you have given in disposing of property to raise the means of furnishing my little church in Evans' Addition to Denver. Also, in behalf of the society that may hereafter worship there, I would return thanks for the efforts you have made in providing the furniture for the church, when I shall have completed the edifice. Please to inform the Bishop and brethren of the Colorado Annual Conference that the little church, with the four lots on the corner of South Fourteenth and Olive Streets (13th and Bannock) where it stands, are at the service of the M E. Church. Also that the edifice, fully completed, will be ready for dedication and use in a few weeks. Also that I propose then to deed it, free from encumbrance, to trustees, to be held by them as church property, according to the regulations of the discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church. However, I propose to impose as a condition of the donation that the property shall never be made liable for any

¹ From a map of 1890, located in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library.

² Edgar C. McMechen, Life of Governor John Evans, p. 213.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, August 30, 1953.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 324.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, June 28, 1953.

⁶ The Denver Tribune, October 11, 1878.

debts, nor be alienated from the purpose of teaching and of religious worship. Please ask the conference to accept and to make such provision for its use as may seem best.¹

Thus, Evans Chapel became the fourth appointment in the city of Denver proper (St. James in West Denver was the third); from 1878 to 1880 Evans Chapel was a part of the St. James appointment. The formal dedication was conducted October 10, 1878, by Bishop Matthew Simpson, a long-time personal friend of John Evans.²

J. F. McClelland, an invalid seeking health, was appointed to Evans Chapel in 1880 at a time when there were only five members on the roll.³ However, at the end of his first year he registered forty-three members and a Sunday School of 136. Perhaps a part of the explanation of his \$3,000 salary his first year is the rental of the pews. It is recorded that John Evans' pew cost him \$1400 that year.⁴ After a year and a half, McClelland's health continued to fail, and the year was filled out by Dr. D. H. Moore, then Chancellor of the University of Denver.

At the Conference of 1882, C. W. Bucy was appointed to fill the vacancy, himself a son-in-law of Bishop Simpson.⁵ the altitude did not agree with Bucy however, and after one and one-half years, he returned East where he recovered. When he first came to Evans Chapel, the membership stood at 90, with Sunday School at 263, reflecting substantial gain. His ministry continued only half-way through the next year, which year was completed again by Chancellor David H. Moore. The statistics of this rather hectic year show a decrease in salary from \$3500 to \$2288, a decrease in Sunday School from 263 to 170, but an increase in membership, 110 to 137. At the conference of 1884, E. T. Gurnick was appointed to this chapel, but he remained only a part of one year.

Great foresight, and perhaps some lucky "hunches" had preceded the establishment of this new church in the outskirts of Denver in the 1870's. However, before 1880, the shift in population was already noticed, and the area around the little church became one where many of the mansions were built. From the homes located on what is now Civic Center and Capitol Hill, much of the city became concentrated soon in Evans Chapel. In 1884, the News described the church as "one of the most popular and wealthy churches in the city."⁶

Thus we see that in these few short years, from a mission of the Lawrence Street Church, the beautiful Evans Chapel was built, dedicated, and became a church with a significant future ahead of it.

West Denver or St. James Methodist Episcopal Church

As Dr. Swan has noted, the "Denver Circuit" in 1871 included the work done at "West Denver." This appointment was the outgrowth of a Sunday School begun there in 1869 by Peter

¹ McMechen, Life of Governor John Evans, p. 214.

² The Rocky Mountain News, August 30, 1953.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, pp. 374-5.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 374-5.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, January 9, 1888. A sermon by Gilbert de LaMatyr, minister of Grace Church.

⁶ The Rocky Mountain News, August 30, 1953.

Winne, O. C. Milleson and others. The Sunday School met in an old arsenal on the corner of Eleventh and Lawrence Streets.¹ Rev. Shaffner preached regularly in this West Denver appointment during the years 1871-71, and 1872-3. In June 1872 the name of the school was changed to a Methodist Episcopal Sunday School; and at Conference time at the end of Rev. Shaffner's ministry (1873) the whole circuit registered forty-five probationers, sixty-two members and a Sunday School of two hundred eight-seven. Of course this was for the circuit of probably three churches, West Denver, North Denver, and Bennett's School.

In 1873, James P. Dew was appointed to North Denver, West Denver, and Littleton. The next year (1874) Littleton was taken off the circuit and placed with Plumb Creek work. During the year 1874, The Rocky Mountain News records a real estate transaction in connection with this church – "Lots 11 and 12, Block 43, of West Denver, to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church of West Denver."² The building which was built on these lots cost approximately \$4,000 and was completed in 1875. (see Fig. 9).

In 1875, F. C. Millington was appointed to "St. James" Church, the first time this name was used, and also the first time the church stood alone as a separate charge. At the end of his first year he reported membership at ninety-seven and Sunday School attendance at one hundred fifty. In addition to his work in building the membership and the Sunday School, Rev. Millington oversaw the building of a four-room brick parsonage and when he moved into it there was no debt.³ There is evidently some error in statistics as this church shifts from a part of a circuit to a separate charge. The second year of Millington's ministry we see that the membership dropped from 97 to 67, and the Sunday School dropped from 150 to 135. However, his last year records a growth again in Sunday School attendance, 135 to 141, but the membership continued to decline from 67 to 61.

When H. S. Hilton came as minister in 1878, St. James was a part of the circuit with the newly formed Evans Chapel. The separate statistics are not given but it is seen that at the end of one year, the Sunday School growth is recorded as jumping from 141 to 270. This is no doubt reflected by the large Sunday School group now counted at Evans Chapel. The membership change this year was from 61 to 79, probably reflecting some of the Evans people also. The next year he reported little change for the two charges, membership 78, and Sunday School at 185. Hilton's third year at St. James was the first year that Evans Chapel was a separate charge, and the St. James statistics for that year show a membership of 69 and a Sunday School of 125, substantially the same as before its connection with Evans Chapel.

In 1881, B. W. Baker was appointed minister of St. James Church. He was returned to that charge in 1882, when it was linked with "Beckwourth Street" Mission. This arrangement continued through the conference year 1883-4 when I. H. Beardsley was appointed as minister. There is no appreciable shift in statistics for these two years, which seem to indicate that if any membership is counted from the new mission, St. James statistics would be continuing to decrease.

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 371.

² The Rocky Mountain News, June 23, 1874.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 324.

At the Conference of 1884, St. James was again alone, as Beckwourth Street Church was now with Simpson Mission. Beardsley has reported the statistics at the end of his second year at St. James at slightly lower than before the Beckwourth work began; his membership was down to 80 (drop of 5), and Sunday School records show 184, a drop of 66 from 1882. Despite this seeming decrease of strength, St. James Church was in an area of Denver where its work was vitally needed. Because of this it continued to be a significant Christian influence in West Denver for many years.

German Methodist Churches

Closely associated with Lawrence Street and John Evans, was the First German Methodist Episcopal Church of Denver, organized October 20, 1872, at 251 Holliday Street (now Market). John Evans was chairman of the first Board of Trustees, and exerted his influence in many ways.

John L. Dyer tells us that Conrad Frick had long been interested in getting a German church organized in Denver.¹ As early as 1866 three men, Conrad Frick, Henry Reitze, and Friederich Gamer wrote to Rev. Phillip Kuhl at his residence in Warrenton, Missouri, in respect to securing a preacher for the German people of Denver. They thought a church should be organized, because there was no Protestant church in Denver of any denomination for German-speaking people.² Kuhl promised that he would exert what influence he had to secure an appointment in Denver; however, nothing happened for a few years. In the year 1872, Bishop Haven of the West German Conference, meeting in Quincy, Illinois, appointed the same Rev. Phillip Kuhl as the first missionary of the German Methodists to Denver.³

When he arrived, Rev. Kuhl found a few loyal German Methodists, though of course no parsonage or church. They met for a few times in the City Hall, 351 Holliday (now Market) Street.⁴ After two weeks a church group was formed with 12 members in October, 1872. These twelve are given as: Mr. and Mrs. August Heckendorf, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Frick, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Hahn and Elizabeth, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Reitze, John T. Frink, Martha Hartman, and the minister's wife, Mrs. Kuhl.⁵

After meeting for a few weeks in the City Hall the group began to meet in a hall at 1447 Blake Street. Soon a board of Trustees was chosen including: John Evans, S. H. Elbert, John P. Fink, Conrad Frick, H. Reitze and F. L. Hahn.⁶ It is interesting to see that Henry Reitze and John Evans had been active in several other Methodist churches in Denver; Evans in Lawrence Street and Evans Chapel in addition to the German group. Reitze was one of the early leaders of both Lawrence Street Church and the California Street (Christ) Church.

¹ John L. Dyer, The Snow Show Itinerant (An autobiography), (Cincinnati: Cranston and Stowe, 1890), p. 348.

² Otto Kriege, and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz der Bischoflichen Methodistenkirche (Cincinnati: Jennings und Graham, 1906), pp. 143-4.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, p. 51.

⁵ 60th Anniversary folder, the German Church, 1932.

⁶ Kriege, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz, p. 144.

The First Quarterly Conference was held November 8, 1872 at which time they voted to buy two lots on the corner of Arapahoe and 18th Streets for a church to be constructed the next summer. The lots cost \$2,000.¹ The first project was the erection of a house by the minister on the lots, which house the Trustees later bought from him. Soon the building of the church was begun, a small chapel approximately 36 x 60 feet, of gothic architecture. Total cost of the building and parsonage, occupied October 21, 1873, was \$14,000.² Thus with the organization only one year old, the building was built and almost paid for. The consecration sermon was preached by Bishop Bowman.³

The Sunday School had been organized in January 1873, and reported a good attendance, though no statistics are available.⁴ One of the early Superintendents was Conrad Frick, who had taken the initiative before in getting the church organized. Beardsley gives us a glimpse of Conrad Frick's life.⁵ He had been born in Bavaria, Germany, May 4, 1836 and landed in New York in April of 1853 at the age of 17. He worked a while on the east coast, then came to St. Joseph, Missouri where he remained six years before coming finally to Central City in 1861. In 1862 he opened a shoe store in Denver. It was while he was in this business that he worked in both Lawrence Street Church and later the German organization. We see in Conrad Frick the same type of strong leader which the other Methodists found in John Evans.

An old rule in the German church, as in the English-speaking Methodist groups, was the limit of three years for a minister in one church. In 1875 Rev. Kuhl had finished his third year, and The Rocky Mountain News records his appointment to another church.⁶ A good piece of work had been accomplished by this missionary minister, and we can realize that the congregation regretted to see their beloved minister go to a new church.

The successor was Rev. F. G. Leist who stayed three years. He came while there was a debt of \$2,500 on the church, and was concerned that they should pay it off as soon as possible. The Trustees, with Conrad Frick as chairman, began to work systematically at the problem, and finally little by little the debt was paid off before Leist moved on in 1878.⁷

Matthais Klaiber became the minister in 1878 also to stay three years, and was followed by E. H. Kriege who was their minister from 1881-1884. In 1884 Kriege became the superintendent of the Denver District. The membership at the end of his ministry at the German Church was registered at 89, with the Sunday School enrollment at 110. Unfortunately this is the first year in which the Minutes of the German Conference are available.

In 1884 G. J. Schultz became the minister, and under his leadership the old church was sold and the new building constructed at the corner of 25th and California. This particular building is still standing and is now (1956) occupied by the California Street (Japanese)

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 372.

² Kriege, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz, p. 144.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, October 19, 1873.

⁴ Kriege, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz, p. 144.

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 374.

⁶ The Rocky Mountain News, September 28, 1875.

⁷ Kriege, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz, p. 144.

Congregation. (see Fig. 67, Plate III). We shall analyze the details of this building in the next section following the year 1884.

Methodist Episcopal Church, South - St. Paul Church

Dr. Swan has touched on the founding of the South Methodist group in Denver since their organization was effected before the Civil War, in 1860, by Rev. W. M. Bradford.¹ The original church which they built was sold to the Episcopal group in 1861, and later was sold to the Congregation of St. Johns' Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod). It is from a Lutheran source that we have obtained the picture of the original church which stood on the corner of 14th and Arapahoe Streets. (see Fig. 10).

An interesting letter appeared in the News at about the time that Rev. Bradford arrived in Denver:

Editor News: Will you be so kind as to allow me to state through your valuable paper, that the Rev. Wm. Bradford of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has been sent out by the church to form churches in Denver, Colorado City, and Golden City and elsewhere. Mr. Bradford is an old friend and acquaintance; and to all who know me, I can say thus he comes well recommended from the southern church, whose motto is non-intervention, that preachers should preach the gospel and let the government take care of itself.

Respectfully, Wm. M. Belt²

Another side-light to this early South Methodist history can be seen in the Life of Stateler, a biography of an early minister of the South church in Kansas and Colorado.³ Because of Civil War tension, it seems that Stateler and his fellow-ministers were in danger in 1861, and did not hold their regular Conference at Atchison, Kansas, that fall, but held it in secret. The next year he was working on his charge, and received many notes of threats on his life, and the lives of his family. The nationalistic feeling against the southern states had carried over until the people suspected even the ministers of the Southern church, perhaps with justification. Stateler immediately communicated with his Bishop, Kavanaugh, who resided in Kentucky, and asked his permission to get out of Kansas and come to Colorado. Since this was authorized, Stateler came immediately to take charge of the church in Denver. Mrs. Stateler seems to have stayed behind for the time being, because he arrived in Denver alone, and in need of selling his stock for proceeds to send back to his wife and small daughter.

When Stateler got to the church in Denver, he was in for a surprise. He had no church, no job. It seems that when the war broke out, Rev. Bradford had gone back to the "states" for safety, and needing some money, borrowed from the Rev. Mr. Chivington (the Presiding Elder of the Methodist Episcopal Church), leaving in his hands the little southern church. Chivington did not have any use for the church, and the trustees being hesitant about what to do with it in war-

¹ Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, p. 109.

² The Rocky Mountain News, May 2, 1860.

³ E. J. Stanley, Life of Stateler, (Nashville: Publishing House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1916), pp. 163f.

time, sold it to the Episcopalians. The Sunday following Stateler's arrival in Denver was set aside as the dedication for the Episcopalians. Stateler seems to have gone to the service, and reports his rather unusual experience thus:

I had the privilege, if such it can be called, of sitting in our own house, which had been erected by the self-sacrificing and heroic efforts of our own people, and witnessing its dedication and passage into the hands of other people.¹

Stateler then decided that he might as well go back to Kansas, but just before he left he heard from his wife telling that their house had been set on fire in an act of violence, and that she had barely escaped with their little girl. He should not return home. They arranged to meet at Fort Kearney in Nebraska, from where he escorted them back to Denver. In Denver again, they rented a house and took in boarders, and began to make their own way. Stateler leaves our study as he was starting north in 1864, on the gold rush to Montana in an expedition led by several including Major Jim Bridger.²

Of course there is no history of the Southern church during the war. It was not until 1871 that the work was reorganized by Dr. A. A. Morrison with fifteen charter members. Immediately they began to build a small church, a frame structure standing at 1846 Arapahoe, dedicated December 24, 1871 at a total cost of \$3,500.³ The building was 24 by 50 feet, with an "infant class room" 12 by 24 feet.⁴ The first board of Trustees was composed of I. Brinker, J. M. Strickler and Thomas Schrock. Stewards were: Isaac Brinker, J. M. Strickler, Thomas Schrock, N. Cornwell and William Vincenheller. Membership at the end of the first year is reported at 45.

In 1872 Dr. A. A. Morrison was appointed Presiding Elder of the Colorado District of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and W. R. Warren was appointed to the Denver church. Approximately a year later Rev. Warren's health failed, and Rev. S. L. Duke finished the year. By the end of the Conference year 1872-3 the membership stood at 72.

Two Districts were formed in Colorado in 1873, the Denver and the Pueblo. E. M. Mann was put in charge of the Denver work. There were at that time 15 preachers in the state and 300 members in the two districts.

The General Conference of 1874 of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, divided the Western Conference into two conferences, the Colorado and the New Mexico, with W. C. Hearn in charge of the Denver work. Annual Conference was held that year at the Denver church.

In September 1875, W. C. Mitchell was appointed to the Denver church, but Rev. James W. McClure supplied the last part of the year. Other details are not given. The Rocky Mountain

¹ Ibid., p. 167.

² Because of its special interest, this material has been summarized at length from Stanley's biography, pp. 160-170.

³ An anniversary program published by St. Paul Church, 1938.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, July 24, 1887. This particular newspaper article, written at the opening of the first St. Paul Church, 21st and Welton Streets in 1887, also gives a good summary of the history between 1871 and 1887.

News¹ does not give any information between 1875 and 1880, however, the names of the ministers are included for the historical records.² W. G. Miller was appointed in 1876; in the next year the minister was W. Harris; and the two years following were filled by Rev. W. J. Phillip.

Their building was remodeled and improved in 1879, but in 1880 they made a curious trade. For the Presbyterians traded their larger church, on the corner of 20th and Curtis Streets, to the Methodist Church, South, in exchange for the smaller Methodist church plus \$5,000. The church which had previously been “St Paul Presbyterian” now became the “Curtis Street Methodist Episcopal Church, South.” This name appears in church publications and in Conference Journals for several years, until this group built “St. Paul Church” at 21st and Welton in 1886-7. (see Fig. 17).

The ministers for the next few years were: C. B. Riddick (who negotiated the trade mentioned above), from 1880 to 1882; J. D. Bush, 1882-3; J. C. Morris, 1883-5; F. B. Carroll, Oct. 1885-July 1886. Membership at this time is given as 120. In 1886 F. B. Carroll became the Presiding Elder, and W. F. Packard was appointed to the “Curtis Street Church.” Up until the ministry of Packard, the church was a mission project, and it was due to his efforts that it became self-supporting. We shall pick up this story a bit later, however.

Two interesting bits of side-information may take a moment of our attention at this point. The Southern church maintained a “Chinese Sunday School” for a few years.³ There were reported about 50 Chinese children at this school, using the Curtis Street Church building. The teachers were girls ten years to sixteen years. This article states that the school had been established about two years which would make the date of its beginning in 1881. It seems that the Chinese population of Denver had been growing in these years, through the arrival of many Chinese laundry workers and servants from California and Gunnison, Colorado. The reason there might have been a large percentage of Chinese in Gunnison is not know. The school was still in operation in 1888.

The other interesting item is that the Presiding Elder of the Southern Church in Denver in the year 1883 was D. L. Rader.⁴ This is the same D. L. Rader who later became a leading member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and member of the Colorado Conference. Before the turn of the century he became Superintendent of the Wyoming Mission, Presiding Elder of the Pueblo District, and at the turn of the century, minister of Asbury Church in Denver. Perhaps such service in both churches justified the statement “It is the South Church’s younger clergymen who are looking for a union with the Northern Methodist Church before the end of many years.”⁵

Morrison Memorial Chapel - Methodist Episcopal Church, South

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, July 24, 1887.

² From the 80th Anniversary folder published by St. Paul Church.

³ The Daily News, February 26, 1883.

⁴ The Daily News, November 25, 1883.

⁵ The Denver Republican, April 16, 1888.

Although many details of this little church are lost, it seems that it ought to be mentioned in connection with the early Southern church's history. This chapel was begun in 1880, on the corner of Fourth (32nd) and Hoyt (Lafayette) Streets.¹ Beardsley states: "It had been enlarged several times, and they now (1896) assume handsome proportions."² He continues, "This society has had a varied experience. While it has done a good work, it has not made much numerical progress."³

The next reference to this chapel, built in memory of Dr. Aleri Morrison who gave some lots for the buildings, appears in the News.⁴ On Monday night previous, the Curtis Street Church passed a resolution authorizing George Needham of the Denver South Methodist Mission to build anywhere in the city, as long as it was not less than ten blocks from the other church of the same denomination. The article continues that he purchased a tent and set it on the lots given by Dr. Morrison, in preparation for the Sunday service following. However, the wind tore some of the tent, and it had to be repaired for the services.

The Denver Methodist, a paper published by the church in Denver in the late 1880's, carried a page of church activities and a directory. Through the whole year of 1887, the Morrison Chapel, Methodist Episcopal South, appeared with the regular meetings, church and Sunday School. The location was still Fourth (32nd) and Hoyt (Lafayette) Streets.

It seems that the Southern Methodists were getting optimistic the next year. An article appeared telling of the two South churches in Denver, and of their projected plans for another one soon on South Broadway.⁵ Evidently this did not materialize, for we hear nothing more of it.

Morrison Chapel members constructed their edifice, to which Beardsley referred above, completing it in late 1889.⁶ It is said to have cost \$3,000 and at the time the church had forty members. The people were waiting and hoping for the population to move in that direction so that the membership would grow. Since nothing further appears in connection with Morrison Memorial Chapel, we may assume that it had a short life, and finally became absorbed into another church, probably St. Paul.

Suburban Work to 1884

In the early days of the church in and around Denver, we must consider three areas of work: Arvada, Wheatridge and Littleton. Each of these had some early meetings, and in the case of the first two, permanent churches were established quite early.

Arvada suburb

¹Wilbur Fisk Stone, History of Colorado (Chicago: The S. J. Clark Publishing Co., 1918), I., 669.

²Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 386.

³Ibid.

⁴The Rocky Mountain News, July 10, 1882.

⁵The Denver Republican, April 16, 1888.

⁶The Denver Republican, January 1, 1890.

One of the early suburbs of Denver was known as “Arvada”, and was founded in 1870.¹ The location of this early suburb was approximately five miles north and five miles west of the center of Denver. At the present time however (1956), Denver has grown out to touch the city limits of Arvada, and the latter is one of the major suburbs, and a significant town in itself. The Rocky Mountain News gave a detailed sketch of the beginning of Arvada:

A new town has been laid out upon the farms of Mr. Wadsworth and Mr. Reno, during the past week, at Ralston Station, which is about midway between Golden and Denver; just a convenient distance from either place for country residences when we arrive at metropolitan dimension and dignity. Nine blocks have been laid out with streets 66 feet wide between them. The new town site is situated on the high, dry ridge between Clear and Ralston Creeks, and between the road from Boyds crossing north, and Boulder road from Cort’s crossing

The name of the suburb was itself related to the original founders:

Arvada, Jefferson County:

This settlement was founded in 1880 [sic,] and named for Hiram Arvada Hoskin, brother-in-law of the wife of the founder, B. F. Wadsworth. It was known in earlier days (1860) as Ralston Point and Ralston Station, for the creek on which early placer miners first discovered “color” in their gold pans.²

As we note above, the actual date of the founding of Arvada was 1870 rather than the 1880 of the latter article.

During the early years the minister of Arvada served also at other churches including Ralston Crossing and Blacks.³ The location of the latter seems to be unobtainable, while the identification of the first is questionable. The name of Ralston Point or Station was one of the early names for the settlement of Arvada.⁴ However, a more probable location for this “Ralston Crossing” was a rural church north of Golden:

Methodist Church . . . Ralston

This is a farming region about six miles north of Golden City. A neat little frame church was built here under the pastorate of Rev. Jesse Smith, costing about \$1,800. This is the first strictly rural church ever built in Colorado. The pastors of the circuit have been W. M. Smith, D. W. Scott, Jesse Smith and G. W. Swift, the present pastor.⁵

It is interesting to see that the names of the ministers, except for the first one, are the same three ministers who worked on the Arvada Circuit.⁶ The evidence thus tends to corroborate the writer’s opinion that this “Ralston” is the location of the Ralston Crossing of a few years earlier.

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, December 1, 1870.

² Colorado Magazine, V. 17, No. 1, January, 1940.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 271.

⁴ Colorado Magazine, Vol. 17, No. 1, Jan. 1940.

⁵ Rocky Mountain Directory and Colorado Gazeteer for 1871.

⁶ Folder published on the occasion of the dedication of the present Arvada Church, June 7, 1931.

The Ralston Church, though a part of the circuit including Arvada for a time, is not a part of Metropolitan Denver, and will not be considered further. The work at the suburb known as Arvada, however, needs further consideration at this early date.

Arvada Church

Dr. Swan has summarized very well the first work in and around Arvada.¹ Beardsley reports that the first religious service was held in this vicinity in the year 1866.² The minister at the time was D. W. Scott. A society was organized and a continuous organization has existed from that time.

Until 1870 we do not find Arvada listed in the Conference Journals, but their dedication program has given a list of ministers previous to this time.³ They are: D. W. Scott, 1866-68; Jessee Smith, 1868-69; G. W. Swift, 1869-70; George Wallace, 1870-71. At the time George Wallace came to the church they had a total membership of 30 persons.

The minister for the next few years following George Wallace was G. S. Allen, 1871-75. The Conference minutes of 1875 records a membership of only 30 persons, the same as is reported five years previously. At this last date the Sunday School membership was 115. This is even more interesting when we note that in 1874 the organization at Wheatridge was added to the circuit with Arvada, and yet we see no change or growth in membership and no substantial change in the Sunday School.

U. S. Buckner came to the circuit following G. S. Allen and stayed less than a year when he was followed by John Stocks, who also stayed less than a year. W. H. Gilliam filled in until the conference of 1877 and was then appointed the next year to the circuit. It was this Rev. Gilliam who completed the first church building at Arvada at a cost of \$1,500.⁴ The first real progress in membership is noted under C. S. Uzzell who began his year in 1878 with 28 members and finished the year with exactly twice that number. In addition to this membership increase, we see that he also paid off the remaining \$300 left on the debt of building the first church.⁵

C. L. Libby came to the circuit and stayed at Arvada only one year, 1879-80. In 1880 Wheatridge was separated from Arvada and C. L. Libby was appointed to Wheatridge-Argo. Arvada does not appear in the Journals of the year 1880 unless it is included in the "Denver Circuit."

In 1881 H. L. Beardsley was appointed to Arvada as a separate charge. During his three years the membership is recorded at 27, 25, and 37. The Sunday School records little substantial change, 50, 55, 50. However, during his pastorate he constructed a parsonage, much of it with his own labour. His brother records in his book:

¹ Swan, A History of Methodist in Colorado, p. 46.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 271.

³ Folder published on the occasion of the dedication of the present Arvada Church, June 7, 1931.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

A six room parsonage was begun here by the pastor, H. L. Beardsley, in 1881, and completed by him in 1882, all paid for. During its construction he gave his time almost wholly to this, raising the funds and doing most of the work.¹

Perhaps his preoccupation with the work of the parsonage explains why there was not more growth in the church membership and Sunday School attendance.

The appointments for 1884 list A. W. Coffman as minister at Arvada. He stayed but one year, and nothing especially is recorded of his year's work. The year 1885 began the three-year period when Arvada and Hugo were on a circuit together. At first it might seem strange that these two charges should be on the same circuit, as Hugo is almost one hundred-fifty miles southeast of Denver. However, it was on a main rail line, and the minister could travel back and forth rather easily. The minister for the three years Arvada and Hugo were together was H. R. Wriston.

The Suburb of Wheatridge

As has already been mentioned, Wheatridge was a small farming community located directly west of Highlands, and directly south of Arvada. The exact street location was West 38th Avenue between Wadsworth and Sheridan Boulevards. The name of the settlement was suggestive of the area itself, as it is a continuation to the west of the "high" lands, or the "ridge" which was rich farming land, mainly wheat in the early days. Still today (1956) the area of Wheatridge is covered with small tracts of farm-land, and gives one the feeling of being out in the country, yet within the metropolitan area.

The Wheatridge Church

On January 11, 1874, a small group of people met with Rev. Robert R. Rhodes to organize a church at Wheatridge.² This meeting took place on Prospect (now 38th Avenue) near what is now Otis Avenue, in a school house. The site is the location of the present Wheatridge High School. Shortly after this, the Wheatridge people decided to build a church in which to worship. They built a small building approximately 20 feet by 30 feet under the direction of the Rev. Rhodes. The building was used for ten years as a church, and then fifteen years as a school. At the end of those ten years the church rebuilt on another site (32nd and Wadsworth, see Fig. 21), and continued to grow stronger.

For the first six year of its life, the Wheatridge church was a part of the Arvada Circuit, and the first minister to serve the two together was G. S. Allen.³ U. S. Buckner was appointed to the circuit in 1875, and remained only eight months, followed by John Stocks who stayed only ten months. The next six months were filled by W. H. Gillum. This quick change of ministers was not good for the two churches, and they showed little progress.

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 562.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 479.

³ History of Wheatridge Church published on the occasion of their 56th anniversary, 1930.

In 1878, C. S. Uzell was appointed to the churches. The minister appointed in 1879 was C. L. Libby, who stayed two years. The growth of this circuit from the founding of the Wheatridge Church in 1874 to 1880 had been: membership 30 to 62; Sunday School enrollment 115 decreased to 75.

In 1880 Wheatridge and Arvada were separated and the new church at Argo was linked with Wheatridge. C. L. Libby was appointed to the circuit and remained only another year. During his ministry however, it was seen that a parsonage was essential, since their minister had formerly lived at Arvada. An acre of land was donated by the David Brothers, and a parsonage was immediately built. In this, Wheatridge became the point of pastoral residence, and seemed to be well on its way to success.¹ The first year of this new circuit, the total membership was listed as 27 with Sunday School enrollment at 106.

At the Conference of 1881, the minister appointed was E. S. March who served only seven months when he went East. He was followed by Rev. R. H. Rhodes who finished out the year. I. H. Beardsley was appointed there in 1882 for a year, for which he has written his own record:

The 1882 Conference was held in Colorado Springs, by Bishop R. S. Foster. At its close I was sent to Wheat Ridge and Argo. My health was not sufficiently recovered for me to do extra work. I was able to preach twice on the sabbath. There were some additions to the Church during the term. A barn was built on the parsonage grounds. A church site was secured, the gift of Henry Lee, Esq. A church-building was erected on this less than two years after, by the Rev. J. C. Greene, 1884-5, costing about \$2,500.²

It is this same Mr. Henry Lee which Beardsley mentions who later became Senator from Colorado. It seems that he was not connected with the church, but was a friend of their cause. Mr. Wilmore has stated that “the name of ‘Wheat Ridge’ was suggested by this Henry Lee also.”³ The land which is mentioned was the corner of Blaine (now 32nd) and Wadsworth. This, it is to be noted, is six blocks south of the present location of the church which is 38th Avenue at Wadsworth.

J. C. Green came to be minister for two years, 1883-85. Through various revivals, members were added, and the church seemed to be growing. The membership saw the need for a larger building, as they were still worshipping in the small frame structure at the present site of the Wheatridge High School. In April 1884 a campaign was launched to obtain money for the new building and it is reported that on a single day \$1,450 was subscribed.⁴

Ground was broken on August 29, 1884, and the dedication services in the completed building were held November 16, the same year.⁵ (see Fig. 21). The total price of the small

¹ From hand-written records in the Wheatridge Church.

² Beardsley, *Echoes from Peak and Plain*, p. 479.

³ Wheatridge Church History, written 1945, by W. W. Wilmore.

⁴ History of Wheatridge Church, 1930. Filed in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁵ Hand-written Official Board records filed in Wheatridge Church Office.

church was \$1,700. At Conference time of 1884, the membership was registered at 70 with Sunday School enrollment at 140.

Littleton

The suburb of Littleton is located twelve miles south of the center of Denver, along the railroad track, a few blocks to the west of South Broadway. In 1956 Littleton is seen to be one of the most progressive of the suburbs of Denver, which is a complete town in itself, boasting a population of approximately 15,000.

Though Methodist work was conducted in and around Littleton from very early times, and though it is listed as a part of a circuit in three different journals, no further mention is made until many years later. In 1871 Littleton and "Plumb Creek" are listed as served by J. M. Lambert. The year 1872 shows Littleton and Arvada on a circuit served by G. S. Allen, while the next year North Denver, West Denver and Littleton were served by J. P. Dew. The complete history of the Littleton Church will be given later, as their permanent organization did not materialize until 1890.

Later Church Work 1876-1884

North Denver - later Asbury Church

The first sermon preached in the North Denver area is recorded as by H. J. Shaffner, in a vacant store building.¹ Rev. Shaffner was then minister of California Street Church, and worked the beginning of the year on the "Denver Circuit" including among others, Arvada. Because of the interest shown, a society was formed with 21 members including Dexter Soggs, class leader, and the following trustees: Richard Sheriff, Dexter Soggs, Thomas Manchester, J. R. Preston, James Wild, Eldridge Rider, and A. Wood.

As had happened in the case of most other churches, John Evans had a part in this project. A direct quotation from the first minister, Rev. Shaffner, is recorded by Beardsley: "I bought the first grounds for the church. Ex-Governor Evans gave me \$500 to pay for the lots. These were afterwards sold, and a church built."² The location of these first lots, held until 1880, was on lower 18th Street, though the exact location is not definite.

The next Conference year, 1873-4, James P. Dew was appointed to the "North Denver and West Denver and Littleton" circuit. The following year the circuit consisted of only the first two, for which he reported at Conference 1875, 110 members, 40 probationers, and 200 Sunday School pupils. During these two years the minister lived in a frame house on the corner of Central and Sixteenth Streets, which he himself had built.³ The church services were held in the Ashland School.⁴

¹ Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, p. 49.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 375.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 375.

⁴ Memoirs of Mr. Gildersleeve. Compiled by L. George Pimlott, on file in Asbury Church office.

For some reason, the name of North Denver is dropped from the Conference Minutes until 1878 when F. C. Millington took charge of the work in addition to his California Street duties. For two years this charge was a part of the circuit, but in 1880 it was again omitted from the Conference records. It is supposed that Millington's occasional duties in North Denver took more time than he could give it, and he gradually gave full time to the California Street Church.

There is no appointment for North Denver in the year 1880, but evidently the Rev. H. C. King arrived on the scene soon after the Conference. He began working in North Denver, on his own for a time, until the Presiding Elder, Earl Granston, thought of starting new work there where King was working. The organization was effected on September 16, 1880, in a public school building.¹ The project was begun with 11 members, and by conference of 1881, he reported 17 members and 120 enrolled in Sunday School. Beardsley tells us that H. C. King was a feeble man, seeking health, and hardly able to work.² However, when we see his accomplishments, we wonder what a man without his affliction would have accomplished.

One interesting story appears about H. C. King, whether truth or apocryphal is not known. This is written in a letter by Mr. W. H. Davis, a member of Asbury until his death recently. It is written to Wm. D. Gildersleeve, a member of Asbury also many years, and Mr. H. C. Roerig, now also deceased:

One day in the summer of 1880 a man drove up to the home of W. H. Davis, about a mile north of his present residence in North Denver, and said "he was out hunting." He then introduced himself as H. C. King, and said he was out hunting Methodists, with a view to starting preaching and Sunday School services, no Methodist services of any kind being held on the North Side at that time. A meeting was called, to be held on Sunday, September 5th, 1880, in a Public School Building, the two room structure formerly used and later known as Ashland School.³

Trustees elected October 31, 1880, were: E. V. Ryder, George Dickinson, John Barr, William Wightman and Isaac Webber. The Stewards were: J. L. Chase, Wm. Wightman, Joanna Webber, Mrs. W. E. Shepardson, Mrs. Susie Seltzer.⁴

Following this they decided that their lots on lower 18th Street were not as favorable as they had looked in 1873, so they sold them in favor of a new location on the corner of 16th and Boulder (across the street from the present Olinger Mortuary).

The corner-stone of the new building was laid July 3, 1881, and in November the same year the building was occupied, valued at \$8,000.⁵ This church was dedicated by Bishop Foster July 30, 1882, and served the members for ten years. What a great accomplishment for a man who was ill and died in 1895, and a congregation which began in 1880 with 11 members and came to the Conference of 1881 with only an increase of 6. H. C. King was appointed to North

¹ A manual of Asbury Church, Easter, 1896, in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 427.

³ On file in the Asbury Church office.

⁴ H. C. Roerig, "Romance of Asbury," unpublished lecture given by Mr. Roerig at the Colorado Methodist Historical Society banquet, 1944. On file in the Asbury Church office.

⁵ Ibid.

Denver Church for another year, and at the Conference of 1882 he reported the membership at 44 and the Sunday School at 150, both of which showed good increases.

The minister appointed in 1882 was T. A. Uzzell who in one year, increased the membership to 83 and Sunday School to 200. S. W. Thornton, minister also for one year showed slight decreases in both, 80 and 160 respectively. The building did not have its permanent pews yet, nor carpeting on the floor as these projects were completed in the Conference year 1886-7. The parsonage was built the year before, in 1895, next door to the church. Both projects were completed in the ministry of O. L. Fisher.¹ Incidentally, this parsonage stood on that particular corner for many years until 1952 when it was torn down to make further room for Olinger's Mortuary parking lot.

Methodism was well on its way in North Denver, and we shall see it taking its important place in the city and in the conference in a very few years.

Argo Church

There is scant information for the early work at Argo, and not too much information until the Presiding Elder, B. T. Vincent, began his term in this office, for which he kept detailed information.² These records are available 1892-on.

In the newly formed smelting suburb of Argo, now of course a part of Denver, a religious service was held by F. C. Millington, the Presiding Elder, in February, 1880.³ It is also noted that for the next seven months the minister was W. C. Roby.

In 1880 the church at Argo is first listed as an appointment of the Colorado Conference, and the minister that year was C. L. Libby, in conjunction with his work at Wheatridge. It was he who officially organized the church that September of 1880. Before he had finished a complete year however, he resigned, the year being finished by Rev. L. Wright. At the end of that first year the circuit of two churches recorded 27 members and 106 in Sunday School. Appointed in 1881 was Rev. E. J. Marsh who also did not finish out the year, but left that to H. H. Rhodes. For the next year Isaac H. Beardsley was the minister of the two, but in his book he gives no information as to what was done that year. He reported total information at 40 and Sunday School at 100. Appointed at Conference of 1883 and staying two years, was J. C. Green. At the end of his ministry there the membership of the circuit was registered at 78 with the Sunday School registration at 156 for the two churches. J. T. Musgrove followed him in 1895 and stayed five years, during which time a building was constructed, but we shall pick up this history in a later section.

Simpson Mission

¹ H. C. Roerig, "The Romance of Asbury".

² The originals and microfilmed copies on file at the Library of the Colorado State Historical Society, Denver.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 480.

A mission which had a long and significant destiny ahead of it was the Simpson Mission, organized in 1882 by O. L. Fisher, minister of the California Street Church. An interesting challenge, already mentioned in connection with Evans Chapel should be repeated. According to the News,¹ a Mr. Hiram Witter challenged John Evans that each of them should build a Methodist Church in their respective additions to the city. If this is correct historically, it is interesting that it should have taken such a long time to have gotten the Simpson Church organized, whereas the Evans Chapel was organized in 1873.

Dr. Swan lists this mission as having been located first near 26th and Market Streets.² A Simpson Church folder³ states that the organization took place in the residence of Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Hester, but the address is not given. Beardsley adds that the address was 1133 Holliday (now Market) Street.⁴ However, soon they moved into a rented room near what is now Downing and 40th Avenue, with W. R. Hester as Superintendent of Sunday School.⁵ This small building soon burned and the Sunday School and other meetings were then held on Short Larimer Street until later in the fall of 1882, when the small church was built on the corner of Ames (38th) and McClellan (Lawrence) Streets. Funds for this building came in part from the Denver Church Extension Society. The small building was enlarged in 1883.⁶

The Simpson Mission was on a circuit with Beckwourth Street Church in 1884, with J. W. Linn the minister. Membership of the two churches at the end of his first year stood at 53 with Sunday School enrollment at 150. After two years with Beckwourth Street Church, the Mission became a separate charge (1886), with H. D. Seckner as the minister. His first year (1887) he reported membership at 16, with Sunday School enrollment at 60. Progress seems to have been rapid, for within three years after Seckner came in 1886, they had constructed a church building, and had significant gains in membership. We shall pick up the threads of this history in the next section.

Beckwourth Street Church (later Fifth Avenue Church)⁷

The only available information about this early church comes from Beardsley.⁸ Both Lawrence Street Church and St. James Church seem to have been a part of the founding of this little church. Through the influence of Dr. Cranston (at that time Presiding Elder) and Dr. Moore (at that time minister of Lawrence Street Church and Chancellor of Denver University) and B. W. Baker (minister of St. James Church), a plot of ground was obtained at Beckwourth Street (now 5th Avenue) and South Water (now Galapago) Street. This was given by a Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Sumner for a new church site, and was 87 by 125 feet in size. On this land several

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, January 9, 1888.

² Swan, A History of Methodism in Colorado, p. 43.

³ Published on the occasion of the Simpson Church Jubilee week, August, 1903, on file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society Library.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 378.

⁵ Simpson Church Jubilee folder, 1903.

⁶ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 378.

⁷ The spellings of "Beckwourth" or "Beckwith" or "Beckworth" seem to be used in all documents of the period interchangeable. However, the first of the three seems to have been most nearly correct. This spelling will be used throughout.

⁸ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak Plain, pp. 377-378.

men, including George McClelland, erected a tabernacle as a temporary worship center, in which the church was organized March 5, 1882.

Beginning with the Conference of 1882, St. James and Beckwourth Street Churches were served by the same minister, B. W. Baker. Membership of both churches the first year as well as Sunday School membership do not seem to reflect much change from the statistics reported when St. James was by itself. Seemingly the origin of Beckwourth Street Church was effected with eight members. Soon afterwards, five others joined, making the membership a total of 13. In the summer of 1882 a building was erected, costing \$1,537.40.¹

I. H. Beardsley was appointed to the church in 1883, the year after it was organized. The first two years (1882-84) it was on the circuit with St. James Church. In 1884 it was decided to shift Beckwourth from St. James and put it with Simpson, the minister being J. W. Linn. He stayed three years, in the last of which (1886-87) Beckwourth Street Church was a charge by itself. At that Conference, 1887, he reported the membership at 74, and Sunday School enrollment at 115. In 1887 the street called Beckwourth was changed to West Fifth Avenue, and the name of the church changed to "Fifth Avenue" as well.

Scandinavian Mission

First mention of a foreign-speaking congregation in Denver appears in the Conference Minutes of 1883:

Resolved. That the time has come when, in the opinion of this Conference, the claims of our Scandinavian brethren in Colorado should receive recognition from the church.

Resolved. That the Missionary Committee be urgently requested to make an appropriation of \$500 or more for the purpose of aiding one or more missionaries to the Scandinavians in this field.²

Evidently they took steps to organize the mission at this time, for in the appointments the same year, the Scandinavian Mission is listed, and left to be supplied. One year later, as we look at the reports, we find that F. J. Berg had arrived and turned in the reports of most of the year's work. At the end of one year the membership was 14, probationers 10, and the Sunday School enrollment stood at 25.

According to some old records of the church, as compiled by Rev. Richard Palmer,³ an earlier meeting of the Swedish people was held. He relates the story of the same Rev. P. J. Berg's holding a meeting in a private home at 168 19th St., attended by about 12 people. The following Sunday a meeting was held in the church at 17th and California attended by almost forty people. It was in this meeting that the wish was expressed to found a Swedish Methodist Church.⁴

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 377.

² Journal of the Colorado Conference, (1883), p.11.

³ Minister of Emmanuel (formerly Swedish) Church until 1952.

⁴ Richard Palmer, a paper written from old church records. In the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

However well they might have planned, P. J. Berg left Denver for three years, and the church did not materialize. Later, after the Conference of 1883 P. J. Berg was officially given the task of organizing the church. According to Palmer's sources, it was on October 7, 1883 that Berg preached his first sermon in the German Methodist Church, then located at 18th and Arapahoe, to a congregation of about 50 Swedish-speaking people.

One month later the Sunday School was started in Goody Hall, in West Denver with 18 children and 10 adults present. Then on December 20, 1883, the Swedish Methodist Episcopal Mission was organized with nine members, including the minister and his wife. By the end of the conference year we find that the membership had grown to 14.

The cornerstone for the first building of the Swedish Society was laid January 24, 1884, on the corner of 11th and Kalamath, the building being dedicated the following March 20th. (see Plate IV, Fig. 68). This building was later sold to the German Methodists. By the time of the Colorado Conference, the fall of 1884, the membership was registered at 12, and the Sunday School enrollment had dropped to 20.

Colorado Methodist Historical Society

Another item of this period, closely related to the churches as a whole was the founding of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society. In the Conference Minutes, 1880, the Bishop appointed a committee to work on the constitution of this organization.¹ The three men appointed were John L. Dyer, F. C. Millington, and D. H. Moore.

At the following Conference session they brought in their report, which consisted mainly of the proposed constitution. This organization has done much to preserve early records of the Conference for their express purpose is stated thus:

Its object shall be the collection, arrangement, preservation and publication of the authentic history of Colorado Methodism from the date of its planting in the Territory; including accurate sketches of every charge and of every member of the Conference, as well as of all education and Conference work, and of lay members whose lives materially affect the history of Methodism and the preservation of the old records of the various charges of the Conference.²

The work of this society through the years has not only preserved the records of churches, but has taken an interest in placing historic plaques in locations which are historically significant, as on Trinity Church, and on St. James Church of Central City. Another recent project of the society was the restoration of the oldest Methodist Church in the state, the Central City Church. It is under their auspices that the historical Pilgrimage is conducted each summer in July.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1880), p. 19.

² Ibid., (1881), p. 43.

For a work such as this dissertation, the work of the historical Society has proven invaluable, and the writer would only urge that they continue their work in the years to come, making it careful, comprehensive and truly a realistic part of Colorado Methodism.

Summarizing the Churches of the Period

As we think of the early history of the church in the city of Denver, it is a bit surprising to realize how fast the church really grew. The population was still rather unstable, and Denver was hardly organized as a city, but the church organized missions and built buildings nevertheless. No doubt a part of the strength of the Methodist church through the years is dependent on the early work of the pioneer ministers and lay preachers who furthered their organizations. Their history and biographies are indeed fascinating as well as challenging.

By the time Bishop Warren arrived in Denver, there were fifteen churches of the Methodist denomination in this city, though three were not directly under his supervision, namely, the Methodist Churches, South, and the German Society.

In 1884, of all fifteen churches perhaps not more than half of them were churches in their own right, as several of them were only recently organized, and still what might be called "mission" status. However, the foundation was laid, and finally the churches were to develop even more than the new bishop might have expected.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER (Colorado Seminary)

Of interest to the Methodists of Denver in 1863-4 was the news of the founding of a school, planned as the Denver Seminary, but before it came into being the name was changed to the Colorado Seminary.¹ The charter for the school was approved March 5, 1864, by the Territorial Legislature. Miss Jeannette Joan Dunleavy, formerly a student at the University of Denver, has written a very detailed account of the beginnings of this school from 1863 to the coming of Chancellor David H. Moore, 1880.² Another thesis has appeared summing up basically the same information with which Miss Dunleavy has dealt with so well, written from the point of view of the contribution especially of ex-Governor John Evans.³ Little more need be said about its organization since it would be only a summation of these more comprehensive works. We may see however, that the forward-looking attitudes of the laymen and ministers of these early days is reflected in a section of the first charter of this University:

Section 3. No test of religious faith shall ever be applied as a condition of admission into said seminary, but the trustees shall have power to adopt all proper rules and regulations for the government of the conduct of teachers and pupils, and the management of all affairs pertaining to said institution.

Section 5. Such property as may be necessary for carrying out the design of the seminary in the best manner, while used exclusive [sic.] for such purpose, shall be free from all taxation.⁴

The life of this school was short however, as in 1867 it was forced to close because of financial deficit. The indebtedness had grown to \$3,000 on property worth approximately \$10,000, and according to McMechen, interest was 3% per month, which meant an almost impossible task of keeping the struggling school operating.⁵ The property was then evidently sold, later to be obtained by John Evans, one of the original founders.

The closing of the school brought discouragement and disappointment to the Colorado Conference, which had felt the dire necessity of a school in the west. The feeling is reflected by B. T. Vincent, in his report as Presiding Elder, Conference Year 1870-71:

The Colorado Seminary is practically no more. The building has been sold for debt and is now being rented for the use of the public schools of Denver. All has been done that could be to secure the sympathy of rich men in the East on the subject of the revival of

¹ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 758.

² Jeannette Joan Dunleavy, Early History of Colorado Seminary and the University of Denver (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1935).

³ Robert B. Rhode, Governor John Evans, Builder of Two Universities (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1952).

⁴ A copy is found in McMechen's Life of Governor John Evans, p. 201.

⁵ Ibid., p. 201.

the enterprise by endowment, but without avail. Either it is not considered worth while to invest in education or the field is too frontierish and obscure to pay enough in the shape of benevolent popularity.¹

Little more is heard about the Colorado Seminary for several years. John Evans however, was still anxious to have an educational institution in this state, and we note that in 1874 he made plans with other officials of the churches to help organize a Union Evangelical University. This was to supported jointly by Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Episcopalians. The plan was passed and adopted by the Colorado Annual Conference of 1874, but no more is heard of it.²

Evans and others were active during the intervening years, though not many specific incidents occur in the records. In 1877 Evans got sole control of the old Colorado Seminary property, paid the debts on it, and kept hoping for the day when the school would re-open. By 1880 the Trustees, which included John Evans, had constructed a new building, and had decided to re-open the school as the University of Denver, using the old charter name of "Colorado Seminary" as a legal title.³

As Chancellor of the re-organized school, David H. Moore was selected from his successful presidency of Cincinnati Female College. The officers of the Board of Trustees at this time were: President, John Evans; Vice President, J. W. Bailey; and Secretary, Earl Cranston. It seems that Cranston and Moore had probably known each other earlier, as both were from Ohio, and both from Ohio Wesleyan University. To help the new chancellor on his task of organizing the new University, many of the Trustees gave money or real estate. David H. Moore (elected Bishop in 1900) must have realized his tremendous task as he wrote his letter of acceptance:

September 23, 1879. Your letter informing me of my election to the presidency of Colorado Seminary is at hand. Thanking you for the honor conferred, and through you the committee, I accept upon the terms noted in your letter. Will act with you so far as any duties here will allow until next July, when God willing, I will report in person to identify myself, body, soul, and substance with the enterprises fraught with the grandest interests of Colorado Methodism. Fraternally, David H. Moore.⁴

The wisdom of choosing a man such as David H. Moore as the Chancellor was proven through the years. He came at a difficult time, and by devoting himself completely over almost ten years, he built the University into an institution like its earlier founders had envisioned. When he came, the building was worth approximately \$80,000 but was unfinished. With some of his own money he had it completed and furnished.⁵ For a time the financing of the institution was his sole responsibility, and his salary came only if there appeared to be a surplus.

¹ B. T. Vincent, unpublished papers in the Colorado Historical Society Library, Presiding Elder Reports, 1870-71.

² Edgar C. McMechen, Life of Governor Evans, p. 202.

³ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 759.

⁴ Preserved as a part of the Trustees records of Denver University, a copy of which is in Jeannette Dunleavy's thesis, Early History of Colorado Seminary and the University of Denver, p. 219.

⁵ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 749.

An advertisement appeared the summer before the new institution opened, which gives the scope of the new institution, and some of the hopes of Dr. Moore:

The University of Denver, the Colorado Seminary, for both sexes, opens with a school of science, school of Liberal Arts, school of music, school of Fine Arts, upon the completion of the elegant and commodious building, 14th and Arapahoe Streets. Parents not wishing to send their sons or daughters East will find the course of study in the Seminary of a grade fully equal to the best colleges East or West. Graduates of Denver High School and of other schools of equal merits admitted to the Freshman Class upon their diplomas. A Preparatory school fits for higher classes. For particulars write Rev. D. H. Moore, D. D.¹

Reflecting the pride with which the Colorado Conference viewed the re-opening of their school, we note the following section of the Education Committee Report at the Conference of 1881:

The Colorado Seminary and the University of Denver were opened for the reception of students, October 4, 1880. Although the building was unfinished, and the recitations could be heard only in what are now the dining hall and kitchen, the enrollment on the first day was over thirty. Bishop Simpson was present, and appropriate opening exercises were held, which were largely attended by the Methodists of Denver. The Bishop's address abounded in valuable instruction and encouragement, and was an inspiration to all departments. It was found necessary to organize a Junior and Senior Preparatory Department, in addition to the regular Collegiate course. Only one college class, the Freshman, was organized.

The department of Music has been largely patronized, and achieved a pronounced success. The same may be said for the Department of Fine Arts.

A "College of Medicine," with an unusually large and able faculty has been organized, and will open for students in the fall.

A Committee, with Chief Justice S. H. Elbert as chairman, has been appointed to organize a Department of Law.

In the regular Academic Department, the next year will open with two advanced classes, the Freshman and Sophomore.

The Professors have been earnest and successful in their work, and have already established a high reputation for the institution.

Valuable additions have been made during the year, to the equipment of the University, consisting in part of several pieces of physical apparatus by Dr. Mortimore. But the greatest addition has been the erection, at a cost of some \$16,000, of a large wing four stories high, forty-five by sixty-five feet, for the accommodation of male students. The completion of this structure gives the University buildings elegant and commodious, and worth at least \$80,000.

Ex-Governor Evans, J. W. Bailey, Esq., Judge S. H. Elbert, Dr. J. Durbin, and others have continued their munificent contributions to the Institution, making possible this addition to our buildings.

¹ The Denver Tribune, July 31, 1880.

A Library is greatly needed. The Beardsley Alcove will be filled by the class of the year, and another has been kindly promised by Mrs. B. T. Vincent, of Philadelphia, but even then we shall have but the nucleus of such a library as the University requires.

As a Conference, we have reason to congratulate ourselves upon the auspicious inauguration of this, our greatest Conference work. But we must not forget for one moment that our work has only begun. We must exert ourselves constantly and earnestly to direct the attention of the people in all our charges to this Institution as offering superior advantages to the youth of both sexes. But above all, we must keep constantly in view the absolute need of endowment.¹

The above report was submitted by the Committee on Education, 1881, which consisted of: D. H. Moore, J. H. Merritt, F. C. Millington, M. Evans and S. W. Thornton.

The remodeled building, (see Fig. 26), hardly looks like the original Seminary Building (Fig. 27). The remodeling included a third story, and a wing at each end to accommodate male and female students respectively. The building then became dormitory as well as class-room and study halls. One of these wings is mentioned in the report of a special Committee on the University, at the Conference of 1882:

We find that the additional wing to the building, which was in construction a year ago, with some other improvements, including a well-laid pavement in front of the house, has been completed, and that nothing essential to health or comfort has been omitted. The building is admirably adapted to the University purposes, large and commodious, with clean, cheerful rooms for students and boards, with bath rooms; in every way well furnished. The recitation rooms, the laboratories for physics, chemistry and assaying, the mineral cabinet, etc., are all complete and quite well adapted to the purposes for which they were designed.

We were permitted to witness the closing exercises of the University, which commenced on the 10th and ended on the 14th of June. We find that 321 students have been in attendance during the year. The examinations in the various departments of instruction gave proof of the ability and efficiency of the faculty, and of satisfactory progress on the part of the students.

In the curriculum we find the Scientific, the Mining and Engineering, and the Classical courses included, and that nothing is wanting in any of these essential to the completion of a thorough and systematic education. The high standard adopted by the University, the force of teachers employed, and the abundance of illustrative apparatus, together with the ample laboratory facilities, are all such as to insure to the diligent students the mastery of all the branches of study pursued in Universities of the high grade.²

By the year 1884, the Colorado Seminary had become the University of Denver. Although the early years looked bleak, the administration of Dr. Moore put the school on a firm foundation, and when Bishop Warren arrived in Colorado to live, in 1884, he found a good

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1881), p. 38.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1882), p. 31.

school to assist the church in training the youth of the West for leadership in the city, the church, and the society.

Summary of the Period 1876-1884

At the close of this first section of our history, it is surprising to compare the city, the churches, and the university with the situation only twenty years before, when both the university and the Colorado Conference were one year old. From a people that were uncertain about their city and their career in the west, we see developed a more stable culture, some city pride, and the possibilities of almost unlimited development. Perhaps some had speculated that Denver would be a necessary city in the route from the East to the Pacific coast. Others had thought of it as an adventure they would tell their friends of back east. However, as Bishop Warren made his decision to come to Colorado to live, he no doubt decided that it was a life-time commitment and dedication. He must have had faith in the area, and no doubt had fond dreams of what the church should become within a generation or two.

Whatever might have been in the thinking of the Bishop, we can see that his enthusiasm lent inspiration, and his hard work paid dividends very soon in Denver, as in the state as a whole. It is with his leadership and inspiration that we shall embark on our survey of the next period in Methodist history.

SECTION II (1884-1890)

CHAPTER V DENVER 1884-1890

CHAPTER VI DENVER METHODISM

CHAPTER VII THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER
(Colorado Seminary)

CHAPTER V

DENVER 1884-1890

Suburban Development

From 1870 to 1882, Denver had mushroomed almost beyond any optimist's comprehension, but after this time it began a gradual decline and depression which lasted until 1885. During this time manufacturing, building, and business itself seemed to be at a stand-still. This was short-lived however, and in 1885 everything seemed to back to normal.

A depression such as Denver experienced did not seem to affect the suburbs however. In this general period we note that several of them grew, and than many of them were incorporated as towns in their own right. A good share of these have since been annexed to Denver.

Two sections which were showing continued growth were Highlands and North Denver (meaning Berkeley). Advertisements such as the following helped the cause immeasurably:

H. C. King and H. S. McDowell Real Estate. . . . We make a specialty of property in North Denver and Highlands. These localities are rapidly coming into prominence as the most beautiful and healthful suburbs of the city.¹

Methodist Churches were formed in both Berkeley and Highlands in 1891.

South Denver included all that portion lying south of Alameda and east of Broadway, bounded on the east by Colorado Boulevard and on the south by Yale Avenue. The eastern and southern boundaries were not specified in the original planning of the town in 1874 however, because no one supposed that it would extend nearly that far. South Denver was incorporated as a town in 1886. Within the bounds of this incorporation were to come in a very few years, four new Methodist church organizations: Flemings Grove (Cameron Memorial), 1888; South Sherman Avenue (soon Grant Avenue), 1890; Myrtle Hill, (now Washington Park), 1893; and University Park, 1894.

Another suburb which appeared in this period was Harman, the little section bounded by First and Sixth Avenues, York Street and Colorado Boulevard. It was laid out by L. B. Harman in 1882, and incorporated in 1886. There has been no Methodist church organized within the bounds of this town which was soon incorporated into Denver.

The town of Barnum now in west Denver has an interesting history dating back to 1865 when Daniel Witter began to develop it. He soon transferred the whole area to the Villa Park Association, which group had hoped to build an exclusive suburb including curved driveways, parkways, parks, and marble mansions. The national panic of 1873 however, changed many plans and the idea never materialized. The town finally got its name from P. T. Barnum of circus fame who came to Denver and selected a site within this subdivision for his winter headquarters.

¹ The Rocky Mountain Methodist, July 18, 1897.

P. T. Barnum's plan did not prove satisfactory because it was so far from the large population centers. Subsequently the land was divided into lots and called the Barnum sub-division. In 1882 the circus man transferred the land to Mrs. Helen Buchtel who was his sister. She was the wife of a prominent doctor in town, and the sister-in-law of H. A. Buchtel, later minister of Trinity Church, Chancellor of the University of Denver and then Governor. Following some building by Mrs. Buchtel, others staked off lots and built many residences on the townsite. In 1887 the town was incorporated.¹ Not until 1907 was a Methodist Church organized in this town, although an interdenominational Sunday School had been formed there several years before.

One other sub-division incorporated before 1890 was that of Montclair to the east of Denver. A Methodist church was not formed in this area until 1944. These people had access to no church of the Methodist denomination until 1910 when Park Hill Church was established to the north. Then in 1927 Christ Church moved to its present location at E. Seventh Avenue and Colorado Boulevard, to serve a part of the same area. However, neither of these churches was close enough to be effective for most of Montclair.

Expansion within Denver proper: -- Within the Denver City limits there were many areas of expansion in addition to the suburbs. For example, lots were offered in Platte Park in 1888.² This was a small section west of the river, north of Colfax. Though the area did not develop at this time, lots were sold for the reasonable price from \$350 to \$750. In other areas of the town many magnificent buildings were constructed, and the complexion of the town changed markedly.

Perhaps the Methodist Church which reflected development within Denver the most was Grace Church (formerly Evans Chapel) just south of Colfax Avenue at West Thirteenth and Bannock. Many large and beautiful homes were built in the community surrounding this church. People seemed to have extra money, or if they did not, credit was easy to obtain. Many who over-spent themselves in this period were the hardest oppressed in the crash of 1893. Hall summed this up in the following bit of wit:

Before the crash came in 1893, Denver boasted the largest army of landed millionaires to be found west of the Missouri River. At this writing [1895] it has been reduced to a mere corporal's guard.³

In checking the population figures, we find that between 1880 and 1890 the population of Denver almost trebled from 35,629 to 106,713. Business began to move from their former locations along the Larimer and Lawrence thoroughfares, to the new "main" streets of Sixteenth and Seventeenth. Banks, hotels, and various stores found their future in the new area. Within this period we remember that Lawrence Street Church became Trinity Methodist, and moved from lower Denver to a more advantageous location at Eighteenth and Broadway, all for the same reasons.

¹ Colorado Writer's Program, A Short History. . . p. 63.

² The Rocky Mountain News, April 21, 1888.

³ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, (Chicago: The Blakely Printing Co., 1889), II, 31.

It is recorded that some of the optimists felt that now Denver could challenge Chicago as the metropolis of the West, as their building boom in 1889 soared from the previous high of two million dollars to a new level of \$10,000,000.

Major Buildings: -- Some of the major buildings which helped to make this large total were: the Mining Exchange Building, Fifteenth at Arapahoe; the Boston Building, Seventeenth at Champa; the Masonic Temple, Sixteenth at Welton; the Kittredge Building at Sixteenth and Glenarm; the Post Office (Old Customs House), Seventeenth and Arapahoe; and the Brown Palace Hotel, Seventeenth and Tremont. In 1890 the cornerstone of the state capitol was laid which was the symbol of the new center of the city taking form. Coupled with this expansion were the enlarged railroad facilities, as four new lines came to Denver from the east, and one from the south.¹

Industry: -- By the date of 1890, new industries were moving into Denver, such as the cotton mill. This was the mill located in Manchester, west of the River, approximately three miles south of the center of Denver, south of Valverde. Here a church was formed to serve the people of this suburb in 1895. Incidentally, the building which was built here was later moved into Barnum in 1914 to be their church. This building was used by the people at Barnum (Bethany) until 1953 and was then abandoned for their new building. The original frame structure was the basis of the new parsonage built in 1954 by this congregation.

Also added to Denver's commerce were a woolen mill, a boot and shoe factory, and increased agricultural prosperity.²

Manufacturing: -- The most important manufacturing at this time continued to be smelting. This has been mentioned before, having been introduced into Denver in 1870. Professor Hill of Brown University had developed a more efficient smelting method, and this was used first at the smelter at Blackhawk, and later brought to the Swansea smelters. While the business seemed to be quickly developing, mismanagement at the Swansea plant caused them to disband as a failure. The Argo smelter was progressing and developing into a giant corporation. In 1883 the Omaha and Grant Smelter was organized, while 1885-6 was the beginning of the organization of the Globe Smelter Company. Around this latter company subsequently was built the town of Globeville in which a Methodist organization known as the Greenwood Church was formed in 1911.

Crime: -- Denver was not all progress however, as crime moved in and made the city its capitol. Tourist trade was exploited and gambling seemed to be on the rampage. Of one of the leading criminals named Ed Chase, we read that:

Chase ruled with an iron hand, a hand which always had one finger on the trigger of a double-barreled shotgun, loaded with slugs.³

¹ Frank Hall, History of the State of Colorado, II, 31.

² Ibid., p. 34.

³ Colorado Writer's Program. A Short History. . . p. 53.

One of the religious leaders against such lawlessness was Dean Hart of the Episcopal Cathedral. He called the Palace Theatre a "death trap to young men, a foul den of vice and corruption."¹

Development of the church: -- During this period of progress as well as corruption, from 1884-1890, the number of churches, members, and ministers was greatly enlarged. Within the Denver Metropolitan area we note the number of Methodist Churches in 1884 was ten. Total membership then stood at 1319. In 1890 the figures were twelve churches with a total membership of 2,770. In addition to these churches of the Colorado Conference there was a Swedish Church, some German work, and two representatives of the Methodist Church, South.

¹ Ibid., p. 53.

CHAPTER VI

DENVER METHODISM 1884-1890

Episcopal Residence Established in Denver

The Colorado Conference was organized in 1863, four years after regular preaching had begun in the area of Denver. By 1883 the area had grown in population, and Denver itself was wishing to be recognized as a city in its own right. However, the church leaders realized that they could not really achieve the importance they desired if they continued to be so far from direct episcopal leadership. A bishop came to the state only to conduct conferences or other special occasions. There was no individual who oversaw the work of the state and had its welfare central in his thinking.

With this in their thinking, both the Colorado Annual Conference of ministers, and the Annual Lay Conference adopted resolutions to the effect that they felt their church would be strengthened if an Episcopal area were established around Denver, with its central offices in this city:

Whereas, it is our opinion as a Conference that the cause of Methodism would be greatly advanced by having a resident Bishop within the bounds of our Conference; therefore,
Resolved, that the General Conference at the next session be requested to designate Denver as a place of Episcopal residence.¹

On motion of Ex-Governor Evans, it was Resolved, that it is the opinion of this Conference, that the designation by the General Conference of the M. E. Church, at its approaching session, of Denver City, an important commercial center, eight hundred miles from the home of any of our Bishops, as an Episcopal Residence, will largely promote the welfare of the church.²

Hardly had this wish been recorded in the Conference Journal when speculation began as to who the bishop would be if the request were granted. Bishop Henry White Warren was linked with the area even before General Conference had met. The Rocky Mountain News³ carried an article indicating that Bishop Warren of Georgia was almost certain to locate in Denver. The paper continued: "A coming interesting event is likely to identify the bishop still more closely with Colorado interests. Full particulars will be given in due time."⁴ The "interesting event" referred to here is almost certainly the marriage of the Bishop to Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff. He had probably met her on his various trips through the state, perhaps even at the time he conducted his first conference in Colorado at Georgetown in 1880. The prediction was realized and the marriage of

¹ Minutes of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, (twenty-first session), 1883, p. 19.

² Minutes of the Colorado Conference, (1883), p. 46.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, December 16, 1883.

⁴ Ibid.

Bishop Warren and Mrs. Iliff, December 27, 1883, was a strengthening move for Methodism in Denver and Colorado. This brought the church leader and one of the most interested and benevolent of financial leaders together.¹ Even as this future move was being considered by the Colorado people, the new item complimented Warren as being “one of the youngest and most vigorous of bishops.”² Certainly he was to fulfill this tribute in a matchless way.

As the General Conference convened in 1884 John Evans introduced the resolution to the effect that Denver ought to be designated as an Episcopal residence:

Whereas, the City of Denver, Colorado, has a population of about 75,000 inhabitants, is the commercial center of a vast extent of rich and rapidly developing country, and is a healthy and delightful place of residence; and

Whereas, it is a convenient center for exercising supervision over the most promising and varied interests of the Church anywhere, to be found in this country, so far removed from convenient Episcopal oversight and care, being 800 to 900 miles west of our nearest Episcopal residence to the east, and 1,500 miles from the only one to the west of it; and,

Whereas, Both the Ministerial and Lay Conferences of the Colorado Annual Conference unanimously adopted resolutions requesting that Denver be made an Episcopal residence by this General Conference; therefore,

Resolved, That the Committee on the Episcopacy be directed to inquire into and report upon the propriety of granting said request.³

The requests of the lay and the ministerial delegates from Colorado were accepted, along with requests for several other Episcopal residences. The Committee on Episcopacy gave the following report to the Conference:

The Committee on Episcopacy beg leave to report that they recommend the fixing of Episcopal residences at the following places: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago, Saint Louis or Green Castle, Indiana, San Francisco or vicinity, Minneapolis, Atlanta or Chattanooga, New Orleans or Austin, Denver, Buffalo, Topeka or vicinity.

They also recommend that the several residences be chosen by the Bishops in the order of seniority of election; and that when a residence is so chosen it be not changed during the current quadrennium, except in case of death or permanent disability.⁴

That Warren should have picked Denver as his Episcopal Residence was to be expected, because it was the home of his wife to whom he had been married less than a year. He perhaps chose this area at first for her sake, and later chose it because he had a home here, loved it, and saw its possibilities for growth and service. Whatever the reasons might have been, the coming of such a vigorous and energetic bishop as Warren marked a new era in Methodism in the state. He took a deep interest in the smallest church while at the same time he could travel to every city

¹ Isaac Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 383.

² The Rocky Mountain News, December 16, 1883.

³ Minutes of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1884, p. 99.

⁴ Minutes of the General Conference, 1884, p. 312.

of the nation soliciting money for the University of Denver, or later on, for the Iliff School of Theology. Bishop Warren made Colorado's Methodism a success because he took a vital interest in every individual, every minister, and was truly a "Prince of the Church."¹

Not only was Bishop Warren a forceful leader, but he had the progress of the times on his side as well. The two decades following his arrival were probably the two greatest eras of Denver's history. Building and expansion were unprecedented, and the church was challenged greatly to keep up with the city.

The coming of Bishop Warren was indeed a sign of the re-juvenating of the Methodist Church in Colorado. We owe a great portion of Colorado Methodism's present status to the progressive spirit, the devoted service and the dynamic personality of this particular bishop through his twenty-eight years as bishop in Denver.

Methodist Churches Organized Previous to 1884

Organization of this portion of the chapter: -- To systematize the discussion of various churches of this period, they will be included here according to alphabetical order, rather than according to their relative importance, or the dates of their organization.

Argo Church

As was mentioned before, this church was organized in February, 1880, and was placed on a circuit in conjunction with the Wheat Ridge church. The growth of the Argo smelter, immediately north of the Denver city limits, and the enlarging town around it had made the building of a church seem necessary.

J. T. Musgrove became the minister of this little organization in 1885, and stayed five years. The statistics for the church are included with Wheat Ridge until 1892, hence it is difficult even to estimate the relative strength of the two churches. In the year 1886, the end of the Rev. Mr. Musgrove's first year, the two churches together reported a membership of 71. By the end of the conference year 1891-2, the report was 128, at which Conference the church at Argo was made a separate charge. The end of their first year as separate churches, Wheat Ridge listed its membership at 77, while Argo listed 52. Evidently Argo could claim roughly one third of the members reported for the churches while they were combined.

Regardless of the difficulty which we encounter in obtaining statistics, Beardsley reports that during the ministry of Mr. Musgrove, a church was built in Argo at a cost of \$3,500.² We note that a part of this work was done by the Rev. Mr. George Richardson who helped Mr. Musgrove, and who himself gave four lots to the church. He also contributed other funds to the struggling organization.

¹ This title given by Frank R. Hollenback in a short biography he wrote of the bishop in 1934. Frank R. Hollenback, Henry White Warren – a Prince of the Church (Fort Morgan: The Times Publishing Company, 1934).

² Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 459.

J. W. Linn became the minister of the Wheat Ridge-Argo circuit in 1890, to remain until after 1892, at which time he continued on at Wheat Ridge as a separate charge. In the year 1892 C. W. Huett was appointed to Argo and Greenwood as a two-church circuit. We shall discuss the organization of the Greenwood (Globeville) Church in a later section.

During this period to 1890, silver was important which made Argo and its smelter important. The church evidently made good gains, though was not yet to the point that it could be a self-supporting separate church.

Beckwourth Street Church (later Fifth Avenue)

In 1884 the Beckwourth Street Church was only two years old, but was beginning to develop into one of the substantial west-side churches. The building was erected in the summer of 1882 while they were a part of a circuit with St. James Church, also in West Denver.

Beginning in 1884, Beckwourth Church was placed on a circuit with Simpson Mission, with J. W. Linn as minister. This circuit remained until 1886 when Beckwourth became a church by itself. At the end of its first year as a single church (1887) the report shows a membership of 74, and a Sunday School enrollment of 115. The church name was changed to Fifth Avenue in 1887 when the city adopted the present system of street naming. The north-south street at this time was "Water", later changed to "Galapago".

J. W. Linn left the church in July 1887, following a very successful ministry. The Rocky Mountain Methodist reports the farewell service for the minister, and gives a summary of his work during the three years.¹

When he came the membership stood at eighteen (autumn of 1884), while in his last report three years later the membership was reported at 74. The year he left the Sunday School registered 115, which was probably as rapid a growth as the little church ever made.

The news item² reports further that Mr. Linn did much to improve the church building also. When he came the church was bare. He had the walls plastered, new furniture was bought, and the people proudly reported that there was not a penny remaining on any indebtedness.

H. L. Beardsley came to the church in 1887 to remain one year. His report showed a membership increase of 13, from 74 to 87, while his Sunday School enrollment almost doubled from 115 to 225. Nothing further is recorded during his ministry, except that he held services twice a month in a school in the Valverde community. This continued until John Collins took the Valverde work as a part of his "Denver Circuit" in 1888.³

The Denver Republican had praise for the next minister, S. W. Thornton.⁴ They record that he was improving and enlarging the church building which was costing several thousand

¹ The Rocky Mountain Methodist, July 18, 1887.

² Ibid., July 18, 1887.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 378-9.

⁴ The Denver Republican, January 1, 1890.

dollars. Evidently his ministry was very effective, for after two years he reported a membership increase from 87 to 242, for a net increase of 155. Sunday School also increased from 225 to 350, a healthy gain for only two years' time. By this time, this church was in the midst of one of the fastest growing areas of Denver, and for several years recorded fair growth, although this never did become a large church.

Beardsley reports that during this ministry of Thornton, the church had been enlarged at a cost of \$800, and a new seven room parsonage built at a cost of \$2,200.¹ After all this, a debt of only \$800 remained. This church is substantially the same today, and is still in use by Methodists.

California Street Church (later Christ Church)

G. L. Fisher was succeeded in 1884 by John Wilson who died March 1885.² The year was completed by John Whisler who remained for the conference year of 1885-6 also. These two years were the beginning of a decrease due to the slight shift of population toward the outskirts of the city. We note the decrease especially in the Sunday School from 435 in 1884 to 250 the next year, and 200 the following year. Membership decreased also, 172, 168, and 133 for the years 1884-87.

This decrease was finally stopped by the foresight of the Rev. Mr. G. N. Eldridge. The project which really enhanced the church's position, and insured a progressive future was the decision to move to the outskirts of the city and rebuild. The little society had previously built a humble frame building at 24th and California Streets. Several attempts were made to build, but all failed. The church was at a standstill. Finally, in January, 1889, a committee was appointed to select a new site. The committee chose the corner of Twenty-second and Ogden Streets for the new building, and purchased the property for \$6,650. The old property at the downtown location was sold for \$15,000, giving the church a good margin on which to begin their church anew.³

When the move was planned from California Street to the new location, the necessity of a name change was seen. According to a news item the name of the church was incorporated as Wesley Church.⁴ Then the conflict with the Wesleyan denomination was a problem that was raised, and a suggestion from Bishop and Mrs. Warren was taken, to name the organization Christ Church, which name it bears to this day.

The cornerstone was laid July 30, 1889, only seventeen years to the day from the incorporation of the California Street Church.⁵ Bishop Warren preached the main sermon, and was assisted in the service by the minister, G. N. Eldridge. The cornerstone reads: "Erected A. D. 1889, Society Organized 1871, Formerly California Street Methodist Episcopal Church." To

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 528.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 369.

³ The Denver Republican, July 31, 1889.

⁴ Ibid., July 31, 1889.

⁵ A folder published on the occasion of the Christ Church 75th anniversary, 1946.

help them in their initial costs, it is recorded that Bishop Warren raised a subscription of between \$8,000 and \$10,000 in January of 1889, to be applied on this particular building.¹

Construction progressed rapidly, so that the first gathering could be held in the new church on Christmas Eve of 1889. (see Fig. 5). The first sermon in the new church was preached by Bishop Warren, December 29, 1889. Only the basement was completed, so the services were held there for almost three years. The sanctuary was opened for services July 2, 1892, with the minister, R. N. Barns preaching the sermon. Of the completed church, Beardsley comments:

This is one of the handsomest churches in Denver, it is 74 x 90 feet, it is a two story, Gothic structure, and is built of gray lava-stone, tastefully ornamented with red sandstone trimmings. Its spire, the tallest in the city, is one hundred and ninety feet high.²

After having been at the church only one year, Eldridge had maintained 200 in Sunday School and raised the membership from 133 to 149, only sixteen members, but sixteen significant members. His next years brought steady increase to 248 at the end of his fourth year, the Conference of 1890. Sunday School enrollment had not increased appreciably, for at this time he reported only 252 pupils, an increase of fifty-two.

Though he did not stay to complete the church, much credit is to be given to Mr. Eldridge for halting a slump in the church, and for conceiving of, and leading in the move and the building project. The succeeding minister was R. N. Barns, who increased the membership from 248 to 305 in two years, 1890-92, and increased the Sunday School attendance in the same period of time, from 252 to 340.

In this particular period, Christ Church took its place among four major churches of Denver, all with new buildings: Trinity, Grace, Asbury and Christ. Each of these buildings was a credit to its community, and a matter of pride to the Methodist denomination.

Evans Chapel (later Grace Methodist Church)

As previously mentioned, Evans Chapel was located at West Fourteenth at Bannock Street, and was the center of the main expansion of Denver Between 1884 and 1890. The Rev. Mr. E. T. Curnick had succeeded Dr. David H. Moore, but stayed only a portion of the year, returning east for his wife's health. Regardless of the difficulties he faced, his records for the year show a membership increase of 30, from 127 to 157, and his Sunday School enrollment increased from 170 to 209, a total of 39.

During the ministry of E. T. Curnick, it is noted that the Official Board had decided to complete the church building by constructing the larger sanctuary immediately east of, and joining the little Evans chapel to seat approximately one thousand persons. However there was also a movement to consolidate the Evans Chapel membership with the Lawrence Street Church, to make a more adequate organization and building for both. The final outcome was that Evans

¹ The Denver Republican, July 31, 1889.

² Isaac H. Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 370.

Chapel developed into Grace Church and the Lawrence Street congregation built their own church, naming it Trinity. As far as Evans Chapel was concerned, their wish to build was thwarted for a time.

The successor to Gurnick was Dr. Henry Augustus Buchtel who was destined to have a long career in Colorado Methodism. Dr. Buchtel stayed at Evans Chapel only one year however, for the next year he was appointed to the Lawrence Street Church. Buchtel showed a membership increase of 26 and a Sunday School enrollment increase of only one person.

Evans Chapel came into its own with the ministry of Gilbert de LaMatyr. This minister, formerly a Civil War Chaplain and a congressman, sparked the enthusiasm which was needed to continue the building, and placed the permanent name of Grace Church on the edifice.¹ When de LaMatyr came to Evans Chapel the membership stood at 183 and the Sunday School at 210. During his three years (1886-1889) the membership climbed to 234, for a net increase of 51, while his Sunday School dropped drastically from 210 to 125 the first year, and at the end of the third year stood at 129.

Buchtel received the highest salary in Denver in that year, 1885-86, when he received \$4,000. At the same time, Lawrence Street Church was paying Gilbert de LaMatyr only \$3,500. Then the interesting switch came in 1886 when the men exchanged churches, and exchanged salaries also. In fact de LaMatyr received \$3,500 three years at Lawrence Street and two years at Evans. His last year at Evans Chapel (Grace Church) he was raised to \$3,750, still rather high for a small church in Denver then.

The crowning achievement of Gilbert de LaMatyr was his carrying through of the plans to increase the size of the church edifice by building the much needed sanctuary. In a sermon he told of his dreams for the church as it was being planned:

One year ago the movement was inaugurated to raise the means to erect the church, the walls of which are now going up. The plan is to secure sufficient to pay for its building, furniture, and organ, and dedicate it free of debt. In harmony with the material of the chapel the building is to be of red sandstone, including the spire, which is to rise 160 feet. A Roosevelt organ, costing \$10,000 has been ordered, and will be in place at the dedication.²

Dr. de LaMatyr attributed much of their success in this building enterprise to the city's advance to the south, and the magnificent mansions being erected on Capitol Hill and the area up to and around Evans Chapel.³

One further preliminary notice before the church was actually constructed was the choosing of a name for it. Since he had given so much time, effort, and money to the organization, it is perhaps surprising that the church was not called Evans Memorial, though it

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 489.

² The Rocky Mountain News, January 9, 1888. The complete sermon by Dr. de LaMatyr can be found in this issue.

³ Ibid.

was not until later that churches in Denver began taking names of benefactors (as Cameron, John Collins, Merritt, Clough). The Denver Republican notes that a new church would be built in conjunction with Evans Chapel.¹ This item states that the Official Board had voted to name the church “St. Paul”. No further explanation for the rejection of this name in favor of “Grace” is given.

The completed church adjoining Evans Chapel was dedicated Sunday, January 27, 1889, free of debt.² (see Fig. 7). Bishop Warren preached the dedicatory sermon on that day. The total cost of the church building was \$85,000, with some special gifts in addition.³ The main gift was another stained glass window given by the Iliff family, William B. Iliff, Edna Iliff Briggs and Louise Iliff. (The Iliffs had previously given the window in Evans Chapel.) The inscription on the window is seen to read: “In loving memory of J. W. Iliff from his children, September, 1889.”

Gilbert de LaMatyr hardly had the church completed when he was appointed elsewhere and his successor at the newly completed Grace Methodist Church was A. H. Lucas who stayed two years. Going along with the enthusiasm over the new church, in his first year, Rev. Lucas increased membership from 234 to 300, a net increase of 66. Sunday School enrollment showed no appreciable change. His next year the membership was further increased by twenty.

Grace Church had now taken its rightful place among the Denver churches, and was to serve Methodism faithfully for sixty-five years until it was sold in 1954. By the year 1890, Grace, Trinity, Christ and Asbury all had new churches, and were beginning to reflect some of the progress and the development which was typical of a large part of Denver in these years.

Lawrence Street Church becomes Trinity Methodist Church

Gilbert de LaMatyr became the minister of Lawrence Street Church at the Conference of 1883, to remain three years. We note that when he came the membership stood at 525 and when he left it had grown to 766. The Sunday School had not grown with the membership, perhaps because the younger people were now living nearer the outskirts of the city and attending Simpson Mission, St. James, Beckwourth Street, or Evans Chapel. In fact, it was probably as true then as now, that a church in a new area often attracted a good share of the leaders near the new project, although these leaders had been previously associated closely with the older organization. A good example is John Evans, who quickly associated himself with Grace Church although he had been instrumental in guiding the organization at Lawrence Street for several years.

As Dr. de LaMatyr came to Lawrence Street Church he persuaded a Mr. I. E. Blake to take charge of their music. Under this musician’s leadership, a choir was organized which reached its greatest growth in 1888 when for the opening of the new church it numbered 100

¹ The Denver Republican, December 5, 1886.

² Ibid.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 375.

voices.¹ This same Mr. Blake gave \$30,000 for the new organ in the church, the basic structure of which is still in use (1956).² At the time of the opening of the new church in 1888, it was said that music in Denver was unexcelled in the western states, and in many eastern states as well.

At the Conference of 1886 Gilbert de LaMatyr and Henry Augustus Buchtel of Evans Chapel exchanged churches. In their new assignments each constructed the new building which has stood for three generations. De LaMatyr organized and carried through the building and re-naming of the church from Evans Chapel to Grace Methodist Church. Buchtel carried his work through to include selling the Lawrence Street property, buying new property at Eighteenth and Broadway, re-naming the church "Trinity" and constructing the building on that corner.

Membership as Henry Buchtel came to Lawrence Street was listed at 766, with Sunday School enrollment at 556. When he left at the Conference of 1891 the membership had climbed to 1,023, for a net increase of 467; and the Sunday School had climbed to its peak of 1,200, a net increase of 644. Much of the increase is no doubt attributed to the natural expansion in a growing city, much of it to the enthusiasm which comes with a grand new building, but a good share of it to the prodigious work of Dr. Buchtel.

The Rocky Mountain News reported in April, 1887, that the old property called Lawrence Street Church had been sold for \$13,000 and the old parsonage for \$8,000.³ This made a sum of \$21,000 of the proposed \$50,000 already available, so the task did not look so large.⁴ However, as plans progressed, it was seen that \$50,000 was not sufficient for the building which was needed. Plans were re-worked, changed, enlarged, until the final cost was approximately \$173,000. One of the changes which is recorded was the large organ which was to be installed.⁵ This forced them to make the sanctuary larger and to extend the organ chamber out farther to the east side of the lot. The result was that the proposed parsonage plans on the lot with the church were abandoned, and the final sanctuary was to seat between 1,500 and 2,000.

Concerning this organ given by Isaac E. Blake, Mr. Walter F. Crosby, manager of the Roosevelt Organ Company in New York City said:

Although not containing as many pipes as some concert organs in some public halls, it will be musically the most complete organ in the United States.⁶

At the Fourth Quarterly Conference held in the Lawrence Street Church, July 6, 1887, a resolution was passed which officially changed the name of the organization to "Trinity" Methodist Church. During the summer the services were held at First Congregational Church for a time, but mostly at Tabor Grand Opera House because it was large enough to hold the crowds. One financial report was presented during the beginning of the actual building:

¹ Baber Pathorne, Musical History of Colorado (Denver: The Rocky Mountain News Printing Co., 1889), pp. 96-97.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 363.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, April 28, 1887.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 363.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, April 28, 1887.

⁶ The Rocky Mountain News, April 28, 1887.

Present financial exhibit as follows:	
Value of the building site on Broadway	\$40,000
Special subscription for the organ	20,000
Special subscription for the parsonage (Mr. Chamberlain)	10,000
After paying off mortgage indebtedness we have net cash from the sale of the old church and parsonage property, to be supplied to the new building	10,000
Special subscriptions for the building	50,000
Total in cash, good subscriptions and property	\$130,00 ¹

In these preliminary financial plans we note the gift of \$10,000 by Mr. H. B. Chamberlain toward the parsonage. This is the same individual who gave the large sum of money for the construction of the Chamberlain Observatory at the University's new University Park campus. Beardsley tells us that Mr. Chamberlain later gave the magnificent parsonage on Sherman Avenue to Trinity Church, after he had it built as a memorial to his mother. This was evidently in addition to the last financial report.

In an August, 1887, issue of The Rocky Mountain Methodist, under the heading of Church Notes we read:

Last evening the contract was let for \$107,000.65. [Among other items mentioned were] for stone hitching posts and chains \$217.00; and for carriage steps \$150.²

The great spire in their plans was to cost \$7,435.10, which included the copper cross to surmount the top.

The ceremony for laying the cornerstone of the new Trinity Church was held September 5, 1887. A large group of interested friends attended the great occasion, with only a faint idea of the importance their new church was to have for the growing city of Denver. A whole page of information concerning this occasion appeared in The Rocky Mountain News the next day (September 6, 1887). The inscription on this cornerstone reads: "Erected A. D. 1887. Society organized August 2, 1859. Formerly Lawrence Street Church."

Trinity had wanted to raise enough more money to pay for their building by the time it was completed.³ One of their projects was there "long roll" which contained the name of each individual who contributed \$5.00 or more. In his enthusiasm for the magnificent building project, Bishop Warren answered a letter he had received from Dr. Buchtel:

Augusta, Georgia

¹ Ibid., April 28, 1887.

² The Rocky Mountain News, August 27, 1887.

³ Ibid., February 19, 1888.

February 11, 1888

Dear Sir:

I was delighted beyond measure, especially with the definite announcement of time for the opening of the lecture room. Put me on the long roll, which is the roll of honor for all our citizens. To build up such an elegance of architecture, institution of music, Sunday School, social amenities, and the preaching of the pure gospel, is an honor to any citizen. Easter never was more fittingly celebrated than in making possible a perpetual proclamation of the resurrection of our Lord.

The largest success to you in getting money before you at Easter.

Sincerely yours,
H. W. Warren¹

April 1, Easter Sunday 1888, was the date of the opening service in the partly-finished building (basement). Bishop Warren was the main speaker at that time. Beardsley tells us that during this service there were subscriptions taken for \$63,000 which would almost complete the entire building.²

One of the projects of Trinity Church during this building campaign was the sponsoring of four Sunday Schools.³ They were: first, at Trinity Church, with Peter Winne as Superintendent; second, at the Epworth Center, several blocks north-west of Trinity Church, Harry Williams the Superintendent; third, a group meeting in the old Lawrence Street Church, superintendent not given; and the Chinese School held at the YMCA, Dr. Stenhaus, Superintendent. It is to be noted that at approximately this same time the South Methodist Church was sponsoring a Chinese Sunday School also.

Work progressed well, and in July the notice appeared that the stone workers had completed all their work. There was much work still to be done on the inside however. As soon as the scaffolding could be removed, the townspeople could see the spire with the brass cross on its top, a height of 183 feet from the sidewalk:

Fresco painters are now at work in the immense auditorium, and several carloads containing parts of the new large organ have arrived. Pews, carpets, furniture, etc., are all being made. It will be the finest church edifice in the West.⁴

The formal opening of the new church was held December 23, 1888, with the large choir, and the organ which was given by Mr. Blake. The total cost had been \$173,000 for the whole building, including some furnishings. Much of the amount had been paid in cash prior to the opening of the building.⁵ Architecture had been planned by Mr. Robert S. Roeschlaub, while the contractors had been Hallack and Howard of Denver. The Colorado Graphic Magazine gave a

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, February 19, 1889.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 363.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, January 1, 1888.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, July 22, 1888.

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 363.

complete description of this building when it was completed.¹ (see Fig. 12). For a more complete description of it, the reader is referred to that more detailed article.

The striking success of the Trinity building project was marred for a time by the depression beginning in 1893. After the erection of the church many people who had made pledges found that they were increasingly hard to keep up to date, and as a result, many of them lagged, or even lapsed. Because of this lack of funds, Trinity was not dedicated free of debt until the ministry of Dr. (later Bishop) Charles L. Mead, in the year 1919.² Despite this slight setback, Buchtel did a marvelous piece of work during his five years at Trinity Church. Two years later, Mr. Joseph C. Shattuck, secretary of the Board of Trustees published in the Zion's Herald of Boston the following tribute to Buchtel:

No description of this church or history of its erection, would be complete or just that did not ascribe to Dr. Henry A. Buchtel, pastor from 1886 to 1891, the honor for great leadership in the enterprise. He came to a building seating about 500, but more than ample for the congregation. In two months he had packed it to the doors and in one year had lifted the society from the fourth in rank in the city to the first, and obliged it to move into the opera house, seating 1,200. He welded this people into one aggressive unit, fired by his own high purpose to build a temple worthy of the leading church in Colorado Methodism, yet never forgetting the regular benevolences, which in the year of heaviest giving to the new enterprise, reached a larger total than ever before reported by a church in this conference. It is not too much to say that, but for him, there would be no Trinity church in Denver today.³

We can imagine the disappointment with which the majority of people of Trinity heard the farewell sermon of Dr. Buchtel, March 29, 1891. In The Denver Republican for the next day, the text of the entire sermon appears.⁴ Also there appears a resume of the work of Dr. Buchtel, and an appreciation of his magnificent work. We have noted earlier the membership net gain of 467 and the net increase in the Sunday School of 544. This was a good tribute to the hard-working minister of Trinity.

The four months following Buchtel's departure, the pulpit was supplied by Dr. William F. McDowell, newly elected Chancellor of the University of Denver.

Thus Trinity takes its place among the other newly-built Methodist churches, Grace, Asbury and Christ, to become the "cathedral" church of Methodism in the state, and in the Rocky Mountain Empire.

North Denver Methodist Church becomes Asbury Methodist Church

¹ The Colorado Graphic Magazine, IV, No. 17, p. 1.

² The Denver Republican, March 30, 1891.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 501.

⁴ The Denver Republican, March 30, 1891.

The Methodist Church had been organized in North Denver for the second time in 1880, and in the next year their first building was constructed. When O. L. Fisher came to the church in 1884 there were no carpets, nor permanent pews; they did not even have a parsonage.

As Fisher came, the church had a membership of eighty, and a Sunday School reported at 160 pupils. He stayed at North Denver three years and showed increases in both the membership and the Sunday School. Thirty-two members had been added while a net increase of thirty-five Sunday School pupils was reported. The parsonage was completed in the year 1885, next door to the church at Sixteenth and Boulder Streets, and the next year the permanent pews and the carpeting were made projects to be completed at a cost of \$800.00.¹ Before Fisher left the church at the Conference of 1887, these projects were completed, and the church was stronger in all respects.

The most significant advance in the North Denver church came during the ministry of James F. Harris, who served a total of ten years in this church in two different pastorates. During the first pastorate of four years, from 1887 to 1891, he led the congregation to change the name of the church to Asbury Methodist, in memory of the bishop of the same name; and also led them in the beginning of their building project. It was in his second pastorate of six years, 1904 to 1910, that the mortgage was completely paid off, and the church were relieved from a persistent financial burden.

During the first four years of Harris' ministry the membership more than trebled, from 112 to 383, an increase of 271. During the same period the Sunday School increased from 195 to 344, a net increase of 149. This was one of the growing edges of Denver, and there were many children which would make a larger church necessary. Enthusiasm probably arose as the people saw the walls of their new church taking form, and much is probably due also to the winsome personality and the devoted service of the minister.

One evidence of Mr. Harris' devoted efforts to the younger generation is the note by Roerig² telling of the founding of the young people's society, a forerunner of the Epworth League, in 1889. His leadership shone again however, as he led the official board to buy some land three blocks from the old church, on the corner of Bert (Vallejo) and Fay (30th) Streets. A house had been built on the west side of the lot by the owner, Mr. Brothers, and as the church bought the property, they made the house into a parsonage, as it would then be next door to the church.³ Built of brick, the house was used as the parsonage until 1954 when the present parsonage was built several blocks to the north and west of the church.

The Rocky Mountain News of 1889⁴ recorded the plans of the North Denver Church to expand. It noted that this had happened to several churches recently, and that those which caught the spirit of the times would expand to keep up with the growing demands of their area. The original plans called for a building costing approximately \$50,000.

¹ The Asbury Manual, 1896, filed in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

² Mr. H. G. Roerig, "The Romance of Asbury" a lecture given at the annual meeting of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society, 1944. On file at Asbury Church.

³ The Asbury Directory, 1928, on file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, 1889, in the clipping file in the Western History Department, the Denver Public Library. The exact date not given.

Mr. Roerig¹ has recorded some of the contribution of Bishop Warren as the latter spoke in the old church November 8, 1889, and raised \$13,000 toward the new building. It was hardly six months later when Warren officiated at the cornerstone-laying ceremonies of the new church, now known as Asbury. The date of this ceremony was April 2, 1890, the day before the bishop laid the cornerstone at the new University building in University Park.²

The cornerstone of Asbury Church reads:

Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church
Erected A. D. 1890
Organized A. D. 1880

At this ceremony, the Rev. Mr. Harris reflected on the rapid development of the area. Nine years ago he stated, only one grocery store existed in the area, but now (1890) there were many residences, stores, business, and twelve churches organized and doing their work with a total of ten buildings.³

Despite the fact that the church was not completed until 1894, and the heavy debt not paid off until much later, the work of James F. Harris is of special importance as he gave the people of this little church a vision of the future, and led them in an enterprise which would help them meet that future prepared. In 1930, the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the North Denver Church, James F. Harris was living in Los Angeles, and was asked to write something for the celebration. The letter which he sent to the people, looking back over his own work of fifty years previous, is included in its entirety:

To the pastor and the members of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church, Greetings.

God bless Dear Asbury Church, so says my heart, after giving to them ten of the best years of my active life.

And as you come to the 50th milestone I send you across the wide distance between the Pacific and the Rockies, my heartiest congratulations and my earnest well wishes.

Never since churches were founded, has there been a group more stout-hearted, more faithful, more un-discouraged than the members of Asbury Church.

Have you an impossible task, put it into the hands of those invincible women. Have you financial problems that stagger the wise business man of these times of depression, put them into Asbury's heroes and heroines, who through fifty years have been able to pay out and pay out.

Asbury Church was built in the time of the great real-estate boom in Denver. Our first thought was to build a modest brick building, but the city at that time was thinking only in terms of imperishable stone. Thus it was, that we, like all the rest, built of stone.

The building and lots cost about \$75,000, and brought to the membership years of sore testing and self-denial.

¹ Mr. H. G. Roerig, "The Romance of Asbury".

² Ibid.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, April 3, 1890.

Years of depression followed the boom and the heroic faithfulness of Asbury's men and women so impressed the president of the Northwestern Life Insurance Company of whom we borrowed money, that he said although he had been an unbeliever, he never had anything to so convince him of the reality of the Christian religion as the unswerving integrity, the plodding work and the trusting lives of Asbury's membership.

As I recall the personnel of my first Board, W. H. Davis, Dr. G. B. Crews, H. C. Roerig, and C. B. Parker are the only surviving members.

But over the battlements of Heaven, no doubt a valiant host of yesterday made up of the early officary and lay membership of Asbury, look with joy over the strong faith and good purpose of the Board and members who work and pray today in their stead.

Churches can hardly be rated by their ornate buildings, their balanced budgets, their great memberships and their social standing, but rather their spirit of prayer and praise and usefulness. By the characters they build; by the courage they instill into the down-and-out; by the straight paths they make for the feet of little children; by the Christly way of doing all things great and small, and lastly by the way they are able to look into the face of the Pilot when "the last clear call" comes to them one by one.

If Mrs. Harris and I have lifted a pound of any one's burden, or brought hope to any fainting heart during all the years we have known you, it will be recompense enough to make us glad through eternity. All Hail, dear pastor and people. And by the grace of God let us all make the Port.

Your old time Pastor,
Signed, James F. Harris.¹

The structure which was being erected on the side of the north Denver hill was a two-story structure of gray lava-stone, trimmed with red Manitou sand-stone, was massive in appearance, with heavy arches and a solid stone tower rising to a height of 100 feet. Total cost of the building was \$75,000.² If we spend a little time today to drive over the Speer Boulevard viaduct and look directly ahead of us to the northwest, we will see the massive building standing in plain sight on its hill after sixty-six years. We can then see what Beardsley was meaning when he stated that this was "the most commanding Methodist church site in the city."³ (see Fig. 13).

St. James Methodist Episcopal Church

St. James Church, in West Denver, had been a part of the circuit with Beckwourth Street Church, ten blocks south, for two years preceding 1884; but at the conference that year, it was set apart as a single charge. Isaac H. Beardsley was appointed for his second year to St. James where in 1885 he reported the membership at eight and the Sunday School at 184. Both these figures show a decrease from the previous year, but we can no doubt assume that this was due to the separation of the growing Beckwourth Street work which had been counted in previously.

J. F. Harris was the next minister, coming in 1885 and staying for two years. He reported a net increase of 33 in membership and an increase of one in the Sunday School. The

¹ The original of this letter is on file in the office of Asbury Church.

² H. C. Roerig, "The Romance of Asbury Church".

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 376.

membership at least shows good work on the part of this minister, an increase of over one third in two years.

Succeeding Dr. Harris was C. W. Brewer who also stayed two years. The membership at the end of both his years is recorded at 108, whereas the year previous J. F. Harris had recorded 111 members. The Sunday School shows a steady decline as well, as J. F. Harris reported 185 his last year. The succeeding years were reported as 175 and 150.

A rejuvenating of the life of the church seems to have come with G. W. Ray, appointed in 1889. Soon after he came to the church plans were made to build a larger building, and in 1889 the old church was torn down.¹ The new St. James Church was built on the same site. While the church was being constructed the little group met in a tent in Lincoln Park, diagonally across the street from the church.²

The membership had been reported at 108 before G. W. Ray came. The four yearly reports which he turned in record the membership at 166, 237, 246, and 233 respectively (1880-1883). His Sunday School reports of the same years were 200, 280, 260, and 200.

The highest salary paid at St. James Church in this period was also received by Mr. Ray, a total of \$1,650 received in the year 1890-1891. The salary reported for other ministers was usually approximately \$400 lower.

The crowning work of the pastorate of G. W. Ray was his completion of the new St. James Church at the corner of West Ninth and Colfax Avenue. It was completed in 1892 at a total cost of \$20,000.³ (see Fig. 8). Further details of this particular project will be given in the next section following the year 1890. Despite seeming difficult situations at St. James, the church progressed some in this period, and with the new building being constructed, surely the members of the church could take new courage and optimism for the future of their organization.

Simpson Mission Church

The little Mission church in north-east Denver, named after Bishop Simpson, had met since 1882 in the little building they had constructed at the corner of Ames and McClelland (now Thirty-eighth Avenue and Lafayette Street). J. W. Linn was appointed to the circuit consisting of Simpson Mission and Beckwourth Street in 1884. The circuit reported at the end of the first year, 53 members and 150 enrolled in Sunday School. Another year the membership of the two grew to 76 with the Sunday School registering 138. At this time no doubt the larger percentage of membership and Sunday School attendance was at Beckwourth, for in 1886 Mr. Linn continued on at Beckwourth as a single charge and reported his first year's membership at 74, with 115 in Sunday School. At Simpson at this time the new minister was H. D. Seckner who reported for his first year only sixteen members and 60 in Sunday School.

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 512.

² From an interview with Mrs. Hatch, 959 9th Ave., one of the oldest remaining members of the old St. James Church.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 371.

However, H. D. Seckner gave the spark of enthusiasm to the little church, and his four years (1886-1890) spelled progress in several areas. His fourth year he listed 50 members with 135 in Sunday School, a good gain for a rather new little church.

The church was now getting overcrowded, and the people began to think of a larger building. It is reported that on one night early in 1888 a man by the name of John DeSellem approached the minister and discussed with him the necessity of a larger church. If the people would plan to build, Mr. DeSellem would help.¹ One week later a Mr. Walker, not a member of the church, said that he would give \$100 to the building. Then the minister decided that he would support the idea of a new church and began securing pledges and funds for the building.²

According to this record, it was late in the winter of 1888 that the property on McClellan Street was sold and the new building begun. The old property is said to have brought \$800 to be applied on the new building. During the time of construction the church group met in the rented Swedish Church on Thirty-eighth between Franklin and Gilpin, before erecting tents on their new lots at Thirty-seventh Avenue and Lafayette. Services were held in the tents for a few months, but a snow storm caused the tents to collapse and the congregation again went back to the Swedish Church late in 1889.³

The work on the new church progressed well, assisted by gifts of \$500 for lots and \$500 for the building, both by Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren.⁴ A gift of \$500 from John Evans was also recorded before the opening celebrations were held in the Christmas season of 1889. Total cost of the new building was \$5,100.⁵ At the opening services a communion set and the chandeliers were donated by the Lawrence Street Church. However, when Simpson bought their own equipment, these gifts were given to the still younger church in the area, Hess Memorial Church about which we will have more to say later.⁶

In the year 1890 J. T. Musgrove was appointed to the Simpson Church, and after a year had boosted the membership over 100 per cent, from 50 to 102. The Sunday School grew from 135 to 198. Enthusiasm for the new church and the new building in which to learn and worship was high and Mr. Musgrove took advantage of that. We shall discuss the history of this little church following 1890 in a later section, to see it taking its place among the substantial churches of the city.

The little church which they built on the corner of Thirty-seventh Avenue and Lafayette is still standing, though it has been remodeled and enlarged. (see Fig. 15). It is now (1956) the property of the Roman Catholic Church.

German Methodist Episcopal Church

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the Simpson Church Jubilee Week, August, 1903, on file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Simpson Jubilee Week folder, 1903.

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 378.

⁶ Simpson Jubilee Week folder, 1903.

In 1884 E. H. Kriege was transferred out of the German Church of Denver to be succeeded by G. J. Schultz. Under the able leadership of Schultz, the church made some remarkable progress, and seemed to be well on its way to becoming an important institution in the city of Denver and surrounding area.

During the three years, until 1887, G. J. Schultz enlarged the people's vision to the extent that they could see the need for expansion. Their quarters were small, but even more pressing was the necessity of getting farther away from the spreading business district. Consequently, at the Quarterly Conference in November 1886, the group voted to sell their old property at Eighteenth and Arapahoe Streets for \$25,000 and to choose a new site for rebuilding. The edifice which they planned and constructed stands to this day on the corner of Twenty-fifth and California Streets, though it is now used by the Japanese Methodist people (1956). (see Fig. 67). The building was commodious, beautifully constructed inside with exposed beams leading one's eyes upward to the worship symbols. Proceeds from the sale of the old property were used on the new building; and with the surplus the congregation founded a West Denver Church and assisted in the German Church at Pueblo, Colorado, as well.

The new church was dedicated in August 1887 with Henry A. Buchtel preaching the sermon in English that day.¹

When G. J. Schultz came to this German church, 1884, the membership stood at 89 with Sunday School enrollment at 110. After his third year, the membership had dropped to 72 with the Sunday School down to 45. Much of this decrease in membership and Sunday School enrollment is explained, no doubt, by the fact that in 1886, when Sunday School membership dropped from 155 to 90, the West German Church was founded at the corner of what is now Kalamath and Seventh Avenue. The minister of the First Church was the overseer in the early days of the West Church.

Following G. J. Schultz there came Jakob Tanner who stayed only one year, with no appreciable changes in the records. Good work was done by the successor, Friederick Hausser. At the end of his five years in 1893, he reported 72 members and 65 in Sunday School. Again it is to be noted that a third German church had recently been organized in Denver, and it was probably because of this new group that the Sunday School attendance and the membership records seem rather low at First Church.

Following his three years at First German Church, after 1884, E. H. Kriege became the Superintendent of the Denver District, and as such, he had oversight of the two new churches which were organized, although they were directly under the supervision of the minister at First Church. These two smaller churches were called Second (or West) German Methodist Episcopal Church at Seventh and Kalamath Streets, and North (or West Twenty-seventh Avenue) German Methodist Episcopal Church at West Twenty-seventh and Umatilla Streets. The missionary effort of First Church and the interest of the German Conference is to be noted in their work in organizing new German Churches.

¹ The Rocky Mountain Methodist, August 6, 1887.

Second German Methodist Episcopal Church

Transportation difficulties seem to have played their part in the necessity of founding another German Church, and later a third. The people in the extreme west part of the city found it difficult to go across town, and if they did it took them a long time. Consequently, a meeting was called in September 1886, at which time the church was organized. At this time Bishop J. M. Walden asked E. H. Kriege, the District Superintendent, to be the appointed leader for a time.¹ Preliminary work had been done here by Kriege while he was the minister of First Church, but now in 1886 it was organized as a separate church. In 1887 it received its first regularly appointed minister, according to the Annual Conference Records.

The building in which these people first met is still standing, according to the son of Matthias Klaiber, and is now occupied by the McCoy Drug Store at the corner of Kalamath and Seventh Avenue. (see Fig. 68). By the end of the organization's first year, 1887, the church and land four blocks north at Eleventh and Kalamath, was bought from the Swedish Methodist group.² A considerable portion of the money for the purchase came from the sale of the original First German Church property.³ Three years later, in 1890, under the leadership of Henry Krueger the building was improved and a parsonage was added.⁴

The ministers who served Second (West) German Church from its organization until 1890 were: O. J. Schultz (the minister of First Church), 1885-1886; E. H. Kriege, 1886-1887; Joseph Fiedler, 1887-1890; and Henry Krueger coming in 1890 to remain two years. No membership statistics are available in the Annual Conference records until the end of the conference year 1887-1888, when the membership was recorded as 12 and the Sunday School at 65. In the reports for the Annual Conference meeting in 1890, the membership was recorded at 30 with 60 in Sunday School enrollments.

North Denver German Church (West 27th Avenue)

At the Annual Conference (West German Conference) meeting in Kansas City in the fall of 1886, Bishop J. M. Walden read the appointment "West Denver and Cheyenne, Rev. E. H. Kriege." The future was to bring to this particular District Superintendent even more opportunities for service than he realized. It was his leadership that brought the North Denver German Methodist Church into being, often referred to as West Twenty-seventh Avenue Church.

There were many German people located in North Denver which challenged the new minister there, and late in 1887 two lots were bought⁵ mainly from funds from a Mr. P. Tucson.⁶ The cost of the lots was \$1,700. This small German Church had been organized only the year previously, in 1886, with a small Sunday School of five children; therefore, this buying of lots showed remarkable foresight for the group.

¹ Otto Kriege, and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz der Bischoflichen Methodistenkirche (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1906), p. 147.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 373.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, January 1, 1888.

⁴ Kriege and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz . . . p. 147.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, January 1, 1881.

⁶ Kriege and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz . . . p. 147.

Another year passed, and in 1888 a small chapel was built which cost \$1,216 and was constructed during the ministry of Joseph Fiedler who came in 1887.¹

From the beginning of the West 27th Avenue Church until 1889, with the exception of the year 1889-1890, it was on a circuit with West Denver. Ministers who had served this church since its organization are consequently the same as those serving the West German Church, except for the one year, which is lacking.

First mention of this new church in North Denver came in the Annual Conference Minutes in 1890, when the membership was listed at 18 and the Sunday School enrollment was recorded at 50.

The building in which these German pioneers worshipped has only recently (1953) been demolished to make room for the new Valley Highway. (see Fig. 69). The corner of West Twenty-seventh Avenue and Umatilla project reflecting the rapid change of the time. However, the inspiration which many of these people received on that corner has no doubt had its deep-felt significance to all.

The German Churches as a whole in Denver were missionary-minded, and in 1890 they pioneered in assisting in the organization of the German Church of Pueblo, Colorado, about which we will have more to say at a later time.

St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church, South

In 1884, as noted previously, the minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was J. C. Morris, who remained until 1885. In that year, the minister was F. B. Carroll who was appointed Presiding Elder of the Denver District in nine months. Membership at this time stood at 120 at the "Curtis Street Methodist Episcopal Church, South".

A new turn of events came in 1886 when W. Fisk Packard was appointed to succeed Mr. Carroll. Until Packard came, this church was a missionary appointment of the denomination, and became self-supporting mainly through the efforts of Mr. Packard.

The new minister was commended for having raised finances, putting the church on a firm financial basis, and increasing the membership.² In fact, during his first year of work at this church there were 40 accessions and the total membership then stood at 140.³ It was under the inspiration of Packard that the church voted to enlarge their facilities, and to buy a new location on which to rebuild.

A rather complete history of the church up to this time is given in the newspapers on the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone of the church soon to be called "St. Paul".⁴ The day

¹ Ibid.

² The Denver Republican, April 16, 1888.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, July 24, 1887.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, July 24, 1887.

previous to this article, July 23, 1887, the cornerstone had been laid by Bishop E. N. Hendrix who also spoke at the occasion. The location of this new church was on Welton and Twenty-first Streets. As the cornerstone was being prepared the church officials included several items of interest including a news article similar to the one referred to above.

Plans for this structure called for a combination Romanesque and Gothic style with a spire ninety-seven feet high. The building, to seat 450 persons, was to be constructed of brick and stone and was to include several memorial stained glass windows. This was certainly an ambitious project for a group whose membership numbered only 140.

Original estimates set the total cost of the church at between \$30,000 and \$35,000 and it was expected to be completed by October, although this was not realized. In November there appears a note to the effect that the new St. Paul Church is “almost completed” and will be occupied in a few weeks.¹

“Yesterday was the first day the new St. Paul’s Church (upstairs) was used” appeared in April 1888.² (see Fig. 17). Surely this was a time for rejoicing for the people who had struggled for many years to get their church firmly established. They even boasted of an organ constructed by a Mr. Wood, and their handsome Gothic structure of brick occupied one of the central spots in the city. The cost of the church alone was estimated at \$16,000 - \$17,000 though the plan included also a parsonage near the church. The final cost of the church seems to have been \$20,000 which evidently did not include the parsonage.³

Growth in membership is probably to be seen in part as related to the dynamic leadership of W. F. Packard, and the fact that a new building was being constructed in their midst, which challenged the people to become a part of it. In 1874 the membership was 82; and in 1879, 114; in 1887, 140; and in 1890, 200.⁴

Two projects which were still carried out by this group in 1888 were their “Chinese Sunday School” and the other Southern Methodist Church called Morrison Chapel.⁵ The only note about the Sunday School is that there were 25 Chinese pupils, and that it was one of the oldest in the country.

Perhaps a word about the Chinese population of Denver’s “Hop Alley” would be in order at this time.⁶ When the first railroad came to Denver in 1870, many of the track laborers were Chinese coolies who were discharged as the line was finished. Many of them, having no other place to go, settled in Denver. Following this, some became laborers in the nearby mines. Their ranks were swelled by other Chinese who were brought in especially for work in the mines, through the influence of a gang foreman, Chin Lin Sou, later the “Mayor” of Denver’s Chinatown.

¹ The Denver Republican, November 6, 1887.

² Ibid., April 16, 1888.

³ The Denver Republican, January 1, 1890.

⁴ Ibid., January 1, 1890.

⁵ Ibid., April 16, 1888.

⁶ Forbes Parkhill, Wildest of the West (New York: (Henry Holt and Company, 1951), pp. 108-116. This is a popular history of several aspects of Denver and Colorado’s items of interest.

A Visitors' guide to Denver in 1896 gives the following information about the Chinese:

Chinese quarters – Wazee, between Sixteenth and Seventeenth; Market, between Twentieth and Twenty-first. Visitors apply at Central Police Station for guides.¹

Most of the Chinese who finally settled in Denver were engaged in restaurant, the laundry, or in small merchandise businesses. There were stores selling Chinese foods, trinkets, as well as dealers in opium.

Seemingly, Denver had a large Chinese population, though no statistics are available. Prejudice against the Chinese developed, finding expression at times in riots in downtown Denver. The problem of immigration from China was partially stopped with the passage of the Chinese exclusion Act in 1882, however, prejudice grew stronger in the Rocky Mountain area during the 1890's. Several Colorado towns boycotted Chinese businesses and drove the people out. Denver had a remaining Chinese population during this whole period, although it has steadily dwindled since 1900. The only Chinese religious affiliations were Christian churches recorded by Parkhill were Presbyterian. However, we have seen that some Methodists established and maintained "Chinese Sunday Schools."

The second project was Morrison Chapel, about which we have already noted several historical facts. It was organized in 1880 on the corner of Thirty-second and Lafayette Streets.² They had made little progress in the intervening years, but still were optimistic that with increased population coming from Texas, the Southern group might have more members.

In 1887 we note from the Denver Methodist, a paper published by the church in Denver, that the Morrison Chapel continued its existence and continued its notices of services throughout the year of 1887.³

Another church was in the planning stages, to be located on South Broadway, according to the press.⁴ The people were waiting and hoping for the population to cease going East and begin its southerly movement. After the date of 1890 however, it seems that the church in South Denver did not materialize, and indeed, we lose any references to Morrison Chapel itself. It is supposed that some of the members went into the remaining South Church, St. Paul, and perhaps some of the others united with nearby Simpson Church.⁵

Ministers during the period 1884-1890 at the Southern Methodist Church were: 1883-1885, F. G. Morris; 1885-1886, F. B. Carroll (became Presiding Elder); 1886-1888, J. Fisk Packard (built the new St. Paul Church at Twenty-first and Welton); 1888-1890, Warren T. Bolling; 1890-1891, John M. Crowe.

¹ Ibid., p. 110.

² Wilbur Fisk Stone, History of Colorado (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918), I, 669.

³ The Denver Methodist, the year 1887.

⁴ The Denver Republican, January 1, 1890.

⁵ Personal interview with Mrs. Ray Kruger, Sr., July 1955, formerly a member of Simpson Church.

No doubt we owe the success of St. Paul Church at this trying time to the efforts of Mr. Packard. The challenge was presented, and the time was ripe for some progress. He was the person who responded to this challenge and followed through to completion the necessary plan and building.

Scandinavian (Swedish) Methodist Mission

The date 1883 is given for the official organization of the Swedish Methodist Church in Denver. In the year 1884, under the leadership of F. J. Berg, the year's work had netted a membership of 14 with 10 probationers and an enrollment in the Sunday School of 25.

The first building was erected by this group in 1884, only a year after they had organized, at the corner of Eleventh and Moose (later Kalamath) Streets. The cornerstone was laid January 24, 1884, and the structure was dedicated on March 20 of the same year. The worship services were held in this church for approximately three years until 1887 when it was sold to the Second German Methodist Church.¹ After this action the group met in a room of Trinity Methodist Church.²

The subsequent history of the group is obscure, but S. T. Vincent reported in 1894 that they lost the real estate on which they had been paying for some time.³ No doubt the discouragement surrounding this failure is reflected in the difficulties of the church organization.

F. J. Berg was the minister in 1883 and was replaced sometime before the Conference of 1886 by A. Swanson. The membership at this latter conference was seven, with three probationers, perhaps the all-time low. There was no Sunday School record between 1885 and 1894 with the exception of the year 1889-1890.

The Rev. Mr. A. Johnson came to the church in 1896 and remained only one year, bringing the membership to 18 with 5 probationers. A slight increased interest came next with the appointment of Nils Eklund in 1887, where he remained for four years. These four years showed steady growth, as the membership rose gradually: 23, 55, 74, 83, respectively. In his second year, 1888-1889, he recorded his Sunday School enrollment at seventeen. In his last year, 1890-1891, the salary paid was \$1,000.

In 1890 the future of the Swedish Methodist Mission Church (formerly the Scandinavian Mission) did not look especially bright, but they had made some developments which later helped them become established as a significant church among their people.

Arvada Methodist Episcopal Church

¹ Kriege and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz p. 146.

² Folder published on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of Trinity Church, October 1, 1933.

³ B. T. Vincent, unpublished papers in the Colorado Historical Society Library, Presiding Elder Reports, 1894.

The suburb to the north-west corner of Denver continued to grow. In 1884 Arvada had a parsonage, built in 1881 by H. L. Beardsley. They also had their first church building; constructed in 1877 by H. L. Wriston and by 1884 it was completely debt-free. At the Conference in 1884 the minister appointed was A. W. Coffman, but within his first year he suffered an accident, went to Iowa to regain his health, but did not sufficiently recover to continue his work.¹ The year was completed by A. D. Hammitt. This report gives the membership as 5, although this is evidently a mis-print in the Journal. A year previous (1883) the membership was 37, and in 1885, it was 35.

Arvada became one of two on a circuit in 1885 when Hugo was added. This was the present town of Hugo, over one hundred miles east of Arvada. The great distance between two charges on the same circuit may seem strange, but Hugo was on a main rail line and this type of travel was common. The minister for the two churches was H. L. Wriston, who remained for three years, making some substantial progress. The membership in three years increased from 35 to 52 while the Sunday School enrollment increased from 40 to 112. A certain portion of this however, is no doubt from the Hugo charge, though what percentage we do not know.

The minister appointed at the Conference of 1888 was J. R. Rader who remained one year. At this particular conference Arvada again became a separate charge, which evidently had only a small portion of the combined membership. The last year in which the two churches were united the membership was reported at 52 with 112 recorded in Sunday School. At the end of J. R. Rader's year, the membership dropped to 12 and the Sunday School to 40. Most of this was undoubtedly because the churches were now reporting separately.

Isaac H. Beardsley was appointed to the charge at Arvada in 1889 and seems to have done a good piece of work. It was under his administration that the church rebuilt their building and enlarged it considerably. Of his year at Arvada Beardsley has left us a record in his own words:

The writer was sent to Arvada in 1889, where he found two active members. There were two outside appointments, Black's and Ralston Crossing, which were filled every two weeks. At Arvada the preaching and Sunday School services were held in the Grange and Good Templars' Hall. In the summer of 1890 a church enterprise was begun by the writer, assisted by Bishop Warren. The cellar was dug, foundation laid, most of the funds provided for, and contracts for material talked over; but he was not permitted to finish it being sent elsewhere. My successor, J. F. White, completed the building. B. F. Wadsworth gave the ground and a liberal subscription; besides, other friends helped liberally, and a beautiful house of worship is the result. The year was a very pleasant one, and the congregation good. No fixed allowance was made; yet the people gave us a comfortable living.²

The Conference Journal of this year reported that Beardsley's salary had been \$700 which even in those days was not a large salary.

¹ B. T. Vincent, unpublished papers in the Colorado Historical Society Library, Presiding Elder Reports, 1885.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 563.

Estimated cost of the new building was set at \$3,000 and its size was to have been 28 by 40 feet.¹ However, the actual cost was slightly higher than that. In 1892 the building was finished at a total cost of \$4,000, all of which was paid by 1893.² (see Fig. 19). The successor of Beardsley was J. F. White, who of course, carried this project to completion during his years as minister, 1890-1893.

In addition to the building of the church, we note that the parsonage originally built by H. L. Beardsley in 1881 was enlarged in 1890 to have a total valuation of \$1,200.³

At the close of the Conference year in 1890, J. F. White reported a membership of 29, and a Sunday School enrollment of 90. These figures are both more than double the report of two years previously when Arvada and Hugo became separate charges. The agricultural community surrounding Arvada was continuing to grow, and the influence of the church was undoubtedly becoming stronger through the years.

Wheat Ridge Methodist Episcopal Church

The two suburbs of Wheat Ridge and Argo were on a circuit together from 1880 to 1891. J. C. Green became the minister of the circuit in 1883 and remained two years. The farsightedness of this minister was a large part of the succeeding story of the church. During his ministry through revivals, concentrated programs in the community and other administrative skills, several members were added to the church, which led the people to decide on a larger building. They had been worshipping in a small frame building on the site of the present Wheat Ridge High School, West Thirty-eighth at Otis, since 1873, when Robert H. Rhodes led them in that construction. The building was used for church and school jointly, which caused many problems, and the solution was seen in a new building.

In April 1884, a campaign was launched to obtain money for this purpose, and it is reported that on a single day \$1,450 was subscribed.⁴ Later in 1884, the ground was broken for the new church at the corner of Blaine (32nd) and Wadsworth. The land had been donated to the church, and although the location was much farther out from the center of the community, the optimism of the people helped them to see the possibilities the future could bring to them.

At the conference of 1884, the membership of the Wheat Ridge-Argo charge was registered at 70, with the Sunday School enrollment at 140. This was a far-sighted group of people to think in terms of the future, especially since their own number was relatively small. The Presiding Elder, J. H. Merritt reported that the cost of this building was \$2,000⁵ (see Fig. 21). J. C. Green stayed on this circuit for one more year, and was replaced in 1885 by J. T. Musgrove. At this Conference of 1885, the membership was reported at 78 while the Sunday School recorded 156.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 533. J. H. Merritt's report, Presiding Elder, Conference of 1890.

² From a dedication program printed by the Arvada Methodist Church, June 7, 1931.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ From a folder published by the church on the occasion of its Fiftieth Anniversary, 1930.

⁵ Reports of the Presiding Elder, on file at the Colorado Historical Society Library.

For five years the leadership of J. T. Musgrove continued at Wheat Ridge-Argo, during which time the membership was increased to 106, with the Sunday School reporting 192. The later statistics show that approximately two-thirds of the members were at Wheat Ridge and one-third at Argo.

One of the aspects of the ministry of Mr. Musgrove which helped the churches was his revival fervor. The Denver Methodist records:

The Reverend Brother Musgrove has been holding every evening for two weeks, revival services at Wheatridge. They are well attended.¹

Musgrove seems to have been given as much or more credit than any other in the early years of Wheat Ridge's history, as one who caused "much development" and helped the church become firmly established.

Following the successes of Musgrove, J. W. Linn was appointed to this circuit in 1890, and remained with Wheat Ridge when Argo was made a separate charge in 1892.

Thus by 1890 the two main suburbs, Arvada and Wheat Ridge, had progressed to the point of owning their own buildings, and were the center of religious activity in places rather distinctly separated from Denver proper.

NEW ORGANIZATIONS OF THE PERIOD

Valverde (Wright Memorial) Methodist Episcopal Church

Introducing John Collins: -- An important figure in the missionary work within Denver was John Collins. He was a native of England and in his early life a member of the Primitive Methodist Church there. In 1871, as a youth he came to the United States for his health and became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City. Within a year he moved to Denver where he joined the Lawrence Street Methodist Episcopal Church. The next year in 1873, he began his ministerial career receiving his local preacher's license at the District Conference at Longmont. thereafter he had various appointments in the Colorado Conference before coming to Denver in 1888.

In the fall of 1888, after conferring with the Presiding Elder as to his work, he was assigned to the "Denver Circuit" part of which was located in a suburb called Valverde. This town lay west of the Platte River with its center on Alameda Avenue. It remained a separate town until 1902 when it was annexed to Denver.

The name "Denver Circuit" appears in the Conference Journal only one year, 1888-1889, and the appointee is John Collins. The membership at the end of the year was recorded at six with 30 enrolled in the Sunday School. The salary was \$300.

¹ The Denver Methodist, January 15, 1887.

Developing from his work on the Denver Circuit, John Collins was instrumental in organizing four of the Methodist Churches in South Denver. These churches are: Valverde (Wright Memorial, disbanded 1922); Fleming Grove (Cameron Memorial, organized 1888); Rosedale and South Broadway Heights (later Warren Avenue and now John Collins Church, 1893); and Myrtle Hill Methodist Church (now Washington Park, organized 1893). We shall describe each of these churches in their chronological order. It is also possible that the impetus of the founding of South Sherman Avenue (Grant Avenue) Church came from John Collins, though he is never related to it directly. In addition there is a record of his having held services at Fort Logan in 1892.¹

In Valverde John Collins found some people who were interested in a church and who had attended services conducted by ministers of neighboring churches, especially Beckwourth, one mile to the northeast. We note especially the preaching of H. L. Beardsley when he was at the Beckwourth Street Mission, continuing every two weeks until John Collins arrived in Valverde.

The first service by John Collins in the Valverde area was in a school house on September 30, 1888.² The first Board of Trustees was elected on October 14, 1888, and on the following December 30, the church was organized with six members, John Furry being the leader.³ Evidently the early name of the church was "the Valverde Methodist Episcopal Church" during the ministry of John Collins. However, in July 1889 the name of the church was officially changed to the Wright Memorial Church, in honor of a Mr. Wright, who gave a substantial sum of money to its cause.⁴

The newly-formed Society began to build a church in 1889, according to Beardsley.⁵ The opening service was conducted in September 1889, with N. A. Chamberlin as Presiding Elder and George H. Smith as the minister. The location of the church was given at South Eighth (now South Navajo) at Alaska Place.⁶ Details as to the building plans, cost, or even photographs of the church are unavailable. The building was abandoned in 1922 and demolished shortly thereafter. A home now stands on the same foundation formerly used by the church.⁷

Soon after the building was opened, a Sunday School was organized, and the next winter, February 16, 1890, Bishop Warren presided at the official dedication of their building. The first mention of this church as a separate charge in the Conference Minutes appears at the end of the year 1891-1892 when G. H. Smith reported for his church twenty-five members and forty enrolled in the Sunday School. Accurate statistics for the church at an earlier date are unavailable.

The church in Valverde was destined to have a struggle for its existence, which was finally to end with an agreement with the Presbyterians that the Methodist should give up their

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

² Ibid., pp. 378-379.

³ Ibid., p. 379.

⁴ From a personal interview with Mr. John Burks, 1355 West Nevada Place, Denver, Colorado, 1955.

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 528.

⁶ The Rocky Mountain News, June 28, 1891.

⁷ an Interview with Mr. John Burke.

organization in favor of a united Protestant Church under the auspices of the Presbyterians. This plan went into effect at the Conference of 1922, and the outcome is the present Valverde Presbyterian Church. It is said that the old bell that was a part of the Methodist Church is still preserved and is in the bell-tower of the present Valverde Presbyterian Church.¹

Cameron Methodist Episcopal Church

In The Rocky Mountain News in 1888 there appeared the following notice: “Fleming Grove Mission Sunday School, South Denver, meets each Sunday 3:30 P.M. All welcome. Take the circle railroad cars at Thirteenth and Lawrence.”² This is a notice about a Union Sunday School group which developed into the oldest church in South Denver, now known as Cameron Memorial Methodist. At this time of course, Flemings Grove was outside the city limits of Denver, but the people had foresight and were optimistic about the future.

Consequently, on September 30, 1888, five people, by name, Eliza Milner, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Sanders, and Mr. and Mrs. Webster Daniels organized the Fleming Grove Methodist Episcopal Church of the Denver Circuit.³ The exact churches on this circuit at this time are not certain, but Beardsley gives evidence of several early organizations in South Denver as Rosedale (John Collins), Broadway Heights, South Sherman Avenue (Grant Avenue), Myrtle Hill (Washington Park), and Valverde (Wright Memorial).⁴ These five persons at Flemings Grove met for two years in homes and community centers before they began to think in terms of a building. The minister of the early organization was John Collins, who was in charge of this particular church from 1888 to 1892.

The first service of the organization is said to have been held in the nearby schoolhouse, December 30, 1888. Two months later, February 4, 1889, the group was incorporated, and chose a Board of Trustees. On February 10, the Union Sunday School Class became known as the Methodist Episcopal Sunday School Class, and the church was duly constituted. Very soon they began to think about building a structure in which to worship.

Early in 1890 the trustees launched a building campaign and constructed the first portion of their building at the corner of South Washington and East Iowa.⁵ (see Fig. 24). This building is still standing on this corner, and is used as “Wesley Hall”, the social and recreational facilities of Cameron Church. The present sanctuary is located one block west of their earlier building, on the corner of South Pearl and Iowa. The interesting history of the original church, its many owners and functions, before it finally came again into the hands of Cameron Church recently, is a story that takes us past the scope of this dissertation. The present building was not erected until 1913 and of course the old building was not sold and repossessed until many years later than that.⁶

¹ Ibid.

² The Rocky Mountain News, April 21, 1888.

³ A history of Cameron Church written by Mrs. Ellermeier, one of Cameron’s present members. On file in the office of Cameron Church.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

⁵ Cameron Methodist Church Bulletin, November 23, 1904. A historical issue.

⁶ The Rocky Mountain News, May 19, 1952.

On February 6, 1890, because of a gift of \$250.00 from a Mr. Cameron through the Church Extension Society, the name of the church was changed to the Cameron Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church. Other details of the Cameron gift are evidently unavailable. The church was reorganized and reincorporated under the new name in March of 1890 and finally set apart as a station in 1892.

The only minister of Cameron up to this time had been John Collins, who served from the organization in 1888 until 1892. No other records are available except that the "Denver Circuit" including this Cameron Church reported six members in 1888, with no report given in 1889. Separate records do not appear for Cameron until 1892 when it became a separate charge.

Thus we see the beginning work of John Collins who was to play such a large part in the organization of new churches and the development of established congregations in the Denver metropolitan area. Cameron soon took its place as the leading charge in the area of South Denver, and maintained that place for several decades.

Conclusion to Chapter Six

In the six year period from the coming of Bishop Warren, there was progress noted in almost every church, and some new organizations were added to the list of churches. The work of John Collins is especially commendable, as he organized two churches before 1890 and was instrumental in founding at least two and possibly three others within as many years following 1890.

Bishop Warren had presided at many dedications, including the openings of such buildings as Trinity, Christ (Twenty-second and Ogden), Asbury in North Denver, and Grace (Evans Chapel). In addition to the main churches of the city, the small neighborhood churches were making their own developments. Suburbs show improvement and enlargement, some of which are now (1956) a part of Denver proper, and others have remained separate. Foreign language groups, the German and Swedish, are recorded as active. In addition there was the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

However, the main developments of the church were not to be in the past, but in the future. Bishop Warren and his cabinet had been farsighted enough to see that the time was at hand for even more expansion in the Denver metropolitan area, and they formed the "City Missions" appointment. The sole duty of the person assigned to this project was to establish and organize new missions where they were seen to be needed. We owe the major portion of development in the next ten years up to 1900 to the City Mission organization and the regularity with which the "mission" churches took their place as the leading churches of the city, and in turn supported yet other "missions".

For the story of the greatest decade of expansion, we must look at the developments under the leadership of Bishop Henry White Warren. To this we will turn after a brief summary of the work at the University of Denver from 1884 to 1890.

CHAPTER VII

THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER 1884-1890 (Colorado Seminary)

One of the first developments in the story of the University of Denver after Bishop Warren began his residence in Denver was the announcement on June 18, 1884 of a gift of \$100,000.00 by Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren. She had stipulated that this be used to endow a school of theology as a graduate department of the University. The offer was made on the condition that a permanent location for the University be selected, and that an additional \$50,000 be subscribed also for the endowment of the school.¹

Chancellor Moore worked at this end and in a few years obtained the necessary \$50,000 subscribed by persuading many people to endow scholarships. The permanent site for the University was chosen from several submitted. The Trustees' minutes of the year 1879 recorded an offer by ex-Governor Evans and Mrs. Hotchkiss "of block 24 in the Park Avenue addition to Denver." There was some adjoining property offered by Mr. Chilcott, for the sum of \$1,000.² The offer was not accepted however, as two other adjoining lots were desired but not available. Later, Mr. Evans offered another section of land northeast of Denver where the Stapleton Airport now is located. This offer was tentatively accepted as the Trustees felt that perhaps the city would grow out to that distance and make it a suburb similar to the town of Evanston, Illinois, where Northwestern University was located. However, this offer was finally rejected also.

The section of land where the University now stands in South Denver, was the outcome of an offer by Rufus "Potato" Clark. The announcement was made that the University would move "perhaps in two years, perhaps seven" to the site to be name "University Park".³ A plea was made for people to move to the area and settle in a village of choice lots. Little interest was aroused, and most people did not care to go so far out of the city limits.

Mrs. Warren made her offer of \$100,000 in 1884, after the University was organized, and while it was having a continual financial battle. The good work of Chancellor David H. Moore however, was bringing larger classes to the University, and the administration felt that they would have to expand immediately at their present site before they would have the finances to think of going to their new location.

In the year 1886, Jacob Haish, a wire manufacturer of De Kalb, Illinois, offered one-half of his business' sales from four states until the sum of \$50,000 should be secured. This he stipulated should be used to build a manual training school.⁴ The offer of course was accepted, and the year 1887 the Haish Manual Training School was erected opposite the University building, and some of the University classes met in the new building for a short time.⁵

¹ Edgar G. McMechen, Life of Governor John Evans, (Denver: The Wahlgreen Publishers, 1924), p. 205.

² Jeanette Joan Dunleavy, Early History of Colorado Seminary and the University of Denver (unpublished Master's thesis, The University of Denver, 1935), p. 221.

³ McMechen, Life of Governor Evans, p. 206.

⁴ McMechen, Life of Governor Evans, p. 207.

⁵ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 760.

To interest the Methodist people of Denver in University Park lots, the Colorado Conference of 1887 included the following in the Educational Report:

We are gratified to learn that the University Park enterprise is meeting with a good measure of success. A large number of lots have been sold, the Circle Railroad has four hundred acres, building has begun, and a most attractive and accessible suburb of Denver will, in the not too distant future, surround the permanent buildings of the University of Denver. It will be a great educational center of the Rocky Mountain region, and a most desirable home for the members of the Colorado Conference who have children to educate. To secure lots while they are cheap would seem to be the path of wisdom.¹

In the Conference Journal of 1888, a similar note is seen. John Evans had been appointed as the colony organizer, to try to persuade several families to form the small town as a nucleus around which others could build:

We would commend to the careful consideration of ministers and laymen, the superior advantages offered by the University Park Colonization Society, for securing valuable property and suitable homes in a healthful locality, convenient for the business and the many other advantages of a large city and in a suburban village soon to become to Denver and Colorado what Evanston now is to Chicago and the surrounding country.²

A further larger gift, in addition to the Iliff contribution, was made by Mr. H. B. Chamberlin. This was also announced in the Conference Journal:

Mr. H. B. Chamberlin, in carrying out a long-cherished purpose, has undertaken to erect and equip at his own expense, a first-class Astronomical Observatory. In order to secure the best possible construction and equipment, he has sent, at his own cost, Dr. Howe, to visit the best observatories of the East. He places no limit to the amount to be expended; but it will not be less than \$50,000.³

A short biographical sketch of Mr. H. B. Chamberlin appears in the Colorado Blue Book in 1891. It states that he was the President of the Chamberlin Investment Company of Denver. His early home had been New York, and he had served in the military corps to the end of the Civil War. Later he had been in the drug business and a general secretary of the YMCA; but in 1880 he came to Denver for his health. At this time he organized the company which bore his name. His original capital investment was estimated at about \$1,000,000. His investments and large gifts to the date of the magazine's writing (1891) included \$40,000 to Trinity Methodist Church; \$25,000 to the YMCA building; and the \$50,000 to the Chamberlin Observatory of the University.⁴ Certainly this was a much-appreciated gift to the struggling school.

The last half of the decade 1880-1890, seemed to be good years for the University, and it was a time when all concerned could feel proud of its accomplishments, and optimistic about the future of this school.

¹ Journal of the Colorado Conference, 1887, p. 210.

² Ibid., 188, p. 44.

³ Minutes of the Colorado Conference, 1888, p. 45.

⁴ The Colorado Blue Book, a magazine published in Denver, 1881, p. 98.

In the midst of this seeming prosperity however, personality clashes are recorded. Chancellor Moore felt that John Evans was undercutting his efforts. According to Rhode,¹ Moore called Evans the “absolute dictator of the Board of Trustees”, and attacked the ex-Governor because of financial problems and the general state of the University. Incidentally, Rhode has documented this particular story only with the Rocky Mountain News story of June 18, 1889. There is an inkling of Moore’s feeling of animosity against Bishop Warren also, and perhaps there were justified reasons for his feeling so. These three men, Evans, Warren and Moore, were no doubt all individuals with great abilities and high aspirations, and evidently did not work together as closely as they might have.

David H. Moore resigned from the University in the fall of 1889, to become the minister of the First Methodist Church of Boulder, Colorado, and at the same time to be a professor in the University of Colorado. Shortly after, he was appointed to a position with the Western Christian Advocate. This forceful leader was a delegate to the General Conference in 1892, 1896, and 1900. During the latter conference, he was elected Bishop of the Methodist Church.

No indication of any bitterness at his leaving the University is evidenced in the section of the Education Report of the Conference of 1889. His good qualities were praised, which is as it should be:

After many years of service, we have to record the retirement of its Chancellor, D. H. Moore. His energy and wisdom, his eloquence and public spirit have for years made conspicuous the University over which he has presided. His record is imperishable in the hearts of its students, and his long service in times of toil and sacrifice remain fixed in the history of the institution.²

The successor to Dr. Moore was Dr. William F. McDowell, also from the Ohio Conference. In response to his coming, we read:

We heartily welcome the Rev. W. F. McDowell, to our Conference Fellowship and to the Chancellorship of our University. We pledge him our cordial cooperation in his labors for our young people, and our prayers for his continued health and highest usefulness in his great office . . . His bright record in college and his remarkable success in the pastorate give promise of an eminently successful chancellorship.³

As for the proposed town of University Park, it still seemed like a long distance from the city for most people. No doubt some of the people smiled at the prospect of buying town lots out in the corn fields of Arapahoe county. Two evidences of real activity caught the imagination of the people however, and the building began.

The first of these was the decision of the Bishop to build in University Park. His residence, first occupied in 1889, was just a few blocks east of the University site. “Gray

¹ Robert B. Rhode, Governor John Evans, Builder of Two Universities, p. 125.

² Journal of the Colorado Conference, Education Report, 1889.

³ Ibid., 1890, p. 21.

Gables” as the Bishop’s residence is now called by the Iliff students who live there, was one of the first homes in the Park. Water and transportation were not of the best however, but these were soon arranged. It is said that Mrs. Warren had to have her water carried a half-mile when she first began house-keeping in the Park.

The other evidence of activity was the beginning of the University Building, “Old Main”. In 1889 the foundation was dug for University Hall, and on April 3, 1890, the cornerstone was laid. (see Fig. 25).

Following these two events, many people began to build in the Park, and it quickly became one of the most desirable of Denver’s suburbs. At one time the University officials, who had control of a good share of the land, decided that they should suspend the sale of lots for a time, to take advantage of prices which would inevitably climb. This was their procedure for a time, but on the day of the cornerstone laying it is said that John Evans set up a tent and sold lots in the University Park area.¹

University Hall was completed in 1891, and the Chamberlin Observatory the next year. At the time of its completion, the twenty-inch refractor lens in the telescope was sixth largest in this country, and ninth in the world, a great addition to an infant University.²

First classes were held in the new building the fall of 1892, with housing for the girls being provided in the third building on the campus, the Wycliffe Cottage. Yet another building was taking shape, the Iliff School of Theology to house that particular phase of the University. a sum of \$50,000 had been given by Mr. William Seward Iliff for the purpose of erecting a building for the school named in honor of his father. This structure was begun in the year 1891, and was occupied the next year.

The six years since Bishop Warren established his residence in Denver were certainly eventful times. The University had been put on a relatively sound footing, had expanded and then acquired land in “the most desirable hilltop in Denver.” Mrs. Iliff and Mr. Chamberlin each had given large gifts to the furthering of the cause of education. Chancellor Moore had finished his ten-year position as head of this school, and had brought it through some very troubled times, to a place where it seemed to be on the threshold of a great destiny. Of this time we can agree with the words spoken by George Richardson several years later:

‘You builded better than you knew’. May God give the best thing to the University of Denver. May he make it a great blessing to Colorado and the world.³

¹ Robert B. Rhode, Governor John Evans . . . p. 154. This is in turn taken from the “Report of the Proceedings on the occasion of the Laying of the Cornerstone of the Main Hall of the University of Denver, at University Park, April 3, 1890,” in the collection of the Evans Papers.

² Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 760.

³ George Richardson, an address at the Fortieth Charter Day Anniversary, March 2, 1903. This address is duplicated in its entirety in Dr. Lowell Swan’s dissertation, A History of Methodism in Colorado, 1863-1876, p. 99-107.

SECTION III (1890-1900)

CHAPTER VIII	DENVER 1890-1900
CHAPTER IX	DENVER METHODISM
CHAPTER X	THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER (Colorado Seminary)

CHAPTER VIII HISTORY OF DENVER 1890-1900

The story of Denver in the decade 1890-1900 is little more than the events leading up to the panic in 1893, and the successful recovery from that depression. However, two other items must be mentioned, the crime wave that came to Denver, and the shift and strengthening of the government following the “rule by Folly” of Governor Waite.

Read Estate was in the “boom” stage in 1890. Denver had just had its greatest population increase, from 35,000 in 1880 to 106,713 in 1890. This represented almost a trebling of the population, and business and building tried to keep pace with the needs. Many suburbs were proposed, and those already laid out began to expand. Prices for some of the land “on the prairies” were exceptionally high, but nevertheless sales went forward.

As an example of this boom, we notice in the Denver Republican, the following note about the North Denver (Berkeley) addition:

The tide of the city’s growth is now to the north side. Buy before the big prices come. This is the first time the property is offered on the market.¹

These lots sold for from \$250 to \$500, for which installment plans were available. Barnum, University Park, Valverde, and other suburbs also advertised that they were the choice locations for building in 1890.

It is significant that the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Church established in this year its appointment called “City Missions”, for the city of Denver. The work of this department of the church will be discussed later, but it is to be noted here that they organized missions in many of these surrounding suburbs almost as soon as the first homes were built. Most of the missions grew into churches within a few years, and had varied successes, depending on the area of the city, and the stability of their population.

Suburbs which were annexed as part of the city of Denver in this period were: South Denver, bounded by Broadway, Colfax, and Yale Avenues and Colorado Boulevard, in 1895; Harmon, bounded by First and Sixth Avenues and by University and Colorado Boulevards, annexed in 1895; Highlands, bounded by Colfax and Thirty-eighth Avenue, and by Zuni Street and Sheridan Boulevard, annexed in 1896; and Barnum, bounded on the east by Federal Boulevard and on the South by Alameda Avenue, on the north by Thirteenth Avenue, and on the west most of the way by Tennyson Street, annexed in 1896. One further suburb, Colfax, was annexed in 1897. This was a small strip of the city along Colfax Avenue two blocks south to Thirteenth Avenue, and stretching all the way from the river to Sheridan Boulevard.

In addition, six other suburbs were growing, but were not made a part of Denver proper until 1902. These six were: Globeville, Argo and Berkeley to the north; Elyria and Montclair to the east, and Valverde to the southwest.¹

¹ The Denver Republican, January 1, 1890.

Although Denver was optimistic, various national trends contributed to the slowing down of their building boom. This was not completely stopped however, until the great depression of 1893. In the year 1890, there was the large sum of \$10,000,000 invested in Denver building.² The height of mining activity brought many people to Denver and the nearby mountains; but conversely, any slump in mining work brought an overflow of unemployment and a “floating population” to Denver. Such was the situation when the 1893 disaster occurred.

Denver had recently become the center of the great Colorado silver mining industry. Four smelters had recently been built by this industry in the north-east section of the city and in the adjoining suburbs. It was the silver industry on which a great many people of Colorado depended directly, and on which almost everyone depended indirectly. This depression of 1893 was precipitated by a decline in silver sales in the nation and the world.

Silver had become widely used by the United States Government in coining, much of which was minted in Denver. In the meantime however, silver had been declining in value. In 1871 Germany, Holland, and Scandinavia had adopted a gold standard rather than silver. In 1873 France, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy and Greece had limited the quantity of silver that could be coined. This of course made a further surplus of silver in the world and a decline in the price. The Bland-Allison Act of 1878 had attempted to hold the silver price up by increased coinage and the issuing of \$10.00 silver certificates in paper. The continual decline in silver prices was not stopped however.³

In 1890 the Sherman Silver Purchase Act was also unsuccessful in stemming the tide. The excessive silver buying and the increased issuing of paper certificates resulted in an inflation so that in 1893 the silver dollar was worth only \$.60.⁴ During the first few months of President Cleveland’s administration the silver reserve dropped to \$50,000,000, little more than half the normal reserve. This crisis caused the markets for silver to be closed in 1893, and a serious depression was well on its way.

Another great market for silver had closed in the year of the “crash”. The mints of India also ceased buying silver for coins in June of that year, and a crisis was precipitated in most civilized nations of the world that had any direct bearing on world-wide trade. With the two major markets for silver closed and the inflationary supports gone, it dropped drastically in price. Banks quit their huge investments, real estate became worth a small portion of what it had been before, and a complete unrest gripped the city of Denver.

In July many banks and trust companies had to close their doors because of huge indebtedness, dwindling capital, and with real estate bought at high prices, now worth little. Thousands of other Denver workers were unemployed, and thousands more came from the inactive mines. Denver became a sea of homelessness and financial need.⁵

¹ see the Official Annexation map of Denver, at the end of this work.

² Smiley, History of Denver, p. 913.

³ Harold U. Faulkner, American Economic History, sixth edition (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1949), p. 551.

⁴ Ibid., p. 551-2.

⁵ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 914.

It is estimated that between 15,000 and 25,000 persons left for the East within a few months. Many of them did not have money, and forced passage free, or rode in freight cars headed anywhere away from Colorado; but the thousands who did not choose to leave still had to be cared for. The city council voted money; and private charities, including churches, helped out as much as they could. Many would-be contributors themselves were penniless, which further thwarted the work.

The building boom collapsed, as it is reported that in 1894 there were 124 buildings of all types constructed, compared with 2,338 in 1890.¹ Many individuals who had purchased lots at high prices now found that they were paying for property worth less than the debt still remaining on it. In 1895 the list of property offered for sale because of unpaid taxes covered 73 large pages of fine type in The Rocky Mountain News.² Smiley relates the story that the receivers of one of the banks which went bankrupt had offered at auction a bundle of promissory notes, judgments against property, and other “paper” that had a value of half a million dollars in 1892. The notes after the crash brought exactly \$516.³

The low level of progress, and the lack of building continued for over two years. In 1895 Colorado again became hopeful as they began to develop the gold industry anew. One of the new towns which sprang up because of this new boom was Cripple Creek about one hundred miles south of Denver. Other mining interest developed in respect to copper, coal and lead, to supplement the income from gold. Silver continued at a steady pace, though not in the proportions it had known three years previously.

To make the economy more stable, agriculture was developed in various areas of Colorado. Main crops begun in this period were sugar beets in the northern area of the state, and the fruit crops of the western slope. The Denver Chamber of Commerce had much to do with the shift in economy, and did considerable to develop the farming interests as a stabilizing element in their business as well as the state as a whole.⁴

In the midst of these economic problems, organized crime was still rampant in Denver. Confidence games of all types were considered legitimate business in those days. Clever operators were able to “steal” money from almost anyone who indulged in the “sport”. In the 1890’s Denver became the nation’s capitol for the crime wave.⁵ This was maintained until about 1920. The slogan of these operators was “let the buyer beware”, which meant that they would sell anything they wanted and only the buyers should use their discretion to prevent being “taken”. An interesting side-light on this “racket” was that the Denver Police made an agreement with the operators that they could conduct their “business” only with cowboys, miners, and tourists. The Denver citizens were to be spared the danger of losing their money needlessly. “These robbers followed this rule, and they always found that a prospective victim was from out of town before they relieved him of his money.”⁶

¹ Ibid., pp. 217-218.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History . . . p. 62.

⁵ Ibid., p. 54.

⁶ Ibid., p. 54.

In Denver the gamblers gained control of a portion of the political machinery and stuffed ballot boxes at elections. Murderers escaped their punishment pleading “temporary insanity” and “shady” characters had more than their share of control of the State Capitol and the City Hall. One of the leading racketeers of this period was “Soapy” Smith, whose business interests were so diversified that he was usually in a questionable practice, but seldom long enough to be caught at it.

By 1892 the people were disgusted with the whole system and elected as governor, Davis H. Waite, who had promised whole-sale reform. Some of the reforms were carried out, but his methods brought a storm of protest from the voters who had put him in office. To accomplish his ends he often took the problems into his own hands without due course of legal proceedings, giving orders and demanding they be carried out as a dictator.¹

The “City Hall War” was the blackest mark on Waite’s record, and perhaps was the most tense moment of Denver history. Waite had suspected that some of his appointees were working with “Soapy” Smith and his underworld gang. This infuriated Waite, and he demanded that the two in question resign, which they chose not to do. The situation moved from bad to worse as the underground took over the city hall, complete with arms and ammunition. In retaliation the Governor had issued the order that State National Guard troops should march on the City Hall.

The tense day which almost ended in brutal bloodshed on both sides was March 16, 1894. Before any shots occurred, some more sensible politicians had talked the Governor into using the courts of law rather than his own force.² Needless to say, Waite was defeated for re-election in 1894, while these hectic two years became named the “Government by Folly.”

By the year 1900 Denver was again prosperous and optimistic. The decade, 1890-1900, had experienced nothing like the progress between 1880 and 1890, for the population had increased only from 107,000 to 170,000. The smelting industry had been slowly declining, but to take its place in Denver were the wholesale and retail establishments. The city began to shift from a mining and smelting center to a commercial center. Improvements as electricity, sewers and pavements were noticed in the downtown area, and did their part to help make Denver a city.

Culture and educational interests seemed to have replaced the mad passion for wealth which had been the motivating force before. Within the decade, churches had almost doubled in value, from 1.3 million dollars to 2.5 million. The school enrollment had jumped from 14,000 to 23,000. The park system was improved, and the zoo developed.³ Denver had begun to take its place as a metropolis of the Rocky Mountain Empire, for which it is justly proud even yet. These were at first pessimistic, but later optimistic years in all areas of the work of the church, the University, and other religious interests of the city.

During the decade the land area of the city was enlarged considerably through annexation. In 1890 the total area was recorded at 17.02 square miles, while in 1900 the area

¹ Smiley, History of Denver, p. 917-8.

² Ibid.

³ Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History ... p. 66.

was 47.92 square miles, almost three times the previous area.¹ Many of the churches formed during the decade were in this newly developed land in the city limits, though the outlying suburbs were also active. Indeed, from the standpoint of the church, this was the most dynamic decade it had yet experienced. The depression slowed them down for a time, but the movement was seemingly not permanently hurt by the exodus of so many thousands of people.

To look at this story in detail, let us now turn to the individual churches as they developed in and through these problems in the city, yet transcended the problems at the same time.

¹ see the official annexation map published by the City Planning Office, included at the end of this work.

CHAPTER IX

DENVER CHURCHES 1890-1900

Rapid Growth: -- The decade between 1890 and 1900 was one of the most significant in the history of Denver Methodism, in large part due to the active mission program within the city. During this period the total number of Methodist churches in the Denver metropolitan area rose from fourteen to thirty-one, with five other small missions mentioned, which never developed beyond the organizational stage. In ten years the number of churches had doubled, and in addition a Deaconess Home had been established in Denver. This served the smaller churches of the city as Deaconesses worked wherever they could give a helping hand. This center soon became a headquarters for Deaconesses over the whole state.

Undoubtedly it was a part of the foresight of the Bishop who had the "City Missions" circuit organized, under whose auspices the majority of the new church organizations had their beginnings. In addition to the City Missions, there was also the "suburbs" circuit which was the work of John Collins, and in this decade he was to account for the founding of churches at Littleton, Ft. Logan (temporary), Myrtle Hill (Washington Park) and Warren Avenue (John Collins Chapel). It has been mentioned previously that he was responsible for the founding of Cameron Church previous to 1890, and was active in the early days of Wright Memorial (Valverde).

The Methodists of Denver had finally realized that the city was growing, and that their challenge was getting larger as the city grew. This decade is an indication that they felt compelled to catch up from the standpoint of church organization in the city. In this chapter, the churches which were organized previous to 1890 will be summarized in alphabetical order first; and then the new organizations will be dealt with in chronological order of their organization.

At the end of the chapter a summary is given of the early work of the Deaconess Home in Denver.

Churches Organized previous to 1890

Argo Church

Immediately north of Denver was a suburb called Argo, the main occupation of which was silver smelting. In 1890 the Argo church was on a two-church circuit with the Wheat Ridge Church, the minister for two years being J. W. Linn. When he came as minister, the membership of the two churches was 140. Evidently approximately one-third of these were with the Argo church.

In 1892 the minister appointed to the circuit was C. W. Huett, though Greenwood Methodist Church had been substituted for the Wheat Ridge charge. This new church was in the suburb adjoining Argo to the east, known as Globeville. The two towns were partners in the

silver industry, as a smelter was the central industry for both. Hence, we expect more fluctuation in their organizations that we find.

At the end of the first year, in 1893, C. W. Huett reported a membership of 52 for the two churches, with the Sunday Schools reporting a total enrollment of 100. The church seems to have been progressing, for the Presiding Elder reports in 1893:

Argo, C. W. Huett, a student pastor. With a fine church in a most important smelting region, one of Colorado's earliest and most efficient pastors and educators now a vigorous co-operating layman, to lead a stirring company of young people in patient, persistent liberal work.¹

The first report after the economic "crash" of 1893 reflects but a slight decrease in finances, which may not be connected directly to the financial crisis. This report is for the combined charges, so that which pertains specifically to Argo is uncertain:

Pastor Huett, a student, busy work hath brought fruit; interest (on the Greenwood debt) paid, with 14% increase in church support, but 30% decrease in benevolences; membership not materially changed but probationary list multiplied four times.²

In 1895:

Pastor Huett, a student of the University, has finished his third year of service; with a most excellent record of church progress.³

The total membership was reported by C. W. Huett in 1895 to be 87, with 180 registered in the Sunday School. This showed sixty per cent gain in the church membership during a three-year period, and some of the debt paid in addition.

According to Vincent's 1896 report, the Greenwood debt of \$250 was entirely paid, but no mention is made of Argo. This was during the ministry of C. C. P. Hiller, who served four years, 1895-1899. His efforts however, reflect no change in membership, and a decrease in Sunday School from 240 to 194, a net loss of 46 pupils. H. J. Grace became the minister in 1899, to remain two years, showing little change in any department.

In 1903 the Conference decided to set the Argo Church apart as a station, and from that time on, we may trace its individual statistics. Even though these two churches had their statistics together, it is significant to see their gradual development. They were similar types of churches, in similar surroundings. The main interests of most of the members of both churches were connected with smelting, and all were governed by the trends of that industry. Oddly enough however, there is but slight fluctuation noted for the 1893 "crash" which affected most directly the silver smelting companies. There is no great drop either in membership or in the

¹ Presiding Elder's Reports by B. T. Vincent. Filed in the Colorado Historical Society Library under the title "Vincent Papers". The report for 1893.

² Ibid., for 1894.

³ Ibid., for 1895.

salary paid by this student charge; but on the contrary, both of these churches were rather steady during the period of the most difficulty.

Asbury Church

We have already mentioned the forming of the church in North Denver in 1880, and the various factors leading to their planning a new building as the Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church. On April 2, 1890, Bishop Warren participated in the laying of the cornerstone of the new church which was to stand on a bluff at the corner of West Thirtieth and Vallejo Streets. The church certainly commanded the view of the whole valley from its lofty height. (see Fig. 13).

The minister of the church in 1890 was James F. Harris, who at the Conference of that year reported a membership of 350, with a Sunday School enrollment of 380. The undertaking of such a church was indeed a work of “faith” because it was to become one of the finest in Denver of that day.

In 1891 James F. Harris was appointed elsewhere, and U. Z. Gilmer came to spend two years at Asbury, while the main sanctuary still remained unfinished. The services were held in what is now the social hall of the first floor, as were all the Sunday School classes. At the end of his first year, Gilmer reported 390 members, an increase of 7, and a Sunday School enrollment of 400, an increase of 56. Nothing further is mentioned of his ministry, though no move was yet made to finish the sanctuary.

The minister in 1893 was M. W. Hissey, who was to remain two years also. At the end of Gilmer’s first year he had recorded an increase in membership, but at the end of his second, there was a drop of 104. Mr. Hissey did not get all these members back, in fact, 390 was the largest membership until 1902 when that number was finally surpassed. The reports at the end of both years of Hissey’s ministry showed a membership of 325.

It was during this ministry, however, that the sanctuary was finished. The report is that Mr. Hissey received a gift from an anonymous friend, and that Bishop Warren gave a series of lectures in the East for the purpose of finishing Asbury’s sanctuary. The proceeds of \$750 from these lectures¹ was in addition to some voluntary labor of the people. The efforts were successful, and the sanctuary was opened on September 9, 1894, with sermons delivered by Chancellor McDowell of the University of Denver, and Dr. McIntyre, minister of Trinity Church.²

For a fuller description of the beautiful sanctuary we turn to an art critic of the day:

An art critic of that day thus describes it; ‘Three spacious vestibules lead to the auditorium, providing three separate and ample places of exit, something possessed by no other church in the city. These vestibules are finished in Texas pine, which with its hard oil finish, forms one of the handsomest finishings known. The auditorium is finished in

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 372.

² Roerig, “Romance of Asbury”, a lecture.

the same wood, and its yellow color lends a delightfully cheerful aspect to the church. The communion rails, the choir loft and the pulpit furniture is of solid oak and very rich and tasteful. The body of the auditorium seats 447, the gallery 292, a total of 739. The house is seated with opera chairs of mahogany, the handsomest and most comfortable of any in the city. The whole effect of the auditorium is one of exceeding richness and harmony.’¹

At the following Annual Conference (1895), B. T. Vincent, the Presiding Elder, reported:

Pastor Hissey zealously led in finishing the audience room, securing the cost in subscriptions of labor, and money; and a special gift from the Church Extension received, the church work has generally advanced. The pastor has just returned from a tour of eastern states in the interests of the great debt upon the church, securing some aid.²

From this time on, much of the record is concerned with the great debt that was on the church, and since the economic crash of 1893 the people did not see how they could pay much of it. C. B. Spencer was appointed to the church in 1895, to stay two years. The membership of the church fluctuated a bit, from 325 when he came, to 370 at the end of the first year, and then down to 294 at the end of his pastorate the next year. The Sunday School fluctuation was similar. At the end of Spencer’s first year at Asbury, the Presiding Elder reported “2000 have been paid on the principle and \$1800 on the interest.”³

Appointments for 1897 read: “Asbury, W. D. Phifer”, who remained two years. The debt was heavy, and the work of the minister was of course concerned largely with raising these funds. Of his willingness to accept such a challenge, Vincent reports:

Asbury, with Pastor Phifer, still carrying its awful burden of debt without shrinking, and unto slowly but surely improved condition. It will live. The parsonage has been improved and occupied by the pastor.⁴

One of the high marks in the history of Asbury is that on August 30, 1899, the General Conference of the Methodist Church opened at Asbury, presided over by Bishop Isaac W. Joyce. The Layman’s Conference was held there the same year. Surely the new sanctuary was one of the attractions of the Conference.⁵

W. D. Phifer remained at Asbury Church for two years, being succeeded in 1899 by D. L. Rader, who has previously been mentioned as minister of the Methodist Church, South, and minister of the South Methodist Church in Denver (St. Paul). During the ministry of Phifer, the membership rose from 294 to 321, with but slight increase in the Sunday School enrollment.

¹ *Ibid.*, Roerig has quoted the art critic, but has not given his name nor any other source.

² Report of the Presiding Elder, B. T. Vincent, on file at the Colorado Historical Society Library, 1895. Hereafter noted “Vincent Papers.”

³ *Ibid.*, for 1896.

⁴ *Ibid.*, for 1898.

⁵ A paper written on the occasion of the Seventieth Anniversary celebration of Asbury Church, November 26, 1950, by the minister, Robert Klein.

During the ministry of D. L. Rader the membership did not change markedly, but regular payments had been made on the debts. Health problems caused D. L. Rader to leave for California in February, 1901, where he supposedly joined with his brothers in the oil interests. The speculation was that this was not a permanent retirement but that he would continue light work in a ministerial connection.¹

The construction of Asbury Church, with its completed new sanctuary, was certainly one of the major accomplishments of Methodism during the decade ending 1900. The church still stands on that particular bluff overlooking the center of Denver, reminding all who see her tower that the religious faith of North Denver has a grand and a glorious heritage.

Cameron Methodist Church

Cameron Church had been organized in 1888 under the name of “Flemings Grove Methodist Church” by John Collins doing missionary in South Denver. John Collins remained the minister in charge of this church, and other South Denver missions until 1892 when Cameron was set apart as a station with its first full-time minister. In the meantime, Cameron had erected its first building which had been dedicated by Bishop Warren on February 9, 1890.² (see Fig. 24).

The best records of the church begin when the Annual Conference records begin carrying the statistics as a regular charge. The first full-time minister was A. K. Stabler, appointed in 1892 to remain two years. At the end of his first year he reported a membership of 83 with a Sunday School enrollment of 196. The start which John Collins had given this church has certainly been shown by the early enthusiasm, and the large membership with which the minister could work. The membership of the church was recorded at 116 at the end of the second year, which is a large increase of 33.

Vincent reported at the Conference of 1894:

Pastor Stabler, wise and energetic, wisely removed its debt just before the panic. It was taken a-back a little by the first hard times but has with pluck and push gathered up the slack and is high on the roll of honor for the times.³

The next Conference year, 1894-1895, the minister was W. I. Taylor who showed a membership increase of 14. The only report from the Presiding Elder was: “Excellent chapel, no debt; all departments in good condition. A promising location in a growing part of the city . . .”⁴

Appointed to the church in 1895 was Robert Sanderson who remained one year, with no appreciable change in any department. Sanderson was followed in 1896 by J. F. Coffman who

¹ The Denver Times, February 23, 1901.

² A historical issue of the Cameron Church Bulletin, November 27, 1904, in the Colorado Methodist Historical Society Archives.

³ Vincent Papers, 1894.

⁴ Vincent Papers, 1895..

also remained only one year. He reported a membership increase of 20, but no other details are available.

The church continued to do its work well in South Denver, and in 1898 Vincent reported that they were thinking of a needed enlargement, and that a committee had been appointed.¹

The minister for the year previous to this report was J. C. Gullette who came in 1897 and remained two years. As for membership or Sunday School enrollment, there are no appreciable changes. The increase, or enlargement of facilities, as mentioned by Vincent however, did not come to be a reality until 1909 when the present Cameron Methodist Church was begun on the corner of South Pearl and East Iowa Streets. One block East of this new church stands the original church, still (1956) used as a social and youth center.

In 1899 the minister was C. B. Allen, who remained for three years, and reported a total increase in membership of 74 during these three years. Hence in 1902 Cameron reported a total membership of 206 with 186 registered in the Sunday School. It had progressed well, and had already taken its true place as a leader in South Denver Methodism.

Christ Methodist Church

A pioneer in Denver Methodism had been the California Street Methodist Episcopal Church, the second of the denomination in Denver, organized in 1871. However, as time passed the city population shifted, and the location at Twenty-fourth and California was seen to be less and less strategic, and indeed, the church had come to a virtual stand-still by the time that G. N. Eldridge became the minister in 1886. It was during his ministry that the plan of moving to the outskirts and of rebuilding came into being, and under his leadership this was accomplished. Because of the church's move to Twenty-second and Ogden, in North-East Denver, the name was changed to Christ Methodist Episcopal Church by which name it is known to this day. (see Fig. 5).

Eldridge was the minister for four years until the Conference of 1890. During his ministry he recorded a membership increase of almost one hundred per cent. Membership in 1886 had been 133, and his last report four years later had shown 248. His reported Sunday School statistics did not show so much gain, but after they moved to their new location, and even before the building was finished, he reported a membership gain during the year of 1889-1890, from 175 to 252, a total increase of 77. The figure is significant it seems, as the main reason for moving out was to get younger life into the church, especially the children.

The basement of the new church was first used in the fall of 1889, though the rest of the building was not finished until 1892, when it was opened to the public on July 2.² It seems that a good share of the credit should go to Mr. Eldridge not only for overseeing the building of the new edifice, but more important perhaps, in instilling within the people a vision that would help their church to fulfill its place in the community better. No doubt the church would have

¹ Ibid., 1898.

² A folder published by Christ Church on the occasion of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary, 1946, written by the minister, Dr. Harvey H. Potthoff.

continued to decline and perhaps finally die out all together if it had not had such a vigorous leader, and the foresight to move out to new opportunities and challenges.

In 1890 Rev. R. N. Barns was appointed to Christ Church to remain two years. He was a vigorous leader, as evidenced by the continued membership growth. In two years he showed an increase from 248 to 305, or 57 members net gain. The Sunday School grew from 252 to 340 in the same length of time.

Hardly had he come to the church when the contracts were let to plaster, decorate and finish the auditorium. In addition, they put in the pews, the organ, the chandeliers and all the furnishings.¹ All this work was completed that they might hold the first service in the sanctuary on July 10, 1892, with the newly-appointed minister, C. B. Spencer giving the sermon.²

One year later, at the end of the first year for C. B. Spencer, Vincent stated:

Christ Church . . . than which no more beautiful temple can be found in the land, inspiring a growing neighborhood with enthusiastic work of all kinds in the name of Him whose name it bears . . . 'tis the outcome of the first off-shoot from the old Lawrence Street, carrying the prestige of the mother church in some of the old members and the children of others.³

Then the economic crash of 1893 came. Reflecting a bit of the situation at Christ Church we may note the report of the Presiding Elder:

Christ Church . . . seemed to be threatened with ruin at the beginning of the panic but too gritty to confess it, the heroic, persistent, and skillful workers met the situation and brought up incomes to outgoes, jointly with bringing outgoes down to incomes. And there is good progress of reduction of debt materially within a near future.⁴

The drastic results of this were not really felt, however, until a year later. There was a drop from 372 to 313 members during the year 1894-1895. Perhaps it took a year or more for the members who left Denver to find their relationships elsewhere. Indeed, there were probably several members who left, and many who failed to keep in contact with Christ Church.

At the end of the third year, despite the drastic drop in membership, the church had reduced its indebtedness by \$7000, done through good organizational procedures. They were rated as a strong church, and growing stronger continually.⁵

In 1895 H. E. Warner was appointed to Christ Church where he was to have the longest pastoral record up to that time, in Denver. In fact, perhaps this would have been the longest in Methodism. The limit of ministerial tenure was originally two years, and later raised to five years. In 1899 the limits were removed completely, and H. E. Warner finished eight years at

¹ Christ Church Chimes, September, 1900.

² The Denver Republican, July 11, 1892.

³ Vincent Papers, 1893.

⁴ Ibid., 1894.

⁵ Vincent Papers, 1895.

Christ Church before he was appointed Presiding Elder in 1903. It is to this energetic man that Christ Church owes much in the way of financial organization. During this eight-year period he raised money and paid off a debt of \$27,000 which had been on the church since its move to Twenty-second and Ogden Streets. At the end of his pastorate there, his health was rather poor. There was some speculation that he might have to retire,¹ and indeed, his final year was finished by E. E. Bean.

During his long pastorate, the membership was increased from 313 to 531, a net increase of 218. The Sunday School increased from 397 to 575 in three years, an increase of 178. The high average was not to continue however, as by the end of his eighth year the Sunday School gradually decreased to the report of 392. During the same eight years his salary had been increased from \$1450 to \$2000.

At the turn of the century one of the churches with the brightest future was Christ Church, under the able leadership of Dr. Warner. This future was furthered by many strong leaders who followed Dr. Warner, to make us realize that Christ Church truly accepted its challenges and dealt with them very adequately.

Grace Methodist Church

The important happening in the history of Grace Church was the dedication of their new sanctuary, January 27, 1889. (see Fig. 7). This was accomplished free of debt, though the total cost was \$80,000. The church seemed to be prosperous, and seemed also to have a bright future ahead of it. However, the ten years, to 1900, were not to look so favorably on this church.

The minister at the time of the building was Gilbert de LaMatyr, who was succeeded in 1889 by A. H. Lucas who remained two years. As Lucas came in 1889 the membership was 234 which was raised to 300 in one year. The Sunday School the first year rose from 129 to 140. The end of his second year showed an additional increase of 20 in the membership and an increase from 140 to 202 in the Sunday School enrollment. During the two years of Lucas' ministry the net increase of membership had been 86, and the Sunday School increased 73.

Succeeding Lucas in 1891 was J. R. Shannon, who received the largest salaries in the history of Grace Church. He received \$5200 his first year and \$5250 his last year 1895-1896, the highest paid by any Denver Methodist church that year. Also to Shannon must go the honor of having the largest membership in the history of Grace Church. In 1895, his third year, he reported 333 members. Prosperity was very pronounced at Grace Church, as evidenced by Vincent:

Grace, with parsonage, J. R. Shannon pastor, with its fine equipment for all work, its workers from the earliest days of Colorado Methodism, its wealth and culture, its command of resources for its own growth and the aid of all the churches at home and abroad.²

¹ The Denver Republican, August 4, 1903.

² The Vincent Papers, 1893.

However, one year later, after the financial crash of 1893 Vincent reports Grace Church slightly differently: “The hard times have materially affected finances among them.”¹

The wealth of Denver had been concentrated in Grace Church since approximately 1885. The result was that they could pay high salaries and build large churches even without large membership rolls. However, following Shannon’s pastorate we note that there was a shift. The wealthy people were moving east into the Capitol Hill section, and though many replacements were found for Grace Church’s rolls, the wealth it had previously enjoyed was not forthcoming. We now note a rapid shift of ministers, and a decrease in salary and membership until 1899.

In 1896 J. R. Shannon was succeeded by A. H. Briggs, a son-in-law of Bishop and Mrs. Warren. He came with a membership of 250 and left when it registered thirteen less. The \$5250 salary which was paid to Shannon the previous year was cut to \$2500 for Briggs.

The successor was W. F. Conner in 1897, to stay for two years. The membership continued to decrease to 220 his second year, while the salary reached a low point of \$1560 also in his second year. At the end of the first year of Conner, Vincent was reflecting the downward trend, and realized that the potential was now on Capitol Hill rather than the area surrounding Grace Church:

Grace, Pastor Conner, much discouragement growing out of location, but grit and push among the few prove the presence of life that if the church building were removed to Capitol Hill two miles east, leaving the chapel for evangelistic work, would develop into one of the greatest spiritual forces in the city, unto the wholesome benefit of Methodism. The combined influence of the church in the City should unit in bringing about this solution of the Grace Church problem.²

As we know, this move was not made, but in 1900 the Capitol Hill Methodist Church was organized instead. The outcome of the latter organization is the present strong Warren Memorial Methodist Church at East Fourteenth and Gilpin Streets.

At Grace Church in 1899, the minister was W. C. Madison who remained only one year. The membership continued to decrease during his ministry from 220 to 193, while his salary for the year was only \$1600. It is to be noted however, that during his ministry the new parsonage, now standing at 1257 Bannock, was constructed to become an asset to the church, even though the future did not look bright.

The salary in 1900 reached its lowest point at \$1200, when M. A. Rader came to the church. The downward trend in membership and salaries was ended. In one year Rader brought the membership from 193 to 224, and for the two years following, it was 254 and 315. The Sunday School showed similar gains and when Rader left in 1903 the Sunday School had reached an enrollment of 275. The salary for Rader’s third year was up to \$1700, which was much better than when he began, though nothing in comparison with five or six years previously.

¹ Ibid., 1894.

² Vincent Papers, 1898.

Changing times certainly do change the character of churches, though when seen in the year-by-year living it does not seem so drastic. Grace Church is surely one of the best examples in Denver's history to prove that churches do not stand still, and that often with the best of leadership, they still will decline. The sociology of population movements however, is something which none of us would dare predict for more than a year or so in advance. The future of Grace Church, at least for a short time, lay in a completely different type of program. We shall explore the details of this in a later section.

First German Methodist Episcopal Church

Friederich Hauser had been the minister of the First German Methodist Society since 1888, and remained until 1893 for a total of five years. During this period of time the membership declined slightly, as did the Sunday School enrollment. However, it was in 1889 that the West Twenty-seventh Avenue Church (North Denver) was organized, and undoubtedly some of the people formerly in First Church found the new organization near their homes.

The successor in 1893 was Henry Bruns, who stayed for three years. He was followed by John Kohler from 1896 to 1900, to finish out the decade. There was continued decline in membership to the low of 52 reported in 1900. This was exactly forty less than ten years previous, but at the same time, there were now three churches (West Denver, and North Denver German Churches being the other two) with a total membership of 113 for the city as a whole. This does then reflect some net gain, though it is also indicative that the German groups were not destined to grow rapidly, and by 1916 it was seen that they should all unite into one church to maintain a better program.

Second German Church (West Denver)

and

West Twenty-seventh Avenue Church (North Denver)

The German Church in West Denver had been organized in 1886, as the Second German Church of Denver. By 1890 the membership was recorded at 30, with 60 enrolled in the Sunday School. At the conference of this year the newly appointed minister was Henry Krueger. In this same year the church in North Denver was placed on the circuit with the West German church, and hence the statistics until 1899 are combined. The ministers are the same also.

In 1890, because of the work of Mr. Krueger, the church property (West Denver) had been improved by the addition built on to the church, and a parsonage was also constructed. Little information is available during the years when the churches were on a circuit together, except their membership and Sunday School statistics. The membership in 1891, the first report after the statistics were combined, stood at 44, while in 1899, the last year of this arrangement, the membership was 47, a net gain of only 3 people. However, the Sunday School enrollment for the same period had grown from 90 to 150.

Ministers of the two churches were: Henry Krueger, 1890-1892; L. J. Hessel, 1892-1895; A. D. Stuckemann, 1895-1898; H. G. Leist, 1898-1899. The next year H. G. Leist continued at West Denver Church while William J. Fricke was appointed to the North Denver

church. As the two churches were separated, the membership of the West Church was 31, with Sunday School enrollment of 90; of the North Church, 30 members and 115 enrolled in Sunday School. This was the report at the end of the first year of separation, the Conference of 1900.

As the North Denver Church now had a minister of its own, they had to make some arrangements for a parsonage, as they had had no need when they were but a part of a circuit. The minister, Rev. Fricke, lived for four years in a “meeting house.”¹ No further mention of this appears.

The North and the West Church were not to have a long history as separate churches however, for in 1908, they were again placed on a circuit together, and in 1916 all three German Methodist churches of Denver were united into one.

Despite their fluctuations, the German churches filled a void in the lives of many people who were interested in worshipping in their own language. However, the use of the language of the “old country” did not last much past the second generation usually, and gradually assimilation was made into other churches of the city.

One further note about the German churches of this decade preceding the turn of the century is their missionary activity. It is stated by Beardsley² that the German Methodists of Denver, especially First German Society, founded a mission in Pueblo, Colorado, and for a time paid the expenses of the minister, Friederich Hausser who travelled to the Pueblo work from Denver. He had preached there until 1892, a total of two years. Conrad Frick, of the First German Society also, had assisted in buying lots for the new mission in Pueblo, which Beardsley reports cost \$750.³ Furthermore, in the next year, 1893, a parsonage was built and paid for in Pueblo by the German Methodists of Denver.

Fifth Avenue Church (formerly Beckwourth Street)

In 1890 N. A. Chamberlain was appointed to the Fifth Avenue Church where the membership had previously been recorded at 242. He remained for two years, and raised both the membership and the Sunday School enrollment to their highest figure of the period ending 1912. At the end of his first year, he reported the membership at 260, and the Sunday School enrollment at 400. The records of the church then fluctuated, but never before 1912 do they achieve this height again. The addition built on to the church and the new parsonage, completed only the year previous to Chamberlain’s coming, were probably a part of the answer for this growth.

J. H. Merritt was appointed to Fifth Avenue Church in 1892, to remain one year. At the end of his year he reported 216 members and 215 in Sunday School. Much of this drop however, was recorded during the second year of Chamberlain’s ministry. Of the completed church at this time, Vincent stated:

¹ Kriege, and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz der Bischoflichen Methodistenkirche, p. 147.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 373.

³ Ibid.

Fifth Avenue, with parsonage, J. H. Merritt pastor, with a location not second to any in the city for importance; the building is a plain two-winged full fledged ecclesiastical 'bird of dawning' fulfilling its figure in Gospel work.¹

In 1893 E. J. Wilcox was appointed to the church to remain three years. It was during this pastorate that the worst of the depression was felt, and this was one of the churches which suffered as much as any. This is corroborated by Vincent:

Fifth Avenue . . . with but a trifling debt on which interest is paid have renewed the audience room beautifully and paid for it and though the people are poor and have greatly suffered from the panic have . . . [The report abruptly ends as though torn].²

The work continued under the ministry of Wilcox, and before the Conference of 1895 he had completed a basement, an improved sanctuary, and some Sunday School rooms were repaired.³ Although Vincent also stated that their membership increased through 20 accessions, the net result was a loss of 20 and in 1895 the membership was recorded at 184, and the Sunday School was down to 190. Vincent concluded, "hard times have diminished giving, but not zeal." During these two years it is probable that many of the members of the church had moved to the East because of lack of work, and of course were not replaced by anyone at least not for a time.

Robert Sanderson was appointed to this church in 1896, when the membership stood at 219. He remained three years, but recorded a net loss of 20 during this time. However, the Presiding Elder records⁴ that Mr. Sanderson and his people made repairs on the church and paid for them completely.

In 1899 the minister was H. B. Collins, who remained two years, until the Conference of 1901. Little change is recorded during this pastorate, though he does record a high figure for Sunday School enrollment in 1901. Three-hundred ten was the highest it had been in the whole ten year period, although the increase did not carry over into the new year.

Indeed, the church was located in a strategic part of Denver in the 1890's, as Vincent has said, but it seemed to have been tossed to and for on the winds of increasing and decreasing memberships. The future ahead for this little church was to be indeed unsteady.

St. James Church

The new minister in 1889 at the St. James Methodist Church (in West Denver) was G. W. Ray, to whom is attributed an increase in membership, salary, and enthusiasm. It was during his ministry that their little church was torn down and the new and larger building constructed. The old building proved inadequate and demolished in 1889,⁵ with the new one being completed in 1892 at a cost of \$20,000.⁶ (see Fig. 8). An interesting tribute to the people who built the new

¹ Vincent Papers, 1893.

² Vincent Papers, 1894.

³ Ibid., 1895.

⁴ Ibid., 1897.

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 512.

⁶ Ibid., p. 371.

church appears in the contemporary publication of the Colorado Graphic Magazine.¹ It is mentioned that the new building was to be French gothic, with a tower of 132 feet. In West Denver at that time, this was a commanding height, as it could be seen from all sides.

On June 27, 1891, Bishop Henry White Warren officiated in the laying of the cornerstone of the new St. James Methodist church.² It is also noted that the Board of Trustees at that time included E. Milleson, President; W. M. Park; L. S. Lawyer; J. J. Dunagan; Henry Cole; W. D. Taylor; W. B. Boynton; M. C. Barker and W. R. Jones.³ This E. Milleson is evidently Elisha Milleson, one of the founders of the Milleson Mission farther out west and south from St. James Church. That the Milleson family was active in St. James Church is corroborated by Milleson's son-in-law, James Procter.⁴ The building committee of the new church consisted of Henry Cole, Cole, E. Milleson, J. T. Brown, W. M. Park, G. W. Emigh, and G. W. Ray.⁵

The new building was opened in 1892 (exact date not known) by Bishop Warren.⁶ The next year, at the Conference of 1893, the Presiding Elder reported:

St. James, with parsonage, G. W. Ray, Pastor, located in the very heart of a numerous population, side by side with one of the Pope's allies, chaste, commodious, convenient, working for human up-lift.⁷

G. W. Ray remained for four years at St. James Church during which time some significant gains in the membership were made. There were 108 members when he came, and at the end of his third year he reported 246. The next year it dropped to 233, but still a significant increase over the previous figures. No doubt this is in part a reflection of their increased facilities, and more attractive and adequate building. A part of this, to be sure, is also to be attributed to the enthusiasm of the minister.

In 1893 the minister was F. S. Beggs, during which year much of the disillusionment of the depression was felt. The membership dropped during that year from 233 to 188, a loss of 45 persons, most of which is probably accounted for by their leaving Denver for eastern points. Interestingly enough, the Sunday School enrollment remained steady this year, reported at 200 both in 1893 and 1894. Nor does the Sunday School report a decline later on, to make allowance for bringing records up to date, but for four more years it continued to climb.

Of the work that year, 1893-1894, Vincent reports:

¹ The Colorado Graphic Magazine, September 5, 1891. filed in the Colorado Historical Society Library, this is a magazine dedicated to history and local interest items.

² From a letter placed in the cornerstone on that date, signed by Bishop Warren, J. H. Merritt, the Presiding Elder, and G. W. Ray, the minister. The cornerstone was opened when the building was demolished in 1954.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Mr. Procter, 3539 So. Delaware, Englewood, is a son-in-law of Elisha Milleson, and remembers many of the details both of the family and the mission that bore the Milleson name.

⁵ Letter found in the St. James Cornerstone, now in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁶ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 549.

⁷ Vincent Papers, 1893.

St. James, Pastor Beggs, met confusion and dismay in the outset but by outside aid and persistent pastoral purpose and effort, interest has been met, the loan well placed, and some light appears in the dark sky. Current expenses have increased \$9, and have been met but the pastor is not half paid and the benevolences are \$35 behind last year. The membership has been reduced by improving the records, though souls have come to Christ here during the year.¹

It would be interesting to know what is meant here by “improving the records” to explain the decrease of membership. Perhaps it is meant that they were brought up to date.

In 1894 the minister was C. B. Allen, who reported remarkable progress. He came when the membership recorded 188; at the end of one year it was 185, but at the end of his second year, 1896, he reported 311, or an increase of 65 per cent. This incidentally is the highest membership ever recorded for St. James Church, though 310 members were reported in 1901. In twelve years the membership dropped to 73, and continued to decline.

During the ministry of C. B. Allen there is progress noted in the Sunday School also. Previous to his coming, the figure had been 200 for two years in a row. Beginning in 1895 the Sunday School figures are: 208, 240, 256, 250, and 240. Hence at the end of his five years the average was well above the previous figures. This is perhaps to be expected in part because of the membership increase, which would logically bring in more children.

Financially, there was much progress also. Beardsley reports that during the ministry of C. B. Allen, between 1894 and 1896, “the debt contracted in the erection of the new church is being discharged”.² Vincent makes this more specific in his report for the year 1895:

St. James, Pastor Allen, debt reduced at beginning of the year from ten to seven thousand. Interest paid, without devices. General work successful . . .³

Vincent reports further progress in 1898:

St. James, Pastor Allen, much self-denial goes on and the money for all needs is provided, claiming the love that God gives the cheerful giver. Plans for paying the debt the coming year are made and will doubtless be carried out.⁴

Unfortunately the debt was not paid off the next year, and not until 1909 does the Conference Journal report final clearance of the mortgage on St. James Church.

In 1899 the minister was O. J. Moore, who continued the work, but made no substantial gains, or declines. Coming in 1900 for two years was A. A. Johnson, who reported a high figure of membership at the end of one year at 310, just one short of the all-time high of 1896. However, the Sunday School records that year show a great decrease, from 234 to 175. The next

¹ Vincent Papers, 1894.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 371.

³ Vincent Papers, 1895.

⁴ Ibid., 1898.

the minister reported 249 members and a Sunday School enrollment of 200, which seemed to be leveling off process.

Despite the new building and seemingly increased activity of St. James Church, its progress was short-lived, for within the next decade it was to decline continually until finally the church itself was no longer used as St. James Church, and the membership was united with the Fifth Avenue Church, approximately one mile to the southeast. However, in the decade 1890-1900, St. James Church, as one of the early Methodist organizations in Denver, showed remarkable progress, and seemed to be well on its way to a long and successful future.

St. Paul Methodist Episcopal Church, South

Due to lack of records available on the former South Church, the details of the decade ending 1900 are rather scanty for St. Paul Church in Denver. The only information available after a careful search for a collection of the Journals of early years, is a complete list of the ministers, and an item from the press.

The ministers of this church, and the years they served are: 1890, John M. Crowe; 1891-1895, J. A. Duncan; 1895-1898, J. H. Ledbetter; 1898-1899, W. P. Rippey; 1899-1901, O. M. Rickman.¹

The building at Twenty-first and Welton Streets had been dedicated in 1887, and in 1900 they held a thirteenth anniversary celebration:

The celebration of the Thirteenth Anniversary of St. Paul Methodist Church last evening was attended by four of the persons who assisted in founding the church, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Strickler, Isaac Brinker and Mrs. A. A. Morrison and many of the pioneers of the church.²

Simpson Church

As has been previously mentioned, the people of Simpson Church had built a new building in 1888-89, at Thirty-seventh and Lafayette, in northeast Denver, and were growing rapidly because of enthusiasm engendered through the enlarged and more adequate facilities. (see Fig. 15).

The minister coming in 1890 was J. T. Musgrove who remained three years, and recorded during his first year an increase in membership from 50 to 102, more than a one-hundred per cent gain. The Sunday School made rapid progress also, as the membership increased an additional 19 persons, and the Sunday School enrollment rose from 198 to 204 the second year, and dropped back down to 175 the third year. Perhaps some of this is to be explained by the fact that in 1893, near Simpson church, there was organized the Hess Memorial Church, eighteen blocks

¹ From the appropriate Conference Journals of the Methodist Church, South. A collection of these Journals, dating from 1890, is located in the library at Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas.

² The Denver Times, October 16, 1900.

away at Thirty-first and Elizabeth Streets. This no doubt drew some of the people away from Simpson church.

For the new Simpson church the people had spent \$5,100, for which they had to have a mortgage of \$2500,¹ which was not finally paid until 1903. Interest had mounted and the people were unable to pay much on it, that in the end, the interest was forgotten about and they paid back only the principal.

During this ministry of Musgrove, Beardsley reported that Simpson had added a wing to their church in 1890, 39 feet by 73 feet, and the property was then valued at \$10,500.² This was corroborated by the Presiding Elder's report by J. B. Merritt.³

The minister appointed in 1893 was J. T. Pender, who remained only one year. This was the hardest year for all Denver, because so many people had been out of their work because of the drop in silver prices throughout the area. The panic hit Simpson church rather hard, as reflected in the Presiding Elder's report for 1894:

Simpson, Pastor Pender, has suffered some scattering of the forces by the discharge of workmen from the shops but the courage of the people has not waned. The interest has been paid, the amount raised for current expenses increased \$20, and benevolences at least \$10. The membership has grown 40.⁴

This final statement seems rather incongruous, for during this year most of the other churches of the city were losing members. The Conference Journals report during this year of 1892-1894, an increase in membership at Simpson from 121 to 162, an increase of 41; and a Sunday School increase from 175 to 200.

The next year the minister was R. M. Barns who remained until 1896. The membership seemed to take a slight up-turn again during his ministry, as he reported a total increase for the two years from 162 to 194, for an increase of thirty-two. The Sunday School reflects the opposite in that it decreased in the same period from 200 to 175, reflecting yet the growth of Hess Church only a little over a mile away.

In 1895 the Presiding Elder reported the situation:

Simpson, Pastor Barns. People poor; some unemployed; a \$3,000 debt. But interest paid by voluntary gifts. Other finances behind, but the pastor is hopeful, backed by a pushing people, old and young.⁵

The next year Vincent reported that the debt had been reduced by \$200, and that the interest was nearly all paid to date.

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 378.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 533.

³ Filed in the Colorado Historical Society Library.

⁴ Vincent Papers, 1894.

⁵ Vincent Papers, 1895.

H. L. Beardsley came to the church in 1896 to remain two years. During this time both the membership and the Sunday School enrollments declined. At the end of his two years he reported twenty-three fewer members and twenty-five less in Sunday School than when he came.

I. J. Keator was appointed to the church in 1898 and remained one year. Little change is recorded. The successor remaining for two years, to 1901, was G. R. Graff whose last report showed the membership at a low of 130 but the Sunday School enrollment back up to a high figure of 215.

As for the debt that had remained on the church since 1898 and the accumulating interest, we note an interesting, but perhaps erroneous report in the Times:

Samuel H. Perry, administrator of the estate of the late George Tritch, was this morning granted leave by Judge Steele of the county court to accept \$2500 from the Simpson Methodist Episcopal Church in full payment of the claim against the church association. The original amount of the loan was for \$2,500 but interest had accumulated for several years past, none of which had ever been paid. It was stated that a verbal agreement had been entered into by the members of the church and Mr. Tritch whereby there was to be no interest. As the property is not worth the sum of \$2,500 it was deemed best to accept the offer made.¹

Evidently, according to this, the people made some overture to repayment of their debt, which was completely liquidated in 1903. However, the above article states that there was never any interest paid which is perhaps questionable. B. T. Vincent in his yearly reports as a Presiding Elder mentioned often that the interest was paid up to date, though other payments of the church were lagging. However, we may assume that some compromise was made to liquidate the debt and also that the value of the property had declined, making an added burden on the people.

Simpson Church continued however, and still does continue to minister to its people in that section of Denver. It never became a large church, but always remained a significant neighborhood church, many of which were necessary in the growing city.

Swedish Methodist Mission

Many misfortunes and hard times are recorded throughout the history of the Swedish organization. They had been organized in 1883, but had not mustered enough strength to buy and hold their buildings. In addition they had met with at least two disappointments and losses of lots and property.²

In 1890 the minister was Nils Eklund who had been at the church since 1887, and had shown much progress. In the year 1887 the Swedish group had sold their West Denver property at Eleventh and Kalamath Streets to the Second German Methodist Society and had moved to the lecture room of Trinity Methodist Church almost as soon as it was completed.

¹ The Denver Times, May 3, 1900.

² Vincent Papers, 1896.

At the Conference of 1891 the newly appointed minister was A. J. Gustafson who remained five years. Although his record of membership and Sunday School is not exceptional, it seems that he maintained a relatively even pace despite some of the other happenings in their organization. In 1895 we have a reference to Sunday School enrollment of fifteen which was the first time for six years that any reference to the Sunday School was made.

During the ministry of Gustafson, Vincent made two references to their financial difficulties:

Swedish Mission, A. J. Gustafson pastor, worshipping in Trinity Lecture room, but owning lots on which a building is greatly needed.¹

Unfortunately the location of these lots is not given.

Swedish Mission, Pastor Gustafson, worshipping in the lecture room of Trinity Church with believing zeal. Unfortunate in the loss of the real estate upon which they have been paying from out of hard earnings for years. They yet do not give up hope that they shall have a church home sometime.²

Another approach was taken as the next move. They decided that it might be better to buy a church building rather than to try to build it themselves. Consequently, while they were planning this, in 1895, they moved from Trinity to a rented church on Arapahoe and Twenty-Second Streets.³ It was during the next Conference year that they bought an old church on Pennsylvania between Nineteenth and Twentieth. Vincent gave some of the details of the venture:

Swedish Mission, after two misfortunes in building enterprises in which they have sunken two or three thousand dollars, have again embarked in a plan which submitted to the judgment of Bishop Warren and other thoughtful and judicious men in Denver Methodism was believed to be a wise venture. An old church on Pennsylvania Avenue between 19th and 20th, well worth even now \$3,500 was through the desire of the Mortgage holder to dispose of it, bought for \$2,000. Of this the interest is much less than rent previously. These persistent, devout people are under Pastor Liljegren, transferred from California at the close of the last Conference session, doing a most wholesome work.⁴

F. U. Liljegren was appointed minister in 1896 to remain only one year. Seemingly he had filled out a portion of the preceding year also. There was no substantial change in membership or Sunday School enrollment during his ministry.

In 1897 the minister was J. A. Gabrielson who remained four years, reporting little change in membership or Sunday School enrollment. During the whole decade the membership

¹ Vincent Papers, 1893.

² Ibid., 1895.

³ Vincent Papers, 1895.

⁴ Ibid., 1896.

had remained just under 70 most of the time, and the Sunday School average, after it was begun in 1895, averaged about 40.

As might be expected, one of the wishes of the people as well as their ministerial leadership was that the debt be decreased, that they might look to a prosperous future:

Swedish Mission, Pastor Gabrielson, plans for the reduction of the debt are well under way and will of course [be instigated soon].¹

The congregation continued to pay on this old church, and conduct their worship services at the Pennsylvania Street address until 1902 when it was sold for \$3450.² At this time they built the church which is still standing on the corner of Twenty-second and Court Place. (see Fig. 11). In this new location they changed their name to Emmanuel Methodist Church and worshipped for many years there until they sold and moved in 1945 to the present location of Emmanuel Church, South Downing at East Yale Avenue. Of course the congregation has long since ceased to be only for the Swedish-speaking people, since in 1940 it was merged into the Colorado Annual Conference with no language barrier.

During the decade 1890-1900, the Swedish people indeed had their hard time, but they kept their faith and their hope, and finally gained enough strength to become a church on their own, assuming their financial obligations without frustrating reversals.

Trinity Methodist Church

The credit for the building of the Trinity Methodist Church building must go in a large part to the unceasing efforts of Henry Augustus Buchtel, whose dream and hard work carried the church from a small group in lower Denver to the largest single Methodist group in the state; with a building second to none at that time in the whole of the mid-west. He had a rather long pastorate there, as he remained almost five years, leaving early in 1891. He was succeeded those few months until Conference by William F. McDowell, newly elected Chancellor of the University of Denver.

During the ministry of Buchtel the membership had grown from 766 to 1023, a net increase in five years of 467. As to the Sunday School enrollment, we note a large increase also, from 556 to 1200, an increase of 644.

After this fine record, Henry Augustus Buchtel left Trinity Church in March 1891, to be succeeded a few months later by Robert McIntyre. Buchtel left behind him a magnificent work, and it is fitting that as he was later elected Governor of the State of Colorado in 1906, that he requested his inauguration to be held in the sanctuary which he had had a large part in building

¹ Vincent Papers, 1898.

² A history of Emmanuel Church, written by the Rev. J. Richard Palmer, 1948. On file in the Colorado Methodist Historical Society archives.

several years before. Indeed, on that occasion, January 8, 1907, twenty-five hundred people crowded the sanctuary of Trinity Church to see the inauguration of the new Governor.¹

Robert McIntyre succeeded Buchtel in 1891, when the membership was recorded at 1023, and at the end of the first year recorded 1200. The Sunday School both these years registered an enrollment of 1200. Of this church, the year before the depression, Vincent reports:

Trinity, with parsonage, R. McIntyre pastor, is a magnificent structure filled every sabbath with worshippers and Bible students, American, Swedish, and Chinese unto mighty work for god.²

Vincent was referring no doubt to the Chinese Sunday School which was maintained by this church for a time, and also the Swedish Methodist Church people who temporarily used Trinity's facilities.

The year of the depression, 1893, had less effect on Trinity than other churches, but it is mentioned also, as a factor that hindered their making their regular payments on their large debt, which was not finally paid off until 1920:

Trinity, Pastor McIntyre, was overwhelmed for a time by the panic which overthrew many of its leading men and left its hosts poor but grit had not been lost. By wisdom the current expenses have been decreased \$35, and by misfortunes of the people have the benevolences decreased \$50 and the membership has been weeded out to a wise reduction. But the interest of the greatest debt has been paid and the faith and hope are clear.³

One other reflection of the pastorate of McIntyre is mentioned by the Presiding Elder:

Trinity, Pastor McIntyre. Heavy debt, but immense congregations; and an Official Board who handle business in a business way, and will pull through. Epworth League is a great body of working young people. Woman's Work in all departments most vigorous.⁴

After five years of work, McIntyre was succeeded by Camden Coburn, who remained for six years, until 1902. An interesting item appeared about Coburn's ministry, in that the Trinity Reading College was established, although further mention of it is not made.⁵ The plan was that individuals attended voluntary classes at Trinity to get recommended reading lists. Then the books they desired to read would be ordered at a discount. Any person who read six books of the standard "best-sellers" in a year were awarded certificates. The extent of this service, and the length of time it was in operation was not given.

¹ Thomas R. Garth, The Life of Henry Augustus Buchtel (Denver: Peerless Printing Company, 1937), pp. 197-198.

² Vincent Papers, 1893.

³ Ibid., 1894.

⁴ Ibid., 1895.

⁵ An undated clipping in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library.

During this ministry the membership remained relatively stable. Coburn began with 878 members, and reported 1076 his last year. However, at the Conference of 1901, next to his last as minister of Trinity, he recorded his highest membership at 1101. The enthusiasm for his work is reflected by these gains made by Coburn.

As for the Sunday School, they had recorded 1200 for the four years from 1890 to 1893, but at the end of McIntyre's ministry, by the conference of 1901 and 1902, the Sunday School registered only 650. The lowest point during the recent years was in the ministry of McIntyre when in 1895 they reported only 595 members in Sunday School. This had been a drop of 605 in two years!

The debt remaining on the building was a constant worry to people and minister alike. They kept paying as they could however, and Vincent reported that many subscriptions were coming in:

The amount secured on subscription for the debt has much of it been collected and the burden has been reduced to \$32,500, for which there are usually good subscriptions, which in these times and with the immense expense involved in carrying on the church work is a rich testimony to liberality and zeal.¹

Despite their large debt, Trinity was continuing to make its place felt in Colorado Methodism, and especially among the churches of Denver.

Wright Memorial Methodist Church

In 1890 the Wright Memorial Methodist Church (formerly Valverde Methodist Church) was but two years old, having been organized in 1888. They constructed their building in 1889, and dedicated it February 16, 1890 with Bishop Warren presiding.² The location of their work was the corner of South Navajo at Alaska Place.³

The first minister of which we have record was G. H. Smith, who was appointed there in 1891. Other records seem to reflect however, that he was minister two years earlier when the church was opened in 1889.⁴ In 1892, the end of the first year on record in the Conference Journals the Wright Memorial Church recorded 25 members and a Sunday School enrollment of 40.

The next year, 1892, Thomas Bithell was appointed minister, and at the end of the year the report lists only twelve members and thirty-five enrolled in Sunday School. This particular minister, as many others who followed, was a student of the University, or perhaps Iliff School of Theology, which was an integral part of the University at that time:

¹ Vincent Papers, 1898.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 528.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, June 28, 1891.

⁴ Ibid.

T. Bithell, a student, pastor, with a neat little chapel in Valverde, an isolated addition to the City where work for Christ is most important.¹

There is no record of the Conference year 1893-1894 due perhaps to the depression of the year 1893; the Presiding Elder does not mention the church that year. The following year the Journal reports Wm. D. Phifer as minister, with a membership of 16 and a Sunday School enrollment of 40. B. T. Vincent added the statement that their church was now paid for, that the ministers were all students, and that although the society was small it was earnest.² Unfortunately the cost or other details of the building are unavailable. This was torn down in 1922, and has been superceded by the Valverde Presbyterian Church, through an arrangement between the two denominations, since both felt that there was need for only one church in this particular area.

There followed a rapid succession of student ministers, most of whom stayed but one year. The complete list appears thus: 1894-1895, Wm. D. Phifer; 1895-1896, W. H. Haupt; 1896-1899, F. L. L. Hiller; 1899-1900, Buckwalter; 1900-1901, Wesley DeSellem.

During this period of time the membership shows little change, fluctuating from 16 in 1895 to 18 in 1900, but remaining near 11 or 12 in the meantime. The Sunday School fluctuated between 30 and 60 during this same period.

The difficult future of the church was sensed by the Presiding Elder in his report of 1898:

Wright Memorial, Pastor Hiller a student, is a problem. The pay is painfully poor because the people are, and too few to keep up a church. It must be supported as a student's appointment in the mission plan with outside help. As we have a neat little church all paid for, we must hold the ground for the few true souls who are there.³

A part of the solution to this problem was when the Valverde Church was put on a circuit with another small church located less than a mile away. This church was Wesley Chapel, soon to be called the John A. Clough Memorial Church. However, this only proved that there was not sufficient need to keep both churches open, and in 1826 both were united with the Fifth Avenue Church which then took the name Wesley Methodist, at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Galapago.

It was a heroic work in Valverde that the small church established, but shifts of population did not favor that organization, although in 1956 we realize that that particular area is prosperous and growing, but the Methodists are losing out because there is no church within easy distance of the people. Perhaps it was impossible to continue the little church forty years ago, but now we wish they had found some way.

¹ Vincent Papers, 1893.

² Ibid., 1895.

³ Vincent Papers, 1898.

Suburban Churches: -- Unfortunately for the sake of history, the Arvada, the Wheatridge and the Lake charges were not a part of the Denver District during the decade ending 1900; therefore, we do not have yearly reports on them as have been preserved in the personal reports of the Presiding Elder of the Denver District. B. T. Vincent was certainly far-sighted in the detail in which he told the story of each of his churches of the Denver District each year. However, we do have some information of the suburban churches from which we can piece together a part of their history.

Arvada Church

The minister appointed in 1890 was J. F. White, who remained for three years. During his ministry the building was completed, having been begun by I. H. Beardsley in 1889. The completed building in 1892 was estimated to have cost \$4000, slightly more than the original estimates.¹ (see Fig. 19). With pride the people stated that \$3500 was paid the first year (1892), with the last \$500 coming in 1893.²

J. F. White reported in 1893 that the membership was 34, with 142 in Sunday School. Succeeding him that year was R. M. Barns who remained only one year and reported fifty-four members, an increase of 20; and 210 in Sunday School enrollments, an increase of 68. Barns' salary was a record high up to this time also, as it is reported that he received \$1000. The last salary which J. F. White had received the year previous was \$805. It is to be remembered that J. F. White had done so much in their building campaign, to help get the church on a firmer foundation.

In 1894 the successor was John H. Merritt who remained three years. Membership fluctuated, but held steady. Sunday School enrollments declined slightly, but otherwise there were no noticeable differences. This was the year when so many churches had reported declines due to the depression, but Arvada was a farming community and would have been affected only indirectly by the falling silver prices. Hence little change is recorded for their church.

The two succeeding ministers to the turn of the century were H. J. Grace, 1897-1899; and C. W. Simmons, 1899-1901. Neither records any substantial membership or Sunday School shifts, nor is the salary appreciably different. At the turn of the century membership was listed at 73, with the Sunday School enrollments at 150.

Arvada was strategically located, as a shopping center outside the city of Denver, and yet within easy traveling distance. It was destined to grow continually, and of course the church grew with it. Arvada today (1956) is one of the finest suburban settlements, though Denver's northwest corner has grown out to meet the Arvada city limits in many places. The Arvada Methodist Church remains one of the effective suburban Methodist organizations.

THE WHEAT RIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the opening of the present church, June 7, 1931.

² Ibid.

J. W. Linn was the minister of the Wheat Ridge-Argo circuit in 1890, and remained at the Wheat Ridge church until 1895. However, in 1892 it was deemed advisable to separate from Argo, and in that year Wheat Ridge was set apart as a station. J. W. Linn began his ministry when the two churches together recorded 106 members. The last year the two were together the membership stood at 128. The first year after the separation, Arvada recorded 77. At the end of Linn's five years, 1895, the membership of Arvada alone was 116, an increase of 39 in three years since the two churches were separated. Such growth is indicative of a continually expanding and developing church.

A. L. Chase was appointed in 1895, and remained for three years. The statistics remained rather constant during this period, showing a total of 120 members at the end of three years, an increase of only 4. However, it is recorded in an official church Directory of 1896¹ that in this year there were three Sunday Schools maintained by the church. The first of course was their own, with W. W. Wilmore as Superintendent. The second was a new work in Lakewood, Elmer Green, Superintendent. It is to be remembered that there was no Methodist organization as yet in Lakewood, two miles south of Wheat Ridge, and this organization did not come until 1904. The third Sunday School was at Prospect Valley, one mile northwest of Wheatridge, with Fred Bunger as Superintendent.

The small settlement of Prospect Valley was located on Prospect Avenue (West 38th) west of Wadsworth, in the valley which was known for its truck gardens and fruit. To the north of this was the settlement known as Fruitdale, of which we will have further mention later as being the location of the present Jefferson Avenue Methodist Church.

In the area of Prospect Valley a plan was begun to organize a church out of the Sunday School, but this evidently did not materialize. A sketch of these plans appears in the Wheat Ridge records.² That material will be summarized at the end of this section on Wheat Ridge.

The work done at the Sunday School in Lakewood, two miles south of Wheat Ridge, was indirectly responsible for the organization of the Lakewood Methodist Church a few years later, in 1904. Thus we see that in its own neighborhood, Wheat Ridge was a missionary church, beginning Sunday Schools where there was a need.

S. A. Weber was appointed the minister of the Wheat Ridge Church in 1898, to remain only a year. D. C. Winship followed him, and remained almost two years. For the remainder of the second year (a few months) the church was supplied by Professor W. F. Steele of the University of Denver.

Membership of the Wheat Ridge Church at the turn of the century was 151, with 200 enrolled in the Sunday School. Located at the corner of Wadsworth and Thirty-second Avenue, they were situated strategically, and had a bright future ahead of them, as recent history has proven.

¹ Official Church Directory of 1896, filed in the Church office.

² Hand-written Official Board Records, filed in the Wheat Ridge Church office. These records go back to 1875.

Prospect Valley Church (proposed)

Appearing only in one place, namely the records of the Wheat Ridge Church, we find mention of the Prospect Valley project.¹ It seems that on November 5, 1892, Fred G. Bunger, Thomas Boat, and a few other individuals met in an old house said to be owned by a Mr. S. A. Lyon, where they organized the Sunday School mentioned in the previous section. The location was approximately one-half mile west of Wadsworth Avenue on Thirty-eighth Avenue. Two weeks later, the middle of November, 1892, they invited the Rev. J. W. Linn, then of the Wheat Ridge Church, to preach to them in the afternoon, after the Sunday School session.

In February 1893, special services were held, with 15 more conversions. What the membership at this time was, is not available. Beginning in April of the same year, because a new school had been erected on Prospect Avenue (Thirty-eighth), the church was held in that building.

The record continues² that in January 1895, at the close of one of the services there was organized the Prospect Valley Methodist Episcopal Church with 30 members. What the names of some of the early leaders were, some of the details following this meeting, or some of their ministerial leadership, are all unavailable. The name does not appear in any Conference Journal, as evidently the group had but a short life. It may well be that some of the leaders at Prospect Valley were among the originators of the church in Fruitdale, now called Jefferson Avenue Methodist Church. They would have been close enough to have participated in this project easily.

We may wish that history told us more facts and details of some of these projects, but unfortunately we must be satisfied with the scanty information we have.

New Organizations During the Decade

City Missions Circuit

Much of the progress, and many of the new churches which were formed in the decade from 1890 to 1900 was due to the missionary attitude of the members of the Colorado Annual Conference, and especially the ministers in Denver proper.

These ministers realized more and more how inadequate their churches were to cope with the rising population of their city. The population in 1890 was 106,713, with only ten (10) Methodist Episcopal Churches. In addition to these churches of the Colorado Conference, there was one Methodist church, South; two of the German speaking people; one of the Swedish people; and one in each of the suburbs of Wheat Ridge and Arvada. The church was not meeting the needs of the people, and something had to be done about it.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

During the Conference of 1890 a group of the preachers of the Denver District had a meeting and later made a request to Bishop Ninde that some provision be made for furthering their work in Denver. Following this request Bishop Ninde appointed O. L. Fisher as “City Missionary” whose duties would include the surveying of different areas of the city and the establishing of new churches where they were needed. Fisher of course was to be supported largely by the stronger churches of the city.

Previous to this we may remember the work of John Collins who had been a missionary on the “Denver Circuit” and before 1890 was instrumental in organizing the churches of Valverde (Wright Memorial), and Fleming Grove (Cameron). Soon after 1890 he was the instigator of such churches as Myrtle Hill (Washington Park), Warren Avenue (John Collins Church), and Littleton. The first two churches were located in the south part of Denver, and of course Littleton is a suburb six or eight miles south of the city.

As food as the work of John Collins was for the city as a whole, O. L. Fisher was instrumental in forming several other churches during the one year he was the “City Missionary”. By way of summary, we shall see that in 1890 there were formed the following churches: Grant Avenue, Greenwood (in Globeville), Church of the Strangers (also known as Eighth Street Mission and People’s Mission), and perhaps Briggs Mission (Epworth).

During the first half of 1891, the following churches were organized: Ellsworth (also called South Eleventh Avenue-Kalamath Street), later called Wesley Chapel, and still later called John A. Clough Memorial), Milleson Mission, Highlands, and perhaps he had a slight connection with the founding of Berkeley Church. Such was the great work of O. L. Fisher during one year’s work as “City Missionary”.

In 1891 when O. L. Fisher decided to leave Denver to become President of Fort Worth University, he went with the best of good wishes for his future work. Surely he had contributed immensely to Methodism in Denver, and it is to him that we owe the beginnings of several of our churches which are considered strong and important today.

In 1891 the minister appointed to continue this work was John R. Wood, who remained a year. During his year we note that other churches were formed, as Lake Park (called Ruby Avenue, and later Merritt Memorial), Edgewater, and perhaps Briggs Mission (Epworth). There is a discrepancy of dates on the latter of these churches, as we shall see a bit later. The deaconess work was begun in Denver in 1891, and was to have its importance as the girls gave their services to the churches which needed them, many of the churches needing this help of course were the mission churches. In this year the Littleton church was formed, but this was more under the supervision of John Collins than the “City Missions” supervisor.

At the Conference of 1892 the Denver District was formed from parts of two other districts, and included but little outside the city proper. The Presiding Elder was then to have direct oversight of the City Mission projects, and it was his responsibility to have their pulpits supplied.

In 1892 Dr. B. T. Vincent became the Presiding Elder and remained six years. With the opening of the Iliff School at this time, he used many students for supplying the various charges in Denver. It was good to do this, both from the standpoint of experience for the students, and for the chance to have pastoral leadership in the churches.

Of this period, Beardsley comments:

The work of City Missions has been greatly blessed; its first superintendent, O. L. Fisher, goes from us carrying the respect and confidence of all ... Epworth Leagues are now organized in most of the charges, and the young people are developing grandly. A Deaconess Home has been established in Denver, and a Deaconess visitor is employed in Colorado Springs. A Christ-like work is being done, worthy and commendable.¹

Surely, this was a new era for Methodism in Denver, and we owe much of the future successes to the "City Mission" idea. Had the church not developed in the decade preceding the turn of the century, it is probable that it would have been a much weaker church in Denver today.

However, let us now take each of these mission churches and trace their individual development to the time when many of them became regular charges, and were in turn contributing to the Mission project in behalf of others.

Grant Avenue Church (originally South Sherman Avenue)

In 1890 there was one church in South Denver, Flemings' Grove (Cameron), organized in 1888 by John Collins. In addition he was working in other South Denver areas. However, there was still need for a church nearer to the center of Denver than any in which John Collins was working. The need of this church was first brought to the "City Missionary" thus:

Brother Fisher writes, "Three laymen came to my office in the city, and said, 'there ought to be a mission near Broadway and South Cherry Creek.' I called a meeting at my house in the early part of November, 1890. Five came. A few days later I held another meeting, with seven. Then I leased a lot on Sherman Avenue, and commenced to erect a tabernacle. Nine people came with lanterns and we worked for eleven nights, when it was done. On the first Sabbath of December 1890, the tabernacle was opened, a church and Sunday School organized. In six months we had almost one hundred members, and over one hundred in the Sunday School. Just six months from its organization, June 9, 1891, at the morning service the congregation subscribed over \$1,400 for the support of a pastor the coming year".²

Evidently this meeting took place in the home of O. L. Fisher, 38 W. Irvington Place in South Denver.³ The potential must have been rather substantial, because from the very beginning, Grant Avenue Church progressed rapidly. The estimate given above, that the membership numbered almost a hundred persons after six months is no doubt rather accurate.

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 544.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380-1.

³ The Journal of the Fair at Grant Avenue, November 18-20, 1931.

The first mention of this church in the Colorado Conference Journals is at the end of the year 1891-1892 when the membership was recorded at 130 with 175 enrolled in the Sunday School.

The meeting with O. L. Fisher took place on November 7, 1890. Just one month later, to the day, the first service was held for the new church organization. The place was a tabernacle tent on South Sherman Avenue at Maple Street, not far from the present Grant Avenue Church at South Grant and East Cedar. Sherman Avenue was only one block to the west, and Maple a half block north of the present church. For the grand opening service the people chose for their speaker the leader of Methodism in Denver, Bishop Henry White Warren.¹ There is no record of the attendance, or any other details of this particular opening meeting.

The next month, January 1891, O. L. Fisher and others organized the Ladies' Aid Society and the Sunday School. Probably they organized an Epworth League early also. On July 1891, the first Quarterly Conference was held.² Official organization seems to have come on October 5, 1891, with the appointing of a Board of Trustees, including Bernard Olds, John H. Pieper, Daniel C. Savage, Edwin W. Olds, Levi L. Gustine, James H. Harned, and E. Pumphrey.³

Because of the increase of attendance, there was need for a new location for the church. They decided late in 1891, to move one block to the east to Grant Avenue, and of course they renamed their church accordingly. The lots which are still occupied by the church were originally bought for \$4,300 and their first chapel was erected at a cost of \$2500. This building was dedicated by the Bishop on February 14, 1892, when the membership was approximately 150.⁴ The original plan was that this would be the parsonage, but it was used for the church until 1899, and was located just south of the corner, facing Grant Avenue, approximately where the present (1956) organ chamber is located. This left the corner vacant for further building plans. The minister at the time of this building was Rev. R. A. Chase.

During the business slump of 1893 when Denver people suffered so much economic distress, there seems to be little reflection of this in the membership records of Grant Avenue Church. The salary payments to the minister did not waver either. To be sure, a part of the explanation is in the type of church which Grant Avenue was, mainly middle class, not laboring people. It was at the opposite side of the city from all the smelting industries. The people who were out of work and leaving were not in Grant Avenue Church, hence their businesses would have been affected only indirectly. B. T. Vincent, the Presiding Elder reflects this even pace: "Grant Avenue, Pastor Casey, has kept everything going at a lively pace in spite of the illness of the pastor."⁵

When R. A. Chase left Grant Avenue Church in 1893 the membership records stood at 176 with 225 in Sunday School. His successor was M. A. Casey who remained only one year, but recorded an increase in membership to 213, or a total increase of 37 members. The Sunday School showed an increase of 31 pupils.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, December 9, 1899.

⁴ Journal of the Fair at Grant Avenue, 1931.

⁵ Vincent Papers, 1893-1894.

M. A. Casey was followed by J. T. Pender who remained two years, 1894-1896, and recorded a further membership increase to 232, increasing 19; and Sunday School decreasing by 56 to 200. B. T. Vincent reports of this church at the Conference of 1896 that they were flourishing, and that the Epworth and Junior Leagues were doing exceptionally good work.¹ To be sure, this was one of the churches which would have had a large percentage of children and youth, as this was the church on the growing edge of the city in the 1890's.

In 1896 W. F. Conner became the minister to remain only one year. He showed a net drop of 17 members but an increase of 41 pupils for Sunday School. He was followed by N. H. Lee, who remained four years, to the Conference of 1901. Under Nathan H. Lee the membership climbed from 215 to 259, an increase of 44; while the Sunday School records a net loss of 3, to 238.

It was during the ministry of Nathan H. Lee that the people received a vision to build larger, on the corner where they had bought and built only a few years previously. The new building was contracted at a cost of \$5000, and was dedicated by Bishop Warren, December 10, 1899.

Some further details as to the location of this building are given in a newspaper article.² The contract was let recently for the chapel, they stated, to be built at the corner of South Grant and Cedar. The chapel was to be located on the back of the lots, that is the east side, leaving the corner at the job in the street vacant for a larger building later on. This later addition came in 1908, and included all of the present sanctuary. The building which is now the educational wing, on the east, later took the place of the original chapel constructed in 1899.

However, back to the chapel of 1899. The article continues³ that the chapel was to be 38 feet by 54 feet, and was to seat 240 with a gallery for fifty additional. The Gothic style of architecture with the red pressed brick was used.

At the Conference of 1900 the membership of Grant Avenue Church stood at 259, which was certainly a remarkable record for only nine years' activity. The wisdom of O. L. Fisher in helping these people get started was certainly to be commended. Had he helped no other churches get organized that first year, his work would have been repaid many times by the good that is done through Grant Avenue Church.

Greenwood Church (in Globeville)

We have noted previously the organizing of the smelters in Swansea and Argo. Quickly there grew up small towns around each of these industries, although mismanagement caused the former to disband.

¹ Vincent Papers, 1895.

² The Denver Times, August 3, 1899.

³ The Denver Times, August 3, 1899.

In 1883 the Omaha and Grant Smelter was organized at the northeast Denver location of Brighton Boulevard and Fortieth Avenue; and in 1895-1896 the Globe Smelting Company was organized. It is the town which grew around the latter which took the name Globeville. A Methodist Church was organized in this small town in 1890, almost as soon as the industry began its functioning.

Globeville was directly east of the town of Argo in North Central Denver. Originally Globeville seems to have been bounded by our present streets of Broadway east to the River between 46th and 52nd. Next to this small town was another settlement called "Garden Place", bounded by our present streets of Broadway, Downing, 44th and 46th. Almost immediately however, the town of Globeville was expanded to include that formerly called Garden Place.

Some time following the Annual Conference in the fall of 1890 a Methodist Church was organized in the town of Garden Place. Beardsley tells us that originally there were eleven members of the church, as the Union Sunday School was changed to a Methodist Sunday School.¹ The next March (1891) we see the further mention that the Society was progressing, and that they were planning a building to replace their tent:

At Garden Place, a society of Epworth League formed. Special meetings held, more than 40 persons "helped". Brother Willis doing meritorious work there. The congregation and Sunday School are much enlarged, making the tent uncomfortably full. Soon the new church will be going up, and when we can occupy it a new era of yet greater prosperity will begin. Between 20-30 are received on probation there.²

The address of this church was the corner of Fourth and Central Streets in Globeville. The student minister at the time, as is noted above, was D. Burr Willis.

During the leadership of their first minister, the small group began erecting a building in the spring of 1891.³ This was completed by the next minister, H. D. Seckner who came at the Conference of 1891, and remained one year.

Further statistics are unavailable, as to the cost of the building or any membership records. The charge "Garden Place" appears in the Conference Minutes of 1891, and was on the circuit with Berkeley Church, also begun 1891. In 1892 the name "Greenwood" is given to the Globeville Church as Garden Place had become a part of the town of Globeville. Incidentally, another section of Globeville had originally been called "Greenwood".

In this year (1892) the minister was C. W. Huett, and the charge was on a circuit with Argo. Statistics do not give the relative strengths of the two churches, but it is assumed that because of its earlier organization, the Argo Church was much stronger. In 1893 the minister

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

² The Church Extension Journal, Vol 1, No. 3, March 1891. This is the only known extant copy of this particular Journal and was among the papers in the cornerstone of the old St. James Church, demolished in 1954. Now on file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

recorded a total of 52 members for the two churches. At the same time B. T. Vincent, the Presiding Elder reported:

Greenwood, with Argo, is a plain neat structure in a lovely grove in Globeville, indispensable to the good of the people in that smelting suburb.¹

Rev. C. W. Huett remained at Greenwood-Argo for three years, and was succeeded in 1895 by C. C. P. Hiller. No further statistics are available, except those of the combined churches, recorded in 1899 as a total of 82. The two following years, 1899-1901, the minister was H. J. Grace, who reported the total membership in 1901 at 87.

The statistics of Greenwood Church are not available, but from other sources we note that the church had a difficult time, and was never really prosperous. Its future was not very bright, and in the years between 1900 and 1912, foreign people who were non-Protestant moved into Globeville, and the Methodists finally gave up their church in 1911.

Briggs Mission (Epworth Church)

The beginnings of the little Briggs Mission are rather interesting to relate, and are filled with a courage rather similar to the daring of some of the early Christians. The area into which Miss Melissa Briggs, a Deaconess, went was known as the “Hog Ranch” partly because it was in the northeast section of Denver near the stock yards, and partly because the area represented one of the lowest standards of living in Denver. This area was the section between Larimer Street and Globeville, several blocks northeast of the center of the city. The present (1956) stock yards are built on a portion of this territory:

Back in the year 1890, the district of Denver near the old smelter (the stock still stands) [the Omaha-Grant stack demolished 1949] and the stock-yards was called “The Hog Ranch”. Here murders occurred nearly every night. In the residence section adjacent, parents noted that practically the only place of recreation open to young men was the saloon.²

The sincerity and the dedication of Miss Briggs seemed to catch the imagination of some of the people, for out of her efforts came “fruit from bramble bushes.” When Miss Briggs began her work

there was consternation in that savage district known as Denver’s “old town” or the “Hog Ranch”. Residents gasped at the daring of Miss Melissa Briggs as she supervised the rigging of a gospel tent at 31st and Walnut Streets. But Melissa Briggs, a bird-like young Methodist deaconess, seemed oblivious to the furor she was creating. She saw that her tent was securely fastened, set up crude wooden benches, and went about establishing

¹ Vincent Papers, 1893.

² The Goodwill, March 1934. This was a paper published by the Goodwill Industries, and filed in the office of the Epworth Community Church.

Denver's first community center. First known as Briggs' Mission, the center later was called Epworth Mission.¹

One further reference should be made to show some of the handicaps under which Miss Briggs worked during the early months of this mission. The Rocky Mountain News stated² that when she began her work, around her tent were many liquor establishments. Two hundred were reported within a mile. The extreme is caught in colorful newspaper style, whether or not historically correct:

On Sunday between services, members of the choir and orchestra had but to step from the tent to find saloons offering refreshment, which they sometimes accepted, much to the disappointment of Miss Briggs.³

Two interesting characteristics of Miss Briggs and her helpers, were their black garb of the Deaconess organization, and the fact that they traveled around the neighborhood on bicycles. Surely these individuals caught the attention of all in the neighborhood.

As to the date of the organization of this mission there is a slight discrepancy. Evidence all points however, to Miss Melissa Briggs, a Deaconess, who had the courage to lead in the project. In fact, in Epworth Church today there is a window in her honor:

In honor of Melissa Briggs, Deaconess
Founded as Briggs Mission – 1890
Now Epworth Church
By members of the W. H. M. S.

The first discrepancy which we may mention is that the Deaconess work in Denver was not begun until June 12, 1891,⁴ and it is probable that any Deaconess work such as this would have to be centered in an organization. That Miss Briggs came to Denver and worked in this particular section alone, seems improbable.

There is however, an even stronger reason for feeling that the work was begun in 1891 rather than 1890. The Rocky Mountain News states⁵ that the work was begun under the Rev. Mr. John R. Wood when he was Superintendent of the City Missions. If this is true, it would have to have been after the Conference of 1891 because Wood was first appointed to that particular position then. The year preceding, the Superintendent of the City Missions was O. L. Fisher who began the work in 1890 and remained only one year. That the work at Briggs Mission was begun under J. R. Wood is corroborated by Beardsley.⁶

Whether or not the work was actually begun as early as 1890 is not certain, and perhaps the final evidence will not be found. It does seem probable however, that the official

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, April 22, 1934.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The Denver Times, June 13, 1891.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, April 8, 1929.

⁶ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 382.

organization came under the superintendency of J. R. Wood, and would then have been during the Conference year 1891-1892.

The original meeting place seems to have been a tent, but the exact location seems to be in question. It is given as 31st and Walnut,¹ and it is given also as 29th and Market.² The tent and its furnishings, according to Beardsley³ had come from the St. James Methodist Church in West Denver.

Several other early locations are given for the small mission, and it is probable that it moved frequently in order to have an adequate meeting place, and also to have the lowest rent possible. Other locations given are suggested without specific dates or facilities:

The cold of January and February soon drove this little group from the tent. They moved to a vacant store building between 30th and 31st on Larimer. It is now [1934] occupied by a laundry. Later to an old blacksmith shop at 27th and Larimer. Thence to other vacant store buildings. It was a rough, crude beginning. But the courage of this little woman and her helpers never wavered.⁴

The group finally settled in a small building at 3208 Market Street in 1896.⁵ Beardsley, writing in 1896, corroborates this by saying it “is located on Market near 32nd Street.”⁶ Little else is known of the early buildings or locations of the group until 1905, but we shall analyze these developments later.

The ministerial leadership was all from the Iliff School of Theology and the University of Denver⁷ Although the exact records are unobtainable on many students, some of the names are listed thus:

The pastors have been: Rev. Brother Burhans, followed by Rev. E. N. Edgerton in 1893; Rev. W. F. Falkenberg and Rev. Bro. Martin, 1895-1896; Rev. E. H. Edgerton again, who with the exception of the summer of 1897, when Rev. E. N. Hoff served, continued till the coming of Rev. P. E. Bartlett. The latter ended his labors in the spring of 1899. The work was supplied during the summer. Rev. H. L. Harvey is the present pastor [1900]. He preaches every Sunday evening.⁸

No statistics are available in the Conference Journals for this particular church until 1905, but one suggestion of an “overflow” crowd does appear. The percentage of actual members among the attendants is not given:

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, April 8, 1929.

² A paper written by R. R. Adams on “City Missions”, approximately 1900. It is on file in the Archives of the Methodist Historical Society.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 382.

⁴ The Goodwill, March 1934.

⁵ Adams, paper on “City Missions”.

⁶ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 382.

⁷ The Goodwill, March 1934.

⁸ Adams, paper on “City Missions.”-

They [the store buildings] could not conveniently accommodate more than 100 people. Many times as high as 160 were crowded into these rooms. The work was greatly thwarted because of lack of accommodations.¹

The outlook for this particular mission was not too bright even in 1900, as Trinity Epworth League felt it necessary to aid “substantially” the program in the area.² It is reported also that the neighborhood in 1900 was strongly Roman Catholic, which would be an added difficulty for the struggling Protestant group.

In 1905 the progress began, and in 1906 a building was erected. The mission continued, and still continues, even though its beginnings were anything but hopeful. We shall see the changes that came to this small mission group a bit later in this work.

Eighth Street Mission³

One of the first challenges which O. L. Fisher undertook as he became the “City Missionary” in 1890 was the moving of a Sunday School from the Chamber of Commerce Building into the old Lawrence Street Church. It is to be remembered that this church had stood idle since the congregation moved into their new Trinity Methodist Church in 1888. This particular Sunday School had begun previous to 1890 especially to minister to the needs of the people in lower Denver where there were few churches remaining.⁴ The rent was to be \$70 per month, paid presumably to the Denver Church Extension Society. This amount did not seem large however, as the Sunday School of 112 was willing make the move.⁵ The name of this group became “The Church of the Strangers”, appropriate for a downtown church such as this.

Many repairs were deemed necessary before the new group took over, including the adding of electricity to the building. The “downtown” church of Methodism was opened in November of 1890, with ex-Governor Evans and Peter Winne both of Trinity Church, sharing in the opening services.⁶

The work seems to have progressed well, for the Church Extension Journal reports:

The Church of the Strangers is as busy as ever, and now hopes to get a class of little girls, whose busy mothers have little time to instruct them in sewing, and teach them.⁷

In 1891, under the direction of J. R. Wood, the Church of the Strangers moved into a building on Eleventh Street between Lawrence and Larimer. The name was consequently changed to “Eleventh Street Mission”, but no doubt continued a similar type of work.⁸

¹ The Goodwill, September 1934.

² Adams, paper on “City Missions.”

³ also called Church of the Strangers, Eleventh Street Mission, and Larimer Street Mission. After 1900 the People’s Mission.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

⁵ The Denver Republican, November 3, 1890.

⁶ The Denver Times, November 1, 1890.

⁷ The Church Extension Journal, 1891, from St. James Cornerstone.

⁸ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 382.

At the Conference of 1892, B. T. Vincent was put in charge of the City Missions projects, and J. R. Wood was given the responsibility of the Eleventh Street Mission alone. The situation was rather unstable, and the leadership shifted rapidly:

Coupled with my appointment to the District, Bishop Hurst made me Superintendent of City Missions in Denver, putting J. R. Wood in charge of the Eleventh Street Mission as a regular work. As he felt called early to resign this work and A. C. Peck gave up the Deanship of the University, I appointed him, after consultation with those acquainted with the situation, to the general care of the missions, and Eleventh Street in particular. But the Haymarket mission scheme developed in his heart and he felt called upon to give his whole time to that. I then resumed the direct personal supervision of the missions.¹

As if this instability were not enough, it seemed advisable from the standpoint of B. T. Vincent, that another move be made:

Soon after Conference the Eleventh Street work was found to be both as to location and general plan a questionable venture, especially as a burden of nearly a thousand dollars indebtedness rested upon it; and those in charge of the Sunday School removed that department to a building on Larimer Street which new location gave new title to it as one of the Mission schools.²

Hence, in 1893, the Mission became known as the Larimer Street Mission, though the exact location on Larimer is not certain. No doubt it was near Eleventh Street, in the section just west of Cherry Creek.

Enthusiasm seemed to rise and the people began to think of ways to raise money and to launch a building project. They had various lecture courses which brought in some funds. They had raised \$660.11 at the Conference of 1895 when Vincent gave his report.³

Previous to the Conference of 1896 the people had decided to buy a building on the corner of Eighth and Market, to remodel for their chapel. Hence, their name changed to "Eighth Street Mission". The building was bought, paid for, and dedicated at a total cost of \$1700.⁴ Vincent continues:

[this was] chiefly secured by lectures and personal solicitations by the active young men connected with this most useful mission.⁵

By the next year, 1897, Vincent reports "Eighth Avenue [Street] secured \$150 for a needed addition to its chapel".

¹ Vincent Papers, 1893.

² Vincent Papers, 1893.

³ Ibid., 1895.

⁴ Ibid., 1896.

⁵ Ibid., 1896.

Still another aspect of the work of this mission is noted in connection with the Ladies' Aid Society:

The Ladies' Aid Society of the Eighth Street Chapel was organized January 14, 1899. The charter members were Mrs. Templen [sic – it should be Mrs. F. L. Templin, the minister's wife], Mrs. White, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. J. Smith, Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Baldwin, Mrs. Izor and Misses Minnie Brewer and Izor.

Regular meetings have been held every week since then, including nine all-day sessions. Besides these, five extra meetings have been held.

The membership has increased from 9 to 35

The members of the society represent several different denominations.¹

Evidently the purpose for the formation of this small mission was being served, as it seemed to be growing, and to be ministering to the needs of the people in "lower" Denver which most of the other churches had neglected. That the Methodists saw the challenge, and after moving out, returned to that section, is commendable, and shows vision as well as true Christian insight.

Littleton Church

Littleton is a suburb located approximately twelve miles southwest of the center of Denver, along the railroad tracks. It has figured in Methodist history before, but there was no permanent organization in Littleton until John Collins' work in 1890.

In 1870 John L. Dyer was sent to the "Divide" Circuit where he formed a class at Petersburg, between Littleton and Denver, and in addition held services as far south as Castle Rock, twenty miles south of Littleton. It is also reported that he held services in the vicinity of Littleton in a Mr. Isaac McBroom's home.² In 1871 J. M. Lambert was sent to minister to "Plumb Creek" and Littleton. The next year Littleton and Arvada were on a circuit served by G. S. Allen. In 1873 the circuit was changed again, and North Denver, West Denver (St. James), and Littleton were served by J. P. Dew. There is no record of any specific details about this work, although Beardsley has summarized this scanty information.

There is a record that J. L. Moffatt preached in Littleton in 1878, coming from his church at Morrison, but gave the work up the following year.³ Yet there was no organization in that particular suburb of Littleton.

In 1888 John Collins began to preach in the Littleton area, and there is a record of a class organization by Mrs. Hamlin and Mr. and Mrs. Lewis, under the general direction of John Collins. Still however, there was no definite organization.⁴

¹ The Denver Republican, December 19, 1899.

² Handwritten history of the Littleton Church by Mrs. Bertha Booth, 175 N. Harrison. She has in turn taken much of her information from the Littleton Independent.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

The actual date of organization is not clear, though the year is almost certainly the late fall of 1890. The Littleton Independent has stated that the Methodists rented the Odd Fellows Hall and were to have services conducted by a Rev. Mr. E. E. Allison on November 2, 1890. Their purpose was to be the organization of a church and to plan construction of a building.¹ Whether this meeting was cancelled, we do not know, but Beardsley gives the organization date as December 7, 1890.² However, we can be sure that “the first congregation of the church was organized in a tent by the Rev. John Collins in 1890.”³ The place of organization may have been at O’Brien’s Hall, Harrison Avenue and Main Street.⁴

Following Beardsley⁵ Mrs. Booth has accepted December 7, 1890, as the organization date, and lists the nine members as: Mr. and Mrs. Eagleton, Mr. and Mrs. Massey, G. B. Markle, Mrs. V. Mackey, Mrs. Bush, Mrs. Julia Cozens and Mrs. A. J. Nester. From this group the Trustees were elected December 13 of the year 1890. The Trustees consisted of G. B. Markle, W. Massey, O. L. Nestor, Mrs. V. Mackey and Mrs. Julia Cozens.⁶

Of the enthusiasm of the Methodists we note the Littleton press reflecting the beginning of the tent-tabernacle:

The Methodists with characteristic push and energy have already commenced on their tabernacle. It is to be 24 feet by 36 feet, located on Main, between Curtis [sic should be Curtice] and Nevada Street.⁷

The next month, on February 21, the tabernacle was opened by Bishop Warren with appropriate ceremonies. Beardsley gives the date as February 10, 1891.⁸ The following October however, a snow storm crushed a part of the tabernacle, and they were forced to worship in a lodge hall, and later in the patched-up tent until they could build their church in 1900.

Reflecting the work of John Collins, the Presiding Elder wrote in 1893: “John Collins is working up a church in a tent in Littleton.”⁹

John Collins evidently had had some student help on some of his church responsibilities, for in 1893 it is seen that F. L. L. Hiller became the permanent assistant at the Littleton Church, and the next year was officially appointed as minister there, in which year the first Conference Journal record of Littleton appears. At the end of the Conference year 1894-1895, the membership at Littleton was recorded at 28, with 60 registered in the Sunday School. Both these reflect a sizable group with which to work, especially in a new church situation.

¹ The Littleton Independent, October 24, 1890.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 379.

³ The Denver Post, December 8, 1950, p. 22. This statement was published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Littleton Church.

⁴ The Littleton Independent, February 12, 1954.

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 379.

⁶ History of Littleton Church written by Mrs. Booth.

⁷ The Littleton Independent, January 30, 1891.

⁸ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 379.

⁹ Vincent Papers, 1893.

Sometime in 1894 the church had a social meeting to help raise money for buying lots for their proposed permanent church.¹ Evidently they were rather successful in their fund raising, for at the next Conference, in 1895, Vincent reported:

Littleton, Pastor Hiller, student. Work in tent. Revival, conversions, 37; Accessions, 29. All departments vigorously prospered, lots nearly paid for.²

F. L. L. Hiller remained at the church for two years as a regular appointee, and was succeeded in 1896 by O. L. Orton who remained only one year. The next minister, no doubt another student, was James Whittaker who remained a year and a half. Of his work Vincent reflects:

Littleton, Pastor Whittaker, a student, a large revival, a mighty desire to get out of the tabernacle into a church, and success is in all departments.³

To be sure, we can imagine how anxious the people were becoming to get into their church of their own. The tent had had its sides boarded up, but was rather temporary even so.

Whittaker was succeeded mid-year 1898-1899 by Virgil Thompson who remained until the Conference of 1900. Thus at the turn of the century the report showed 62 members with 75 registered in the Sunday School.

During this last pastorate plans were made to build on the lots they had bought, and the plans called for a church 30 feet by 50 feet, seating 150 persons. This was completed January 20, 1900.⁴ (see Fig. 32). The location of the church was 155 North Nevada in Littleton, the same lot on which the church still stands (1956). In fact, it is virtually the same building, though in 1927 the structure was elevated and a basement was dug. Other improvements have been added also, but there has not been any completely new building since 1900. The total cost of the original structure was listed at \$1300.⁵

To have been one of the earliest preaching places of Methodism, it is surprising that they did not organize a church much sooner. However, Littleton grew rapidly following 1890, and continues to be one of the main growing edges of Denver. The work of John Collins in this particular instance has borne much good fruit as his work has in many other situations.

Fort Logan Plans

One other work of John Collins is mentioned, that being at Fort Logan. Although this has not been a continuous church that is still in existence, it is another evidence of the wise influence and great work of this missionary in Denver. Beardsley gives the date of July 10, 1892, as one

¹ History of Littleton Church by Mrs. Booth.

² Vincent Papers, 1895.

³ Ibid., 1898.

⁴ History of Littleton Church by Mrs. Booth.

⁵ Ibid.

on which John Collins first held services at Fort Logan.¹ No other mention of other services here, or any continuing organization have been found.

Wesley Chapel (originally Ellsworth Mission, or South Eleventh Street Mission)

In a relatively new section of Denver, near West Ellsworth and South Kalamath, three blocks north of the present Alameda Avenue viaduct, was begun a new mission in 1891. This was probably the last mission founded by Fisher while he was the City Missionary, 1890-1891.² The newly established mission is noted in the News before the Conference of that year, when the minister was George H. Smith.³

The section of town was not the best, for on the west was the river, to the south was through traffic (now Alameda Avenue) and beyond that few people lived; to the north and east the railroad tracks cut the section off from Denver proper. These caused a semi-isolation for the new church and the people of the area. Although it seemed to be strategic at the time, the church had a short future, and finally merged with Wright Memorial which in turn merged with Beckwourth (Fifth Avenue) to become in 1926 the Wesley Institutional Church.

Because this was one of the City Missions until 1901 no statistics are available in the Conference Journals, and a complete list of ministers has not yet been found. However, from other sources we can sketch in some of their history.

It seems that in the early days of the mission they had constructed two tent-tabernacles, and both times these had been destroyed by wind storms. Then the group went to a “hall” where they remained until they constructed their brick building.⁴

By 1896, their building was completed, as it still stands just north of Ellsworth on Kalamath. (see Fig. 34). However, it is now owned (1956) by the Seventh Day Baptists, and the cornerstone has been defaced, that no information is available there. Vincent gives us some details of the building:

Ellsworth, Pastor Edwards, a building of brick has been enclosed and occupied by the zealous workers of that neighborhood, especially aided both in money and work by the League of Trinity. The cost of this enterprise to this time is \$1300, and \$700 on the lot, with a debt of \$400, for which an apology is needed in that under the mortification of the old City Mission indebtedness the work has been preserved for four years free from any additional burden.⁵

The next year Vincent records that \$150 had been paid on the debt of Wesley Chapel, reducing the debt then to \$250. The name had been changed from Ellsworth Mission to Wesley

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

² Ibid., p. 381.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, June 28, 1891.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

⁵ Vincent Papers, 1896.

Chapel as they moved into their new building during the Conference year of 1896-1897. What the actual inscription had been on the cornerstone would have been interesting to read.

In summarizing the work of the City Missions, Robert R. Adams wrote a paper approximately 1900, giving information on several of the smaller churches.¹ For Wesley Chapel he records:

Twice the tabernacle in which the services were first held was blown down. Now there is a neat, unique little brick church. The Sunday School averages over 100; the Epworth League has 50 members and the juniors 25. Rev. C. F. Seitter is pastor and the work is very prosperous under his judicious guidance. He preaches each Sunday evening. Rev. S. E. Ellis did excellent work here while a student at the Iliff School. This mission might easily become a conference appointment in the near future. It is entirely self-supporting at present. [1900]²

Unfortunately, no further information has been found about the early work of Wesley Chapel. This sketch will help us see it in its true place in Denver Methodism however, as it was later to receive a portion of a gift and become the John A. Clough Memorial Methodist Church. Even then it had but a short future.

Milleson Mission³

The names that are associated with the Milleson Mission are Elisha and his wife Lydia J. Milleson. The family originally came to Denver from Iowa, and acquired some land in what is now West Denver, through the Homestead Act. A part of this land was originally within the bounds of the old Camp Weld which was bounded by Colfax, Eighth Avenue, Vallejo, and the railroad tracks on the east. For a fuller explanation of the several factors leading to the founding of this mission, we should note briefly the founding of Camp Weld, and the coming of Elisha Milleson as a soldier stationed at that camp.

The founding of Camp Weld: --⁴ Among the last official acts of President Buchanan was the approval of the bill creating the Territory of Colorado, February 28, 1861. Abraham Lincoln, on March 22, 1861, appointed Col. William Gilpin as the first Territorial Governor of Colorado. When Gilpin arrived in Denver on May 29, the Civil War sentiment was rising, and a large percentage of the people were in sympathy with the South. This is explained in part probably by the fact that some early settlers had come with the Green Russell party and were originally citizens of Georgia.

¹ Adams, paper on "City Missions".

² Ibid.

³ Although the name "milleson" is spelled "Millison" in several places, Mr. Procter of Englewood, the son-in-law of Elisha Milleson has stated that the correct spelling was "definitely" Milleson. On the strength of his statement, I follow this particular spelling.

⁴ Unless otherwise stated, the following data on Camp Weld are summarized from a rather detailed article: Albert B. Sanford, "Camp Weld, Colorado", The Colorado Magazine, March 3, 1934. Mr. Sanford was formerly assistant curator of the State Historical Society Museum.

Gilpin organized the First Regiment of Colorado Volunteers and appointed recruiting officers in several parts of the territory. Sentiment became more heated, and miners left their claims to volunteer in the Union cause. At the time however, recruits were quartered in Denver in spare buildings scattered over the town, and in some tents for a short time.

The need for a site for an army post was seen, and in the summer of 1861, Gilpin selected an ideal spot for the camp. He named it "Camp Weld" in honor of Louis Ledyard Weld, Secretary of the Colorado Territory.¹

The camp was located between what is now West Eighth Avenue and Colfax Avenue in West Denver. The marker denoting the southwest corner of this camp now stands at the west end of the Eighth Avenue viaduct, on the north side of the street. At the time, this was well outside Denver city limits, and only scattered houses dotted the plains along what is now West Eighth Avenue, few coming out as far as the Army Camp.

One of the soldiers at Camp Weld was Elisha Milleson, born in Ohio in 1827.² In 1863, two years after Camp Weld was organized, Elisha Milleson and his family came to Colorado where Elisha promptly enlisted in the First Colorado Volunteer Regiment which was stationed at this camp.

After serving its purpose during the Civil War, the camp was evidently abandoned in the spring of 1865. Elisha Milleson obtained information that the land had never officially been set aside as a military reserve, and he petitioned for the right to homestead a portion of the land. Having won his claim, he established his home in that section of Denver, and later on was instrumental in organizing a Methodist mission near the present intersection of Platte River Drive and West Tenth Avenue.³

The exact address of the home which the Millesons established was at the corner of West Eighth Avenue and Vallejo Street in the section which was later commonly called "Frog's Hollow". What happened to the Milleson family between 1865 and 1890 we know little, except that they were probably active for part of that time in the St. James Methodist Church. Until the formation of Jerome Park in 1888-1889, there were virtually no people living near the Millesons, and they had no need of a church nearby. The closest one seems to have been St. James Church on West Colfax.

Founding the Mission: -- It is probable that Elisha Milleson knew B. T. Vincent and Bishop Warren very well, as in 1891 Milleson was the President of the Board of Trustees of the St. James Church.⁴ Beardsley tells us⁵ that in January of 1891 O. L. Fisher began a mission at Milleson's. This was near the section known later as Jerome Park, immediately west of the Platte River between Colfax and Eighth Avenue. The mission had its beginning in a tent over

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, September 18, 1861.

² For the biographical information on Elisha Milleson I am indebted especially to Mrs. Kathleen Bruyn, 663 Kalamath, and to her work through the West Denver Historical Society.

³ see also the Rocky Mountain News, October 24, 1861, concerning Camp Weld.

⁴ St. James Church directory, 1891. Found in the cornerstone in 1954, and filed with the Colorado Methodist Historical Society

⁵ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

nearer the river than the Milleson home. Mrs. Lydia Milleson was probably as much a founder of the Mission as was her husband.¹

From the tent they soon moved into a flimsy frame building which soon burned down. The next semi-permanent location of the mission was in an old store building on the corner of Eleventh Avenue and First Street (Umatilla).² The building was a one-story frame structure, approximately 28 feet by 60 feet, and was at one time a pickle company.³

Among the early leaders of the mission are listed Rev. O. L. Orton, Rev. A. R. Gullette, and Rev. L. D. Beckwith.⁴ Also, it is noted that at times Elisha Milleson himself took the place of the minister to conduct their services.⁵ O. S. Baker was the minister at the turn of the century.

The report is that though the people of the area were very poor, they still had a good active Sunday School and Epworth League.⁶ The average attendance was estimated at between 25 and 30.⁷

Mrs. Bruyn, of the West Denver Historical Society,⁸ erroneously stated that the Mission went out of existence approximately 1893. However, Beardsley stated⁹ that it was reorganized in 1896. By checking the Conference records, we find a mention of an appointment to Milleson's Mission, including membership and financial statistics each year between 1905 and 1915. In the latter year the Mission was on a circuit with St. James Church. Before 1920 the name of Milleson's Mission disappears from the records.

The suggestion is that because of the panic of 1893 the mission was almost disbanded because so many people left, and because the economic situation was so desperate. However, the activity was resumed in somewhat the same manner in 1896, and existed for several years.¹⁰

The name of Milleson's Mission has appeared in many places, but the details are rather illusive. The work of this pioneer family in the west part of Denver was no doubt significant in his day, but because of the shift of population, there is little left in that part of the city, now further devastated by the new valley highway which goes through the middle of the area in which Milleson's mission families formerly lived.

Railroad Mission

¹ Adams, paper on "City Missions".

² Ibid.

³ Recollections of Mr. James Procter, son-in-law of Elisha Milleson.

⁴ Adams, paper on "City Missions".

⁵ Recollections of Mr. James Procter.

⁶ Adams, paper on "City Missions".

⁷ Recollections of Mr. James Procter.

⁸ this writer exchanged various notes on early history with Mrs. Bruyn.

⁹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381-2.

¹⁰ Recollections of Mr. Procter.

Mr. Procter recalled¹ another Methodist Mission, for which no other records seem to be available. This was called the “Railroad Mission” located near Nineteenth and Wewatta Streets. It was founded approximately the same time as the Milleson Mission of Jerome Park, approximately 1890-1891, by the Rev. Mr. Uzzell, with Robert S. Rowe as Sunday School Superintendent. Mr. Procter was unable to remember any other details of this mission, and no further reference to it seems to have appeared in the press during this period.

Ruby Avenue (later Lake Park and Merritt Memorial

John R. Wood, as Superintendent of the City Missions, was responsible for the organizing of a mission in 1891 which was later to grow into a significant neighborhood church. At approximately the turn of the century the name was changed to the Merritt Memorial Church, following a gift to the building fund by John H. Merritt, one of the truly great pioneers in Denver Methodism.

Although the records are scarce, bits of information will help us to piece together some of the historical data surrounding the small mission in the town of Highlands. According to their Homecoming Bulletin,² which was in turn taken from a paper on the “City Missions” by Robert R. Adams,³ the mission was under the superintendence of J. R. Wood, but was more directly related to a “Brother Harvey”. This latter person set up a tent and organized a Union Sunday School on the corner of Mead Street and West Twenty-third Avenue, in the town of Highlands.⁴

“About two years later” because of the growth of the work, a small frame building was constructed, although the exact date and location are not given. The Union Sunday School was then changed to a Methodist Sunday School, and in 1894 preaching services were begun. The only reference to this first minister who remained until the Conference of 1895 was “a local preacher.”⁵

The records of Merritt Church give a list of the ministers in the early years, but because of the mission status of the organization, they are not mentioned in the Colorado Conference Journals until 1901, hence we have no way to check their accuracy.

The list includes: “1894-5, a local preacher; 1895-6, J. J. Post; 1896-8, W. E. Miller; 1898-1901, W. C. Terrill”.⁶ In 1901 Merritt Memorial Church became a regular appointment of the Conference, and its official records are available from that time on.

The Woman’s Society was organized in 1897, and the Epworth League approximately the same time.⁷ Regular preaching services were being held at this time also.

¹ It is the same Mr. Procter who related the information about the Milleson Mission, though no other sources even mention the name.

² printed for Sunday September 17, 1939.

³ this paper, written approximately 1900, is on file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁴ Adams, paper on “City Missions.”

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Homecoming Bulletin, September 17, 1939.

⁷ Adams, paper on “City Missions.”

In 1899, so a report goes,¹ a physician approached Dr. R. A. Carnine, the Presiding Elder of the Denver District and also the Superintendent of the City Missions, and emphasized the need of a church in the Lake Park region. Highlands Church was quite a distance away, and no other church was close enough to be a “church home” for the people of the Lake area. Since the Lake Park Mission was already established, it was decided to organize the church by enlarging the mission. Immediately the Building Fund was begun, in order to have an adequate meeting place. One of the contributors was the Rev. John H. Merritt, then pastor of Berkeley Church in Denver. Because of this gift, though the amount is unknown, the church was named after him, and a large photograph of him still hangs on the wall of the church which bears his name.

At the time of the organization of the Merritt Church, the membership stood at 16. From these the building Committee was chosen: Charles A. Treff, Dr. G. M. Edwards, John H. Smythe, and the minister, W. A. Edwards.² Edwards was the minister for the year 1901-1902, which gives us an estimate as to the actual date of the change in name, and the beginning of the building fund.

The ground was broken for their new building on the corner of Lowell and West Twenty-third, on June 27, 1902. The cornerstone was laid by Dr. R. A. Carnine, August 7, 1902, and at Conference time two weeks later the walls of the new church were almost completed.³ The church which they built at that time has served the congregation well, and still stands serving. On reading the cornerstone, it corroborates the date of erection as 1902.

Although the early history is vague, and perhaps sketchy, we may see that this mission began from a need in a local community, and progressed according to shifts in the city's population. From the year 1901 we have better records, and will be able to make a more detailed and accurate survey of the history of this particular church.

Highlands Methodist Church

The town of Highlands was incorporated in 1875 on the “high lands” to the north and west of Denver. The original streets which formed the boundaries were: Gallup Avenue (Zuni); Golden Road (West Colfax); County Road No. 24 (Sheridan); and Prospect Avenue, also called Highlands Boulevard (West 38th Avenue). The suburb of Denver grew gradually until the following Real Estate advertisement appeared in 1890:

[Highlands is] a village that has grown from a few scattering houses to a place of 5,000 inhabitants with street railroads, motor lines, electric lights, schools, churches and all that pertains to a city.⁴

¹ Homecoming Bulletin, September 17, 1939.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Burton Scrapbook, Vol. I, p. 121. This is a clipping collection, on file at the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library.

Early religious work was undoubtedly carried on in this suburb, but our records list nothing until the fall of 1890. The impetus for the founding of a church in Highlands seems to have come from two activities:

[The first] influence leading on toward an organized church in the community was a series of neighborhood prayer meetings. These meetings were held during the winter of 1890 and 1892 alternately at the home of Captain Crews then living at 3268 Perry St., and the late George A. Barrows whose home was at 3921 W. 32nd Avenue. These meetings were well attended and awakened much religious interest and tended largely to crystallize the religious sentiment of the community.¹

Interestingly enough, these two men became early leaders in the new Highlands Methodist Church.

The second influence which played a vital part was a Sunday School which met only a block from the prayer meetings previously mentioned:

A second influence that worked toward a church organization during the summer and fall of 1891 was a Sunday School begun by Miss Marcia Emery, a young lady who was interested in Christian work, especially among children. She brought together a class of little ones from the homes of her sisters, Mrs. C. H. Emery and Mrs. Osgood. The class met in the rear room of a small grocery store which Miss Emery conducted at 3246 Perry St. The attendance increased so rapidly that in a few weeks the room proved to be too small and, to give it unlimited opportunity to grow, the school held its sessions out doors beside the store building during the summer and early fall. Among those who first enrolled were three from the Emery home, two Osgood children and Harry Barrows. Mrs. George A. Barrows early came to the aid of Miss Emery as an assistant teacher in the school²

As the winter of 1891 approached it was obvious that some other meeting place would have to be found, so the leaders prevailed upon Mr. George A. Barrows to cooperate in the use of some of his land at the northwest corner of the intersection at Sixteenth (Osceola) and Blaine (Thirty-second). On this corner lot he immediately erected a building that came to be known as Barrows Barn. Incidentally, though much remodeled, this building still stands on the alley immediately north across the street from the present Highlands Church building. The meeting place was crude, but it worked for a time, and the organization of the church was soon to become a reality.³ Some further details of the temporary location are given:

Old-fashioned stoves furnished heat, with one person being responsible for getting wood, and another for getting coal. Kerosene lamps supplied light, and oil cost about twenty cents a month. A few years later electric lights were installed at a cost of \$11.10 and the

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary, June 13, 1932.

² Ibid.

³ A folder published on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary, June 13, 1932.

first bill for electricity amounted to \$1.30. The Sunday School grew rapidly, and during the first winter in its new home had an attendance of 135.¹

Despite the hardships with which the people had to be content, the Sunday School grew and progressed. It is recorded that during this winter of 1891-1892 that the attendance in the old barn reached as high as 135, as noted above, and that Mr. Osgood was the first Superintendent.²

With this much as background, we note that in January 1891, O. L. Fisher, the City Missionary was called in to organize a church in the town of Highlands, where from this date on, he conducted services.³ Evidently he preached in the barn that was used as the Sunday School.

There is no record of the minister the next year, but as one of the City Missions, it is probable that J. R. Wood continued preaching at Highlands during the year 1891-2 when he held the position of City Missionary succeeding O. L. Fisher. One other minister who had helped previous to the official organization of the church was C. W. Harned, perhaps as a student. He had worked at Edgewater periodically also.⁴

The date of the official organization of the church is taken as July 22, 1892, when C. W. Harned called a meeting for the purpose of organizing. The group voted to organize an Official Board, and laid some plans for financial subscriptions. Present at the first meeting were: G. A. Barrows, F. P. Barnard, D. C. Weaver, A. N. Carron, T. Moore, I. H. Starbridge, J. E. Fabling, and Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Emery. The incorporated name was "First Methodist Church of Highlands."

At the Conference of 1892, C. W. Harned was officially appointed to the new charge at Highlands where he remained one year. At the end of this time he reported 66 members with 175 enrolled in the Sunday School. This congregation paid their minister \$575 for the first year, slightly less than \$50 per month. The total budget that year was \$825, raised by a finance committee of 3 men.⁵

About the new church, the Presiding Elder, B. T. Vincent has given his comments:

Highlands . . . beginning as its Master began, in a stable, but overgrowing its quarters, as he did, by being about the "Father's business", is one of the most promising suburban appointments.⁶

At the Conference of 1893 the appointment to Highlands was J. W. Flesher, who was to remain two years. By the end of his first year he recorded a drop in both membership and Sunday School enrollment, 4 members loss, and 49 fewer in Sunday School enrollment. A part of the difficulty may be explained by the death of Mrs. Flesher during this year, which undoubtedly made the work suffer slightly:

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

⁴ A folder published on the occasion of Highlands Church's sixtieth anniversary, June 13, 1951.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Vincent Papers, 1893.

Death has invaded our pastoral ranks in the call from earth of Sister Flesher, wife of our Highland Church pastor. A true wife and mother; efficient, saintly, has been taken from a happy home, and the desolation is great. Our dear brother and his children have the deepest sympathy of all, and are the subjects of fervent prayer that God may constantly keep them in their bitter bereavement.¹

In continuing his report Vincent mentions some of the details of the church itself:

Pastor Flesher, still continuing in temporary accommodations, but unflinching in faith and self-sacrificing labor. The deep affliction in the parsonage already alluded to was not allowed to paralyze faith and effort; heaven seemed nearer and labor for it more important in behalf of all afflicted ones. The support of the church has been provided for, though the benevolences have fallen off.²

The future of the church was given an enthusiastic boost when in February 1895 they decided to begin planning a chapel of their own. The church had not paid its Conference obligations, but they were still determined to begin their building fund:

In February 1895, a committee started to investigate possible building sites and costs. By April 1895 the total church indebtedness for the Conference year was \$352.75. A Merchants' Lunch was suggested as a means of clearing this debt and starting a fund toward a new building. Free use was obtained of a large room in the Charles Building at Fifteenth and Curtis, and a number of committees were appointed to solicit wholesale houses for supplies, solicit home cooking, sell tickets, arrange for dishes, tables and chairs, serve in the dining room, and select the "bill of fare". A net profit of \$126.50 was realized. This, together with \$144.00 raised at a church gathering, and \$75 contributed by the Pastor, allowed the Pastor to attend Conference with a church free of debt. In contrast, the ladies of the Church served a home-cooked dinner on saw-horses in a tent and cleared \$300. This was used to purchase a site for a new church.³

Enthusiasm was no doubt high as all people worked together to make their church clear all its Conference obligations in this way. The lots mentioned were on the southwest corner of Thirty-second and Osceola Streets, where Highlands Church stands today. Thus B. T. Vincent could report at the Conference of 1895: "Lots are secured, and a chapel is proposed."⁴

At the Conference of 1895 A. B. Glockner was appointed to Highlands where he remained only one year. According to the statistics, his Sunday School enrollment fell off exactly half, from 120 to 60 during the one year. This is perhaps a mis-print however, as the next year it was back to 128.

¹ Ibid. 1894.

² Vincent Papers, 1894.

³ Folder published on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary, June 13, 1932.

⁴ Vincent Papers, 1895.

C. H. Koyl came to Highlands in 1896 to stay a year and a half, and died while at the church. It is to his credit and perhaps a part of his poor health, that the first building was begun and completed.

Some time in the summer and fall of 1896 this building was begun, reputedly “about 30 feet wide by 48 feet long, costing approximately \$700.”¹ The work progressed well, and before winter they moved into the chapel. (see Fig. 36). This building stood at the south edge of the property, facing Osceola Street. It is supposed that its main entrance was approximately the same location as the east entrance of the present educational building. The first permanent church structure at Highlands was used continuously until it burned in 1934.

At the Conference of 1897 Vincent reported a slightly different figure as the actual cost: “Pastor Koyl has built a beautiful church worth (with lots) \$1600, leaving but a small and easily managed debt.” However, during the next year, 1897-1898, Rev. C. H. Koyl died while actively engaged in his work at Highlands. The successor for the portion of the year was E. B. Dubois. Of this situation the Presiding Elder reports further:

The prolonged sickness and final death of Pastor Koyl was a great blow to the church, but . . . was an inspiration given by the holy struggle and victorious departure. The successor has taken hold with vigor and with fine response upon the part of the people.²

E. V. Dubois was appointed in 1898 to another year at Highlands. At the end of his pastorate there in 1899 he reported the membership at 108 and the Sunday School enrollment at 150.

The “small manageable” debt as mentioned by Vincent was paid off, and on March 3, 1901, the mortgage was burned, when dedication services were conducted by Bishop Warren. The small chapel was connected to another building erected in 1906, which made a church almost twice as large. This total building covered the same area now covered by the educational building. A fire destroyed the structure in 1934.

Two interesting stories have been preserved about the early work of this particular church. One is about Bishop Warren as related by the Cobbeys, long-time members of the church:

. . . during a severe snowstorm Mr. Cobbey and Mr. Brothers were sweeping and shoveling snow for a path for the Sunday School children when Bishop Warren came along. Upon receiving an affirmative answer to his question concerning the need of more help, he picked up a shovel and helped to clear the path.³

The second story was related to this writer by the only living charter member of the church, Mrs. Lowe. Whether this is in reference to the “Barrows Barn” or the original church building is not certain, but we shall assume that it was the latter:

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the sixtieth Anniversary, November 12, 1952.

² Vincent Papers, 1898.

³ re-told in the Fortieth Anniversary Folder of the church, June 13, 1932.

It seems that there was a revival meeting one night and the caretaker had built a fire and then gone home. As the evening wore on the fire burned down and the room began to grow cold. The minister had thought that a man sitting in the back, who was very dignified and rather stiff and pompous, would fix the fire. However, he didn't, and the minister finally interrupted himself and asked the man to do so. The gentleman hesitated a moment and then went out to get some coal. It was dark, but he finally came back in with a bucket full of coal – alack -. He threw this in the stove with disastrous results. The stove exploded and the stove pipe full of soot paused in its journey to the floor to bounce off a bald man's head, but the stove pipe suffered quite an indentation. A song was announced, and as the congregation sang, some of the men put the stove together. Then the minister resumed his talk, but on glancing at the back of the room he noticed one of the men with a soot-covered face who had drawn his hand across his face. The results were so comical that the minister was unable to control himself and he burst out laughing. The meeting was broken up.¹

As later events have shown, Highlands proved to be one of the most desirable suburbs of Denver, annexed to the city in 1896. The church formed there was a strategic church, and today is probably the third largest Methodist Church in the city, as far as membership, prestige, financial support, and program are concerned. The organization has come a long way from a loosely organized group in a barn, to a strong metropolitan church.

Edgewater Methodist Episcopal Church

Beginnings of the town of Edgewater seem to go back to 1887 or before when the center of attraction was a dance pavilion on the shores of Sloan's lake, and a nearby fishing resort all to draw people for pleasure and relaxation. Soon there developed the largest amusement park west of the Mississippi River, known as "Manhattan Beach".² By 1890 the importance of the amusement park was established, and a large zoo was brought in for added attractions. In addition, gambling and liquor were plentiful.

Although various aspects of town life were growing up in the area, as a hotel, other businesses and drug stores, the unwholesome elements seemed to have taken the upper hand:

A familiar character of this period was "Soapy Smith", who operated a gambling table in the middle of the street at West 25th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard. Many took part in his "shell game"; some going away richer, and others considerably wiser.³

The beginning of the church in Edgewater is attributed to J. R. Woods, the City Missionary, in February of 1892. Previous to this, R. H. Rhodes had been preaching in the area for approximately six months. There is evidence however, that prior to any Methodist activity, there had been a group of interested persons holding meetings in the home of Mr. and Mrs.

¹ Mrs. Lowe, 2802 Vrain, Denver.

² L. T. Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, 1951, p. 53. A folder published by Mr. Tautfest.

³ Ibid.

Ricker who lived at what is now 2533 Benton Street. There is no mention of how many persons were involved in these meetings, or how long before February 1892 they were held. However, it is probably the interest of the Rickers who instigated proceedings for a church organization in the difficult town of Edgewater.¹

The early location of this mission in Edgewater is said to have been on Depew Street near Twenty-sixth.² At this location they met for a short time, and then moved to another tent on Chase Street between Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth.³ The newspaper reports that the mission was originally supported by Trinity Methodist Church and that they sent out the first few ministers.⁴ This probably reflects however, a misinterpretation of the City Mission idea, in which a minister was appointed by the Presiding Elder to serve in these various churches. Perhaps the Presiding Elder's office was at Trinity Church.

Early statistics are recorded by Mr. Tautfest⁵ showing the Methodist church with 53 members on the church roll. The Sunday School averaged about fifty also. Since we have no statistics against which to check these, they will remain only an estimate. However, the Annual Conference report of 1905 gives the membership at only 18.

J. R. Wood remained the City Missionary for one year, and was succeeded in 1892 by B. T. Vincent, the Presiding Elder of the newly formed Denver District. Vincent is never directly associated with this church in the records, but he worked through various students of the Iliff School or the University of Denver. In addition, John Collins is often related to this church as it was at times, one charge within his appointment of "Suburbs" circuit.

The church had its problems early however, as the liquor interests of the city seemed to have much influence. The Epworth League records for May 29, 1892, are reported as saying:

It was decided that something should be done to close the saloons on Sunday in Edgewater. A committee of five, Rev. Rhodes, Brother E. Donnelley, Bros. J. E. Lyon, W. F. Ricker, and Roswell Edwards were appointed to see a lawyer and obtain information as to what should be done . . . The following ladies were appointed to aid in whatever way they could: Mrs. L. Weaver, Mrs. Edwards, Mrs. Donnelley and Mrs. W. F. Ricker. It was decided that a temperance concert be given.⁶

Evidently this group and some others got together and caused some pressure on some of the city leaders, and finally after several years they had some successes in making Edgewater a decent place in which to live.

On October 14, 1892, there was called a special meeting in Edgewater for the purpose of incorporation.⁷ It was evidently led by the saloon owners and those in sympathy with them. The

¹ East Jefferson Sentinel, April 19, 1935.

² Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, p. 13.

³ East Jefferson Sentinel, April 19, 1935.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, p. 13.

⁶ East Jefferson Sentinel, April 19, 1935.

⁷ Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, p. 21.

main purpose seemed to have been to incorporate the town of Edgewater so they would not be under the jurisdiction of either the City of Denver or Jefferson County. Thus they could remain a town of the lawless, and do so legally. Many of the ne'er-do-wells from the city of Denver, and from Jefferson or Arapahoe County had been coming into Edgewater and finding there freedom for liquor, gambling, prostitution, and other questionable activities. Some of the decent people feared that this type of incorporation would succeed and Edgewater would become a gangster's paradise.

Concerned persons started to bring to bear some influence, and in a few years, by 1899, they had gained some prestige and some following, and were able to make the county officers listen to them.¹ The success was not immediate however, but took much work, much talking, and even much disappointment as well.

The Methodist Church's particular place in the temperance fight is not clear, but we assume that the leadership was going along with the "temperance" faction. In 1893 however, the panic which hit Denver as a whole, crippled Edgewater's religious efforts also. The Epworth League reports on February 5, 1893: "A sad case of destitution was reported and referred to the Mercy and Help Department."² This was probably general in large percentages of the population and the church membership. The youth raised the money, the Woman's Society did likewise, and every organization in the church tried its hardest to keep their organization going. The storm was difficult, but they came from the trial stronger and more enthusiastic than ever.

In 1895 B. T. Vincent reports that the "chapel [at Edgewater] greatly improved and paid for."³ This was the "first permanent church in Edgewater." The improvements were merely the adding of wooden walls to the tent that it might be made more sturdy. The minister was John Collins on the "suburbs" circuit.

In 1897 the mission at Edgewater was moved to the corner of Twenty-seventh and Depew Streets. This was technically outside the area called Edgewater, on the north side. The name given at the time was "Lakewide". On these lots they moved a chapel which remained their church for five years.⁴

By 1899 there was circulated another petition for incorporation. Those who remembered the situation in 1892 were skeptical, and hesitated to sign. However, the petition was in order, and was finally accepted, and in a heated election on August 18, 1901, Edgewater became an incorporated town. The new mayor, J. B. Westhaver, opposed the liquor elements, and gained law and order in the suburb. Finally, the town began to take its own place in the development of the metropolitan area of Denver.⁵

The list of ministers of the early Edgewater organization shows some discrepancy. The Conference minutes do not mention the appointments of the Mission churches, hence, Edgewater

¹ Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, p. 21.

² East Jefferson Sentinel, April 19, 1935.

³ Vincent Papers, 1895.

⁴ Ibid., 1897.

⁵ Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, p. 21-22.

does not appear in the Journal until 1904. Mr. Tautfest has summarized the names of the ministers as well as he can ascertain. However, if we compare his later record with the actual Conference records, we find that his is not accurate, hence the earlier record is perhaps not accurate either. We may be relatively sure however, that the names are more or less in their right order:

The following is a list of the ministers who served the Edgewater Methodist Church: 1892, Rev. Woods, R. H. Rhodes, John Collins [The conference year of 1894-5 according to B. T. Vincent Papers, 1895] and Allen. In 1896, Rev. Wheatley and Johnston. 1900, Rev. Ammeron, 1902, Rev. L. W. Bell, L. L. Gaither and Stauffer. 1903, Rev. Johnson and Winterbourne.¹

Berkeley Methodist Episcopal Church

The first mention of religious activity in the section now known as Berkeley came in 1889 when the people erected a gospel tent. The exact location is uncertain, but it is stated that it is near the county line between Arapahoe (now Denver) County and Jefferson County.² We may assume that this was near the present location of the Berkeley Church at Forty-third Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard.

The group of people there seemingly continued their sincere work and felt a need for something more permanent. Consequently a Mr. Gustavius D. Brand was appointed to explore possibilities for the church. He and the people decided that they ought to build, and they sought some lots on the corner of "Oak" (43rd) and Sheridan Boulevard.³

The deed to the land is recorded on March 2, 1891,⁴ which meant probably that Mr. Brand and others of the church group had worked almost two years before their church began to come to reality. At this time (1891) thirty-five men banded together and pledged themselves to seeing that a church was erected. Lots were purchased at the aforementioned corner, with the help of the Denver Church Extension Society. The four lots were worth \$900, of which the people paid \$400 and the Church Extension Society \$500.⁵ Up to this date the group was still meeting in a tent.

A month previous to the securing of the land, in February 1891, we note a record of the official organizing of the Ladies' Aid Society.⁶ Probably out of this grew some type of preaching services before the official founding of the church. Seemingly, as in later times, the women are among the first to see the need for a church, and do something about it.

This heroic group of ladies kept their work progressing, and were instrumental in beginning the building. Two months later it is reported that the walls were erected. Before the

¹ Ibid., p. 14.

² Mrs. Helen G. Brand, "Notes on the early history of Berkeley Church", on file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society. Mrs. Brand was the wife of one of the early pioneers in Berkeley Church.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Church Extension Journal, 1891.

⁶ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

floor was completely finished, and before any roof was put on, a Mrs. McDonald, Mrs. Clayton and Mr. S. C. Bishop started a Sunday School.¹ People sat on carpeted nail-kegs for pews.²

The official organization of the church with twelve members came on June 21, 1891, and at the Conference of that year, H. D. Seckner became the minister. However, Beardsley records that Robert H. Rhodes had preached in Berkeley for six months previous to the official organization in June.³ This would have had him beginning in January 1891, or shortly before the Ladies' Aid was formed at the church in February. Perhaps it was this Rev. Rhodes who was the person responsible for the original decision to develop the church in Berkeley.

Mrs. Brand, in her early historical notes, has mentioned that originally the group in Berkeley was more or less interdenominational. As the decision to become Methodist became evident, many of the people living to the east of the county line, in what is now Denver, formed a church of the Christian denomination, while the people across the street in Jefferson county, formed the Methodist group.⁴

In 1891, Rev. Seckner became the minister, in conjunction with work at "Garden Place", but the building of the building at Berkeley was of course the main thing for a time. The News records the progress on the small brick church:

The new Methodist Church in Berkeley is nearing completion. It is a tasteful brick structure and adds to the attractions of that vernal suburb. Regular services are now being held.⁵

The new church was completed soon after this time, and except for the steeple which has long since been removed, the church stands substantially the same to this day, on the corner of Sheridan Boulevard and West Forty-third Avenue. Total cost of the building was recorded at \$4000.⁶ (see Fig. 29).

Hardly had they finished building the church when the minister undertook the building of a parsonage next door to the south. According to Beardsley the parsonage cost \$1100, and was evidently finished well before the Conference of 1893. B. T. Vincent, the Presiding Elder reported at the Conference:

Berkeley, with a parsonage, and with H. D. Seckner as pastor, is high, but by no means dry, lifting its spire on the border of two counties and two districts, in danger of being ecclesiastical kidnapped [sic]. It has a field all its own which it works with young blood in faith and hope.⁷

We have previously mentioned that in June 1891 the membership of the newly organized church stood at 12. At the end of Mr. Seckner's first year, the Conference of 1892, the

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 381.

² Mrs. Brand, Notes on Berkeley History.

³ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 422.

⁴ Mrs. Brand, Notes on Berkeley History.

⁵ The Rocky Mountain News, June 19, 1891.

⁶ Mrs. Brand, Notes on Berkeley History.

⁷ Vincent Papers, 1893.

membership was 26, with 70 in Sunday School enrollment. It is to be noted that this is in conjunction with the mission at "Garden Place", although from further research, it seems that the latter membership was quite small, and hence probably would not change our figures for Berkeley too much. The next year Seckner reported a membership of 45, and a Sunday School enrollment of 96. This was the highest point this church reached until John H. Merritt became minister in 1897-1902.

A part of the difficulties of the church is to be seen in the panic of 1893 when many people left the Denver area for more prosperous points back east. Vincent reported:

Berkeley, under Pastor Seckner, found itself saying to its remnants in the first hegira of the panic, 'Will ye also go away?' But the leaving lessened, and vacant places were filled. The interest on the debt is nearly paid.¹

The successor was Mr. H. W. H. Butler who remained two years. This seems to have been the time when the downward trend was stopped and people and churches could again be optimistic. Nothing seems to have happened to merit a statement from the Presiding Elder during these years. At the end of his second year, 1896, Butler reported membership at 44 and the Sunday School enrollment at 61, a slight decrease over the preceding years. During this ministry the total debt on the church is recorded at \$2,250, which is almost half the estimated value of \$5000.²

John H. Merritt was appointed to Berkeley Church in 1897 and remained there five years. When he came, the debt on the church stood at \$1800 which he reduced to \$1545 in one year. The total debt on the church and parsonage was not liquidated until 1917 during the ministry of J. G. Brawn.³

During the ministry of Merritt, Vincent reported his optimism for the church:

At Berkeley, Pastor Merritt, the congregations are very large; the debt greatly reduced and all peril from it, and the pessimism it occasioned, removed.⁴

The membership in 1900 is reported at 51, with 50 registered for the Sunday School. The next year, Merritt's last, these figures were 42 and 125 respectively.

Thus within a ten-year period, and with the backing of the City Missions project and the Presiding Elder, Berkley Church had grown from a few persons loosely organized meeting in a tent, to a strong congregation in a good church building with parsonage. The idea of City Missions was sound and the strength of several churches today, including Berkley, proves that it was moving in the right direction.

¹ Vincent Papers, 1895.

² From the Records Committee of the Berkeley Church, written in historical form in 1944. On file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Vincent Papers, 1898.

The Haymarket Mission

An interesting project is the Haymarket Mission, an interdenominational project. This mission has a connection however with the Methodist churches, as it was organized and supervised for some time by one of the leading Methodist ministers of the Conference. Arthur C. “Dean” Peck had organized the Methodist Church at Durango, and revised and enlarged the organization of First Church, Colorado Springs, and had served one year as Dean and Business Manager of the University of Denver.

In the fall of 1892 he felt definitely called to take up a work he had been thinking of for some time, namely to do some mission work in lower Denver. Consequently, he rented Haymarket Theatre at Sixteenth and Blake, which was controlled largely by gambling and liquor interests, and began to hold religious services. His expressed purpose was stated as “saving souls and extending help to the needy.”¹

B. T. Vincent reflected on the work of the mission in his report of 1894:

The Haymarket Mission to which our church is related, not only by the interdenominational character of the work, but by the appointment from our own ranks of the able and efficient founder and manager, Rev. A. C. Peck, has done a splendid work through the hard time, relieving many a victim of hunger, cold, and despair. It is still doing a vast and blessed work.²

Vincent makes a similar report of its continued work each year, saying that Peck puts “Methodist Fire into the mission with his enthusiasm and dedication.”³

In 1896 they moved from the Haymarket Theatre into some larger and more convenient location on Arapahoe Street. Unfortunately no details, or even the correct address, are given. However, the idea was growing, and was gradually becoming a major project. In the early 1900’s it became known as “City Temple” and maintained seven separate and distinct phases including: 1. the City Temple for worship; 2. the Clifton Hughes Training School for girls; 3. the Lafayette Young Woman’s Club; 4. the Belle Lennox Home for Children; 5. the Lennox Hall for boys; 6. the May Miller Kindergarten; and 7. the Hospital.⁴ The extent of this work will be summarized in the section on the next decade, but the groundwork of this was laid in the few years immediately following 1892.

The work up to 1896 had been summarized very well by Beardsley:

In November, 1892, having previously resigned his position with the University, he (Peck) began a work to which he had felt called for several years; namely the founding

¹ Journal of the Colorado Conference, 1933, p. 195.

² Vincent Papers, 1894.

³ Vincent Papers, 1896.

⁴ A letter written by A. C. Peck to Peter Winne, dated January 13, 1916. On file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

of a mission in Lower Denver. From that time until this, for more than 12 hundred nights, during all sorts of times and weather, a gospel service has been held at the Haymarket Mission every night. Nearly 5000 souls have professed conversion at its altar. A large institutional work is carried on in connection with the religious services. Many lodgings and meals are given. A reading room medical dispensary, employment bureau, and a clothes-room furnish succor for the unfortunate. In one year over 32,000 meals, and more than 10,000 lodgings were furnished. At the same time more than 6000 patients were treated free in the medical dispensary, and employment was found for 2,632 people. There is a fine and growing Sunday School with an average attendance of 225. Fifteen missionaries, nurses, and workers are employed. Besides, they maintain a nursery for little ones, and a Working Girls' Home, a refuge for those seeking employment.

Connected with the Haymarket Mission, and under the immediate oversight of Mrs. Peck, is the Haven, an institution for girls. It has, at the present writing, 38 inmates. The girls range in age from 9 to 14. They are usually parentless and homeless. They are given three hours of an English education per day, and are taught to wash, iron, cook, sweep, dust, sew, and other things relating to good housekeeping. When the course is finished, good homes are secured for them. The entire work of the Mission and Haven is carried on at the expense of from \$8000 to \$10000 per year, all of which comes from voluntary contributions.¹

It is commendable that such a work was undertaken in downtown Denver, and also a credit to the Methodists for having a minister of their denomination with such a dedication. The Haymarket Mission and its successor, the City Temple projects, had a great future, and filled a very definite need.

Myrtle Hill Church (later Washington Park)

The area now known as Washington Park was one of the later areas of Denver to be developed. As late as 1888-1889 there were glowing real estate advertisements to entice people to move to the southeast edge of Denver, almost out as far as University Park. One advertisement appeared:

Mr. F. A. Bailey and Company offer lots in Myrtle Hill as \$200-\$250 each . . . This bright suburban beauty spot in Arapahoe County southeast of Denver is a sparkling gem in a brilliant setting. The ground is elevated, and there is a never-tiring view of the far-away mountain peaks. Myrtle Hill is three miles nearer than the University Park. It is practically inside property. Transportation facilities unexcelled in Denver are already assured. A line connects Myrtle Hill with the business portion of the city. With its handsome residences, its beautiful streets, its University Avenue frontage, and its nearness to Smith's Lake, Myrtle Hill is peerless, as a home or an investment.²

Some of the early people who moved into this area had felt for a time that a Sunday School or a church was necessary, and had no doubt taken steps to secure some type of

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 486-7.

² Colorado Exchange Journal, 1888-1891.

leadership. The individual who was first recorded as having taken initiative in this area was John Collins, also working in other areas in South Denver.

It was on February 5, 1893, that John Collins first conducted services in the area known as Washington Park, but known then as Myrtle Hill. This was evidently conducted in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lort living in the home which still stands at 725 South High Street, and still owned by three Lort daughters. This family had taken it upon themselves to invite children of the area to their home for Sunday School, and following this the regular morning worship services were held.¹

The Society was formally organized the following July 30, and plans were made immediately to construct a building.² Lots were given by Mr. and Mrs. Bailey, who had the real estate boom in this area.³ With the increased effort and enthusiasm, much money was raised, some from the Church Extension Society, but mostly from pledges from the interested people of the area, and the building was rushed to completion. The date of the formal opening of the little Myrtle Hill Methodist Church was September 3, 1893.⁴ Conducting the impressive ceremonies was Chancellor McDowell of the University of Denver. The location of this first church was South High at Tennessee Streets, one block north and one west of the present Washington Park Church. The total cost of the small building was listed at \$2265, which of course did not include the great amount of voluntary labor.⁵

At the Conference of 1894 G. F. Mead was appointed minister of this church, succeeding the founder and only minister, John Collins. At the end of his first year he reported total membership at 27, of which a good portion were charter members.

Vincent reported in 1894 that "Myrtle Hill has a beautiful church enclosed and nearly paid for."⁶ (see Fig. 30). They carried a debt of \$500 which lingered on until 1898 when it was liquidated and mortgage burned.⁷ This was a small amount it may seem but at this time the depression was at its height, and money was more scarce than previously. Of their success at paying this debt gradually, Vincent reports: "\$100 has been paid on the \$500 debt here, and the interest to October."⁸

The name of the area was still Myrtle Hill, but a plan was submitted and outlined in the News to change the name and develop the area into an attractive park. The names which were suggested were Broadview, Sylvan, Ramona, and Ouray. Sometime within the few weeks or months following, the name of Washington was suggested, and it continued.⁹

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the Golden Anniversary of Washington Park Church, February 5, 1943.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

³ Lydia Terrell Lort, A Church Bell Rings in Denver (Denver: Otto J. Stockmar, 1951), p. 16.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

⁵ Golden Anniversary Folder, 1943.

⁶ Vincent Papers, 1894.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Vincent Papers, 1896.

⁹ Lort, A Church Bell Rings in Denver, p. 47-8.

The minister in 1895 was W. D. Phifer, who recorded only minor changes in membership and Sunday School enrollment. He was followed in 1896 by R. E. Myers who reported an increase in the Sunday School from 41 to 65 during his one year at the church. J. H. Smith was the minister between 1897 and 1899, again with relatively little change. However, it was during the pastorate of Smith, a student at Iliff, that the remaining half of the debt was subscribed, and the mortgage was burned in the presence of the delighted congregation.¹ This is a tribute to the hard work and the dedicated service of several students who worked here half-time or less, yet who accomplished work that in the future years would be considered priceless.

In 1899 the minister was W. E. Perry who reported during his two years, a membership increase from 33 to 42, almost 33 per cent increase, and Sunday School enrollments of 85 for both years. Thus the Myrtle Hill Church stood at the turn of the century, only seven years old, served continuously by students, yet beginning to shape itself into a significant church which it was to become within a very few years.

It is a tribute to the Lort family and their enthusiasm in the founding of this church that the organization progressed well. Miss Lydia Lort, still a member of Washington Park Church, has recently written a pamphlet giving some of her recollections of the development of Washington Park Church from a Sunday School group meeting in the home of her parents. This pamphlet has been quoted previously in this section, and it contains a wealth of interesting information giving the reader some interesting side-lights and human-interest items that make history live again.

The area including Washington Park was annexed to the City of Denver in 1894, although not completely developed for some time following that. The church itself did not take the name of Washington Park until during the ministry of Roy L. Smith, 1911-1916, just previous to their construction of the present sanctuary of Washington Park Church completed in 1919.

Further developments of this new church, destined to be one of Denver's faster growing community churches, will be taken up with material pertaining to the decade following 1900. It was to develop remarkably within this next period, as Denver expanded rapidly in the direction of this church.

John Collins Church (formerly Rosedale, and Warren Avenue)

The earliest records which we have of the work of John Collins in relation to the organization which bears his name comes from Beardsley.² He states that on August 20, 1892, Mrs. Collins organized a Sunday School in Rosedale, a settlement along Broadway near Evans Avenue. Previously the same year, July 2, 1892, John Collins had begun preaching at "Broadway Heights", evidently in the same vicinity. A group was organized on January 7, 1893, and officially incorporated as a church February 14, 1893, as the Warren Avenue Methodist

¹ Vincent Papers, 1898.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

Church.¹ The location was evidently on the corner of Warren Avenue at South Bannock, in a small frame building they had constructed near the alley.

However, there seems to be some evidence of a Sunday School's existing in the area previous to the work of John Collins. In a handwritten history of the church written in 1934, the writer mentions a Mrs. Bertha C. Keller who laid the foundation of a church through her Sunday School class meeting in 1892 in her home at 2625 South Grant Avenue. Later in the year 1892 the Sunday School was moved to the home of a family named Truesdale.² According to this record it was this group with which Mrs. Collins became associated, and from this group that the Warren Avenue Methodist Church was organized. No further record of any organization previous to John Collins exists however, though it is quite possible. It is also possible that the informal name of an earlier Sunday School organization might have had the name "Rosedale" though not specifically Methodist.

When the church was finally incorporated on February 14, 1893, another church in the Suburbs Circuit was added to the list of the Methodist organizations in Denver. In this Suburbs Circuit there were at various times such organizations as Myrtle Hill, Valverde, Littleton, Edgewater, Petersburg, as well as this Warren Avenue Church. Gradually however, each of these was made a station with its own appointment.

In the Conference Minutes we note that the "South Denver Circuit" is first listed in 1889, and continues until 1893 when the name was changed to "Suburbs". This was the same work however, and was always headed by John Collins. He was doing his own type of "City Mission" work in South Denver and nearby settlements. He was one who took the church and its message to the people. After December 17, 1893, when the Warren Avenue Church was officially dedicated by Bishop Warren, it continued to flourish until a larger building was needed. The present church building was constructed in 1900, during the ministry of L. M. Potashinsky, a student of the Iliff School of Theology, himself formerly an orthodox Jew. Except for the steeple which has been removed, the church today is as it was originally built.

By 1894 the people of this new mission had paid for their small chapel, the small frame building previously mentioned, and were able to increase their church benevolences 100 per cent over the preceding year.³

On March 5, 1895, the corporate name of this church was changed to the Collins Chapel.⁴ The John Collins Methodist Church was incorporated with D. H. Pike, F. E. Miller, E. M. Cranston, J. L. Johnson, and W. E. Lloyd as trustees.⁵

After the Conference of 1895 all other churches had been made stations with their own ministers, and the "Suburbs Circuit" included one church, Collins Chapel, with John Collins as the minister. In this first year on its own, we note that the membership was listed at 15, with 91

¹ Ibid.

² A handwritten history of John Collins Church, writer unknown, in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

³ Vincent Papers, 1894.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 380.

⁵ Handwritten history of John Collins Church, unknown author.

enrolled in the Sunday School. The next year, with John Collins again the minister, we see that the membership increased by one, and the Sunday School by four.

In 1897 the Conference ceased listing the “Suburbs Circuit” and lists “Collins Chapel” instead. The minister was E. M. Antrim, a student of the Iliff School of Theology, who at the end of his first year reported a net gain in members of 19, which meant that he more than doubled his membership that year. During this year he had conducted a revival, and had organized some of the you. By April 1898 it was seen that more space was necessary, so the members called a meeting, and planned an addition. They constructed a room 15 by 18 feet, at a cost of \$106.86, redecorated much of the church, and had it re-dedicated by Chancellor W. F. McDowell of the University of Denver.¹

In 1898 the appointed minister was W. R. Ashby, who reported little change in the membership but a drop of 40 in the Sunday School enrollment. He was evidently a student also, though no further mention is made of him.

In 1899 L. M. Potashinsky came to be the minister and remained three years. His main contribution was his leading in the construction of the present building, and added much enthusiasm. The people were wishing they had a larger and more adequate church, so in November 1899 they began seeking funds, pledges, or other resources for beginning some type of construction. On May 26, 1900, the building was completed, and on the next day, May 27, Chancellor Buchtel preached the sermon for the Opening Day Services. At this time an additional \$700 was pledged to the building fund. (see Fig. 40). Three months later, on August 19, 1900, the church was dedicated by Bishop David H. Moore. It is reported that an additional \$800 was pledged on the first Sunday.² The entire cost of the structure was \$4600. In addition, the bell and the furnace were donated to the cause. Only \$500 of the total came from the Methodist Church Extension Society.³

An interesting arrangement is seen in respect to the finances. It is said that from the beginning of the church, a Mr. Dan H. Pike agreed to pay one-fourth of all the expenses of the church. At the time of the building he continued his pledge, and paid at least a total of \$1,125.⁴

What better way could a denomination remember an energetic and ambitious man as John Collins than to have a church that he helped to organize named after him? Such is the case with this early missionary of South Denver. To his efforts we owe at least six churches that are now active in this area. In addition we do not know how much more is due to the influence of John Collins in Denver as a whole.

Nina Cobb Hess Memorial Methodist Church (formerly Epworth Mission)

In 1892, during the ministry of J. T. Musgrove at Simpson Church, the Epworth League of that church conceived of a mission project, and organized a small mission taking the name of

¹ Ibid., see also Vincent Papers, 1898.

² Handwritten history of John Collins Church, author unknown.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

“Epworth”. This is not to be confused with the church in Denver which later took that name, as there was no connection between them. This particular Epworth Mission soon took the name of “Nina Cobb Hess Memorial Methodist Church”, later referred to as Hess Methodist Church.¹

The mission seems to have been started as a Sunday School in the home of Mrs. S. E. Bennett next to a store building at 3260 Columbine. This is corroborated through a personal interview with Mr. Jim Read, 2122 South Gilpin, who was a charter member and loyal worker during the whole history of the church. Jim Reed is related through his wife to this Mrs. Bennett, and remembers the beginnings of this particular mission.² The date for the Sunday School organization is given as October, 1892.

In his paper on “City Missions”³ R. R. Adams tells us further that in January 1893 the group purchased a tent and placed it on the corner of 33rd and Columbine Streets. Then the panic of 1893 came to Denver, and the work was found difficult. J. T. Pender, the next minister of Simpson Church, in 1893, conducted revival services, and raised money by lecturing. The funds from this paid for their tent, though a temporary meeting place.⁴

The first minister of the small mission was R. E. Miller in 1893. He was a local preacher and a member of Cameron Methodist Church.⁵ From October 1893 until June 1894 the minister was T. E. Sisson, a student of the University, followed by W. E. Miller for a second pastorate, June 1894 to May 1896. From May 1896 and for approximately two years, R. R. Adams, a student at Iliff was the minister, and under his leadership the church which is still standing on the corner of Thirty-first and Elizabeth was constructed. The church is now remodeled, but substantially the same, and is now (1956) owned by the Christian Science group.

Vincent reported in 1895 on the progress of the church:

Lands are offered the Epworth Mission for a chapel and plans are already made looking to its erection.⁶

The land which is mentioned here was given by E. M. Ashley, R. R. McMann, and the estate of William Berger.⁷

The actual structure was begun in August 1896, and was completed the next spring, through the loyal and devoted efforts of the student minister, R. R. Adams. (see Fig. 41). On August 22, 1897,⁸ the building was dedicated debt-free:

¹ Adams, paper on “City Missions”, 1900. This is corroborated by Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 383.

² corroborated by the paper by Adams, “City Missions”.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 382.

⁵ an Interview with Mr. Jim Reed, July, 1955.

⁶ Vincent Papers, 1895.

⁷ Adams, paper on “City Missions”. This is reported by the person who was the minister in charge of the Hess Church at the time, and may be considered fairly accurate.

⁸ Ibid.

The Nina Cobb Hess Memorial Chapel has been built at Thirty-first and Elizabeth Streets. A donation of \$250 with \$2000 subscriptions in money and lots and work, have made the church financially clear.¹

No records seem to be available as to how the name of Nina Cobb Hess was chosen for the church, although she is thought to have been an early deaconess in the area, who helped out substantially in the early organization.²

The church which they built seated 200, and had many young people and children. It was reported in 1900 that the average Sunday School attendance was 55³, although no records of membership appear until the Conference of 1905 when the church was changed from “mission” status to a Conference appointment.

The exact dates of R. R. Adams’ ministry are not known, although he did begin in January 1896. The minister in 1900 was E. N. Edgerton, another student, succeeded by a Rev. Mr. Stauffer, also a student. Following Mr. Stauffer was a Mr. T. E. Ashby, remembered by Jim Reed as a heavy-set man, a football player for Denver University in approximately the year 1903.⁴

Although the early history of Hess looked glorious, its future was not to be long. The decade following 1900 was indeed progressive, but following that there was decline.

The last services of the Methodist organization were held at Hess Church in December 1917, at which time the organization was officially disbanded, and the membership was invited to join Simpson Church. Reasons for the closing were given as dwindling members, a heavy debt, and their close proximity to Simpson Church. We shall analyze this decline in a later section.

However, in 1900 we must commend the early pioneers of the Hess Church for their foresight in organizing another church for the growing edge of Denver.

University Park Methodist Episcopal Church

The area now known as University Park was at first set aside as a separate town, approximately four miles southeast of the city limits of Denver. However, as we know, the area today is well within the city limits, and the city has grown as much as five miles on to the south and east of the original “University Park”.

This area is six miles away from the capitol building, and is the seat of the University of Denver. As early as 1879, when the University first felt it should move to a new location and build more adequately for the future, the Trustees’ minutes of the University record an offer of land by John Evans, and a Mrs. Hotchkiss. These were possibilities for the re-location of the

¹ Vincent Papers, 1897.

² Interview with Jim Reed.

³ Adams, paper on “City Missions”.

⁴ Interview with Jim Read.

school. However, the land – now down town – was thought unacceptable because enough additional property was not available in the vicinity to build the University as the trustees had envisioned.¹

Several other offers were reviewed, but the one finally accepted was offered by Rufus “Potato” Clark, including the whole of the present University Park Campus. However, the land at this time was nothing but farm-land, and an occasional farmhouse was all that dotted the landscape.

The first need of the people who did this planning was that some of the interested supporters of the University would buy lots and build in the new University Park because the new University Hall was soon to be built there. Downtown, at Fourteenth and Arapahoe, the location was deemed increasingly unsatisfactory because business and commerce was crowding on all sides. Hence, the new location was conceived, but needed supporters. Bishop and Mrs. Warren were among the first to lead in this venture, as they made plans to sell their downtown home at Eighteenth and Curtis, and rebuild in University Park. Their new home, now known as “Gray Gables” now a dormitory for the Iliff School of Theology, was completed and first occupied in 1889.

Another activity to spur on enthusiasm for the new area was the digging of the foundation for University Hall in 1889, and the laying of the cornerstone April 3, 1890. Following this more and more people settled in University Park, although it was a rather long ride into the city of Denver, even after the inter-urban streetcars were begun. The area was incorporated into Denver proper in 1894, along with the whole area known loosely as “South Denver”.

Evidently there had been a Sunday School organized in the area of University Park for a few years previous to the organization of the church. Beardsley states: ““ Sunday School had been in existence for over two years previous [to the organization of the church, 1894].”²

Dr. Martin Rist of the Iliff School of Theology, who has written a complete history of University Park Church has traced this little Sunday School for three years previous to 1894, and has noted that the Superintendent for this period was Mr. Lyle Waterbury.³ This Sunday School had been meeting at least by 1891 in a store building on the northeast corner of Evans Avenue at Milwaukee, a few blocks east of the University.

From this Sunday School group the people made a request to the Presiding Elder, B. T. Vincent, that a church be organized in University Park. The date of the organization is reported as September 16, 1894.⁴ There were 56 charter members, when the organization met for its first worship service in the chapel of University Hall. This location is said to have been the north side of the second floor where the Registrar and Business offices are now located.

¹ Jeannette Joan Dunleavy, Early History of Colorado Seminary and the University of Denver (unpublished Master's thesis, University of Denver, 1935), p. 221.

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 383.

³ Martin Rist, A History of University Park Church written on the occasion of its Fortieth Anniversary, 1944.

⁴ Ibid., however, Beardsley, p. 383, gives the date as September 10.

The first minister appointed by the Bishop was A. B. Hyde, a professor at the University of Denver.¹ The first official board included the following stewards: L. W. Waterbury, W. W. Evans (in whose store the original Sunday School had met), William C. Strong, Mrs. Alice Plested, Mrs. Lucy Webster, H. E. Russell, Miss Anna A. Fisher, and Mrs. Mary E. Wilson. Trustees were: A. L. Evans, A. J. Evans, Lula Waterbury, W. P. Miller, and J. L. Webster.²

According to A. B. Hyde's statement³ the Sunday congregation usually averaged between 60 and 80 in their small University Hall chapel. The Sunday School attendance was above 60, and the Epworth League about 30. The Women's organizations were soon meeting also. At the end of this first year A. B. Hyde reported a total membership of 66, an increase of ten since the official organizing day. The Sunday School had 125 enrolled, but unfortunately, according to the Conference Journal records, this high number did not appear again until 1905. In view of this record, the minister stated at the end of his first year: "The Church for the first year fairly fulfilled the purpose for which it was established."

The next year, 1895-1896, A. B. Hyde again was assigned to the church, and at the end of his second year reported a drop of ten in membership, and a drop of 60 in Sunday School enrollment. The reason for this is not known, since it is far removed in time from the depression and financial panic of 1893, though the depression was no doubt an indirect cause.

A. B. Hyde was minister of this church almost two years. Following this, Dr. Rist has stated, "Dr. Hyde, the first pastor, lived in University Park until 1921 when he passed away ten days before his ninety-fifth birthday."⁴

A new professor at the Iliff School of theology, Newell S. Albright, was appointed to the church in 1896, when the membership made little gain, and the Sunday School enrollment remained substantially the same. Succeeding ministers were: 1897-1898, J. H. Deeds; 1898-June 1899, C. V. Anthony; June-September 1899, Sylvester E. Ellis; September 1899-July 1900, J. R. Van Pelt. In July 1900 the first full-time minister was appointed, Edward E. Bean, although he stayed less than two years.

At the turn of the century, E. E. Bean reported the membership at 77, with the Sunday School enrollment at 60. There had been but slight change in the first six years of this church's life. There had been a rapid turn-over of ministers, there was no permanent building, but perhaps the greatest difficulty was that the people who had moved out to University left much of their loyalty, as well as their church membership with the downtown church.

Although there were many factors against this church, it is good today that these people continued to work hard at their church organization. Despite the fact that their first building was not constructed until 1927, they built well, and influenced the life of the University community rather markedly. We are proud today of the work that they did in the past, and the contribution

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

they continue to make to the University, to the Iliff School of Theology, and to the city as a whole.

Coronado Mission

Somewhere in the vicinity of University Park there was organized another small mission in 1894. This is evidently a separate mission from that later to become University Park Church. The references are scanty, but the ministers of the Coronado Mission are in no place the same as the University Park Church. The most complete reference to this mission is the paper on the "City Missions" by Robert R. Adams:

In the southeastern part of the city, near the University of Denver, is a market gardening community. Mission work was commenced here in 1894 when a Sunday School was organized. Rev. Marvin Rader, now of Leadville, was the first pastor. In 1896 the work became a part of the city missions, while Rev. Brother Boyd was in charge. Rev. W. H. Cable, Rev. E. M. Hoff, Rev. L. D. Beckwith, Rev. Fredrickson and others have been the pastors. The services are held in the school house. The Sunday school averages 12. As one result of its work, a girl in India is supported and educated. Preaching services are held every Sunday evening. The congregations are composed largely of young people.¹

There are two further references to the Coronado Mission in the next decade, following 1900, and these will be taken up later. Unfortunately no mention has been found which would give a location of the area in which the mission was located, and of course no street addresses either.

Oakes Mission

Beardsley mentions the founding of "Oakes" Mission near University Park of which we have even less information than the Coronado. He states that it was "recently founded"² meaning probably in either 1894 or 1895, and that both Oakes and Coronado were served by students. Oakes does not appear in this work again, but the small Sunday School at Coronado was maintained for a few years, and will be discussed in the next section.

Overland Mission

Developing to the southwest of Denver, along the river, was a small settlement clustered around some light industry. In the early 1890's this was a growing area of the city. The location was north of Evans Avenue, and East of the River, where most old buildings have since gone to ruin, and have been removed for newer dwellings.

There was a Methodist Society organized at the Overland section on March 24, 1895,³ under the leadership of the Rev. W. D. Phifer. The same year in May, their small frame church

¹ Adams, paper on "City Missions."

² Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 383.

³ Beardeley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 383.

was built and dedicated free of debt.¹ The total cost was \$1630, and the building seated 200.² It is commendable that the land on which the church was built had been given by the Mill Company, expressly for a church building.³ The church was a great challenge in this community of mill laborers, all of which were probably too far from the city to feel a part of any Denver church. Indeed, there were none very close, except John Collins Church.

Ministers had been: W. D. Phifer, organizer, remaining until 1895; 1895-1896, Rev. Bassett; 1896-1898, C. B. Seely; 1898-1899, Grant Testers; and 1899-1900, Frank Hiller.⁴ The Sunday School averaged 55 in 1900, and the membership was about 20. The Epworth League had about 30 members also.⁵

During the days when the cotton mills were operating, this little church did a great work, as it appears in every year's Conference minutes from 1905 through 1912. Its membership was never large, but it is often futile to consider only the membership in judging the influence and effectiveness of a church. Again, the Methodists had gone to the people and fulfilled their needs through another mission project, several years under the direction of the City Missions work, and served most of the time by students of the University of Denver, and the Iliff School of Theology.

Frances Merritt Deaconess Home

One of the especially important aspects of progress in Denver Methodism was the opening on June 12, 1891, "A Home for the Sick" as the press reported.⁶ This was a Deaconess Home with two purposes: first, to be a hospital for people who could afford little if any care otherwise; and secondly, to do visitation work through the community, teach Sunday School, and help in various churches where needed.

This Deaconess Home was established in the old home of Bishop and Mrs. Warren, at Eighteenth and Curtis. It is to be remembered that the Bishop and Mrs. Warren moved to their new home in University Park, now known as Gray Gables, in 1899, leaving their home downtown evidently vacant. Mrs. Warren had given the use of this house and the "annex" for one year while other arrangements could be made.⁷ Bishop Warren presided at this opening service where the home was officially called the "Frances Merritt Deaconess Home" in honor of the late wife of the Rev. John H. Merritt.⁸ Because of the generosity of Mrs. Warren, the main house could be used exclusively as a hospital, with the living quarters for the Deaconesses as well as other activities centered in the "annex."

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Vincent Papers, 1895.

⁴ Adams, paper on "City Missions."

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The Denver Times, June 13, 1891.

⁷ The Rocky Mountain Christian Advocate, June 25, 1891.

⁸ Ibid.

Further details of the establishing of this home are given in the daily press the next day.¹ This was reported to be the Nineteenth Deaconess Home in the nation, as the organization of the Deaconesses was itself rather a new idea:

Twenty-thousand Dollars was raised yesterday from special appeals at Trinity and at Grace Churches. Some of the other gifts . . . A. W. Chamberlain gave a 9-room house on Alta Street near 12th, and among subscribers were Chamberlain, \$1000; Mrs. H. B. Chamberlain, \$500; Mrs. Bishop Henry White Warren, \$1000; W. S. Iliff, \$500; Mrs. John Evans, \$1000; Price Johnson, \$1000, J. R. Schermerhorn, \$500; Mrs. I. E. Blake, \$500 [he had previously given the \$30,000 organ to Trinity Church] . . . It is estimated that within a year \$50,000 will be required, but the sum yesterday will get it on its way. Three of the eight or twelve deaconesses are already here, from the Chicago Training School and the Home will probably be opened week after next.²

After the founding of the Home in Denver, a mention of it is found in almost all the Conference Journals while the home was in operation. Typical of these reports is that found in 1891:

Another home has . . . been established in Denver in which are a superintending nurse, one district nurse for the care of the sick, and three visiting Deaconesses . . . A nucleus of a hospital having about twenty beds has also been secured. There will be in connection with this hospital a training school for Deaconess nurses, and later, it is hoped, a training school for visiting Deaconesses.³

Little other information is available after 1891, except the Conference reports. We are indebted to the published reports for the following information:

A building for a permanent Home and Hospital is greatly needed in Denver. Mrs. Warren has again offered the use of her former home for the Deaconess Home and Hospital free of charge for another year, but circumstances will compel the procuring of another place at the expiration of that time.⁴

Evidently however, Mrs. Warren made an extension of time, for the next year we read:

The Deaconess work is still located [1893] in the generously donated and furnished Home on the corner of 18th and Curtis Street in Denver, and is a blessed refuge for the sick and needy, and a radiant center from out which the messengers of mercy go to give consolation and instruction. The Mission Sunday Schools are especially helped by the work of visitation; and pastoral labor in the churches is most efficiently supplemented by these somber uniformed women whose faces are full of encouraging hope to all who hear them.⁵

¹ The Denver Republican, June 13, 1891.

² Ibid.

³ Colorado Conference Journal, 1891, p. 52.

⁴ Ibid., 1892, p. 52.

⁵ Vincent Papers, 1893.

Vincent continues with his report “Among other great good things done by the messengers from the Deaconess’ Home has been visitation among the people, teaching and other work in the Mission Sunday Schools.”¹ Details of this work are elaborated in the Conference Report:

A few words may be spoken of our Mission. This consists of a Sunday School, held every Sunday Morning, and a prayer meet, held every Thursday evening.

The work started nearly three years ago, one Sunday morning with 18 children; today we have an enrollment of over 70 on our class books, with an average attendance of 53. Last Sunday we had 65 present.

The tent which had done us good service for over two years has been replaced by a neat chapel, where we now worship. The year has been busy . . .²

The Mission Sunday School mentioned is undoubtedly the “Briggs Mission” begun by Miss Melissa Briggs, a Deaconess, in 1890 or 1891. It is this Mission which was reorganized in 1905 to become the Epworth Methodist Church of today.

After a rather auspicious beginning, the Deaconess work was suspended at the Conference of 1894. This was undoubtedly related in no small way to the economic crash of 1893, which affected all areas in which the Deaconesses were doing their work. Other obligations on the churches tended to place their support in areas other than the Deaconess needs:

It is sad to record that the Deaconess Home has been temporarily suspended, as claims of the University and the churches made this necessary at this time.³

Nothing further appears in relation to the Deaconess work in Denver until it was re-established in February 1898. In the four years interval it is probable that some work was done in some of the mission fields which were left vacant, as for example the Briggs Mission, but unfortunately we have no records preserved.

B. T. Vincent, in his report of 1898⁴ states that the Woman’s Home Missionary Society has helped them re-establish the Deaconess Home, though on a small scale. One year later we have a fuller report, with an evaluation of the work:

The Conference Board of Control met February 9, 1898, when there was submitted to it a proposition by the official representatives of the Woman’s Home Missionary Society offering to establish a Conference Deaconess Home in Denver.

The Board unanimously authorized the founding of such a home, under the auspices of the said society, to be located in Denver. Under this authority the Home was

¹ Ibid.

² Colorado Conference Journal, 1893, p. 147.

³ Vincent Papers, 1894.

⁴ Ibid.

founded, and the faithful and efficient work done by the consecrated workers sent out from this Home has fully justified the action of your Board.¹

Evidently this Deaconess Work was becoming a regular part of the Conference program, under the jurisdiction of the women, for the amount of work which they report is really significant as well as surprising:

During the year [1899-1900] the Colorado Conference Deaconess Home located in Denver, the only authorized Deaconess work in the Conference, has employed fourteen different deaconesses . . . Work has been done in nearly fifty charges. Membership is: a Superintendent, four field deaconesses, seven visiting deaconesses and two trained nurses.²

Such was the good work of the Deaconess Home as it worked in Denver up to the turn of the century. Although it had been suspended for a time, the zeal of the Deaconesses does not seem to have been thwarted, and their good work contributed much more than we realize to the developing Methodism of the decade.

Conclusion: -- The decade, 1890-1900, was certainly one of the most prosperous as far as church organizations were concerned. During the decade the number of active Methodist churches in metropolitan Denver grew from sixteen to thirty-two, and as we have mentioned, five other small missions were started, but did not have permanent organizations. Of the thirty-two, every one of them was still active in 1912 at the end of the work of Bishop Warren, even though some were rather weak and later either disappeared or were merged with other groups.

Enough credit cannot be given to the foresight of the Bishop and his cabinet for the organization of the City Missions circuit in 1890, for as we have seen, well over half of these new churches had their beginnings in the City Mission Circuit. Much credit is due also to the student ministers who served many of these missions without adequate pay or facilities, as the records have shown. It was a heroic age, and the spirit of Methodism on a developing frontier was not lacking in the least.

The Deaconess Home was almost indispensable as it gave leadership to some struggling missions or Sunday Schools which otherwise would have had inadequate leadership or no leadership at all. At least one church in Denver today, Epworth, is due directly to the organizational work of the Deaconesses.

Another influence not to be taken lightly is the good and substantial work done by the Rev. John Collins who was himself a type of City Missionary as he traveled the "suburbs" circuit and is responsible for three of the new churches of the decade, and two before 1890. It is fitting that one of the organizations he helped organize is named after him today, and carries the name of this great Methodist as a type of perpetual memory.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, 1899, p. 308.

² Ibid., 1900, p. 58.

Truly, this was a great decade of Methodism as evidenced in its church activity in Denver.

CHAPTER X

THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER (Colorado Seminary)

As we have previously noted, the University of Denver had its origin as Colorado Seminary founded by Denver's pioneers in 1864. Unfortunately the school of higher education was forced to close in 1867, not to re-open until 1879. From the Ohio Conference came David H. Moore to be the Chancellor of the newly named and reorganized school 0 the University of Denver. Chancellor Moore gave excellent leadership to the school, and devoted ten good years to the cause.

Upon the resignation of David H. Moore in 1889, Dr. William F. McDowell was chosen as the Chancellor. He remained in this position for almost ten years until he was elected Secretary of the Board of Education of the Methodist Church. As McDowell left for his New York office, it was said of him "He will be remembered long in Colorado as a brilliant and scholarly man."¹ Truly this was another triumphant ten-year period, and William F. McDowell was a big enough man to shoulder the great responsibilities.

At the time that Chancellor McDowell began his work the University was located at its original location, at Fourteenth and Arapahoe Streets. Many leaders however, were anxious that the school might soon move to their new location, about six miles southeast of the capitol building into a newly developing section called "University Park". The plan was that this would develop as a Methodist settlement, and be to Denver what Evanston, Illinois, is to Chicago. As the people began to catch the vision, they began to move to the new location. However, the first leader was Bishop Warren who himself built "Gray Gables" a few blocks east of the University campus, and moved to the Park in 1889. In 1890 the University Hall was begun, and the future of the area seemed certain. (see Fig. 25).

The town of University Park was progressing so that the Board of Education could report:

The University of Denver reports its most successful year . . . The buildings and appliances are in excellent condition for the work of the coming year. At the Park are now twelve residences with several more under contract for building. Of residents there are now about 50 with a store, post office, telephone, water system, graded streets, and shade trees, making the homes there convenient and attractive. The foundation is laid for the main buildings of the University on the finest site in Colorado, and the Chamberlin Observatory, with its furnishings, is advancing to completion. Conveyance by the Circle, and Electric railways is now entirely satisfactory.²

¹ Jerome Smiley, History of Denver, p. 760.

² Colorado Conference Journal, 1890, p. 52.

The next year the Board of Education reported that the property in the Park had gone up in price, and they were then selling inside lots for \$400 and corner lots for \$500. Of the property, of well over five hundred acres, they still had 1834 lots left.

As the students moved into the \$80,000 University Hall in the fall of 1892, the Chancellor was able to report to the Colorado Conference that they had “lost nothing in the number of students on account of the removal to University Park.”¹ Exact costs of the improvements at the University are itemized with the indebtedness as well:

We report the following improvements: University Hall at a cost of \$86, 809; Wycliffe Cottage, \$8,462; Sidewalks, etc., \$5,000; beside about \$3,500 in the School of Medicine, making a total of \$102,000 of which \$10,000 is already provided for by an indemnity bond, thus absolutely securing the institution against possible financial disaster. . . . Net assets of the institution, estimating old properties at the value placed on them a year ago and new properties at their actual cost, is over \$1,560,000.²

The year 1893 was disastrous for all phases of the city, including the churches and the University. The indebtedness which the University might have planned to pay off easily now seemed to grow, and interest expanded the debt until the situation was indeed grave. Liabilities of 1894 are recorded at \$160,000, with little if any possibility of making many changes in the situation for at least a few years.³ The fact that the total assets of the University were near \$1,000,000 did not off-set the seriousness with which they had to deal with their growing debt. In spite of the financial problems, the faculty stayed on, and the students kept coming to the school.

During this time many banks had failed, and those with the University’s money were no exceptions. B. T. Vincent records one such instance in his reports: “Failure of the American National Bank, in which many had money, was a great drawback, and it particularly affected the University.”⁴ Other details of this are seemingly unavailable.

In the year 1896 we note a less bleak financial item. John A. Clough, a long-time member and leading layman of Trinity Church had died, and in his will was a substantial sum of \$5000 for the University.⁵ In addition to the University, Mr. Clough left some of his money to Trinity Church, to the Church Extension Society, and the Preacher’s Aid fund. The bequest of Mr. Clough to the Church Extension Society helped in the original building of Merritt Memorial Church, and later helped to develop Wesley Chapel into the John A. Clough Memorial Church.⁶ The University recorded that the enrollment of the various departments was still increasing.

In the time of financial stress, an interesting item appears in the Education report. “The University experiment of abolishing tuition and charging only a small incidental fee in the

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, 1890, p. 52.

² Ibid., 1892.

³ Ibid., 1894, p. 224.

⁴ Vincent Papers, 1896.

⁵ Colorado Conference Journal, 1896.

⁶ Ibid., 1902.

SECTION IV (1900-1912)

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CHAPTER XI

DENVER 1900-1912

The depression of 1893 had its adverse effects on the city of Denver, as did the unfortunate experiences in connection with the “rule by folly” in which Governor Waite used unwise means to rid the city and state of its gangsters. The latter caused the people to act to prohibit that unfortunate experience ever being repeated.

Just before 1900 several people were interested in making Denver a “Home Rule” city which would entail some changes in organization. Hence, in 1902 the idea was referred to the state legislature at which time a separate county was set up for the city of Denver, and permitted the combination of the city and the county governments.¹ Good outcomes of such an arrangement were the ideas that with a new election, all officials in the city government would be voted upon by the people, and political “machines” would find it more difficult to initiate and maintain their organization.

Until the time that Denver became a county, the city itself was the county seat of Arapahoe County. At this time (1902) Arapahoe county was made smaller by the removal of the area of Denver, and Littleton became the county seat of Arapahoe County.

Included in the bill for “Home Rule” was also the provision for enlarging Denver’s city limits by the annexation of several of its suburbs. These suburbs annexed in 1902 were: Argo and Globeville, both north of Denver; Berkeley, on the northwest corner of Denver, and Elyria to the northeast corner of the city; Montclair, in east central Denver; and Valverde, to the southwest of the city, west of the river between Alameda and Mississippi Avenues. These additions increased the total land area of the city from approximately fifty square miles to almost 59 square miles, almost a twenty per cent increase. Interestingly enough these were the last sections to be added to the city until 1941. There was an organization of the Methodist denomination in each of these new additions except for Montclair in which no Methodist church was organized until 1944.

The population gains during the decade following 1900 are not as significant as in other decades, but there was much expansion nevertheless. The population in 1900 was approximately 150,000 whereas in 1910 it had grown to 225,000.² However, along with the population increase, and the addition of new areas to the city, the decade is noted for its internal improvements when parks, boulevards, and many other aspects of a true city were developed. Mayor Speer, for whom one of the boulevards he made possible is named, is to be credited with much of this progress as he served the city for a total of ten years, 1904-1912, and 1916-1918.

It is noted that in 1902-1903 there were great strikes of miners and some lawlessness which carried over from the previous decade, but as the city developed around it, this was

¹ Colorado Writer’s Program, History of Denver . . . , p. 67.

² Chamber of Commerce Reports, 1912.

gradually outgrown. Denver ceased being the capitol of the gangster world and “Soapy” Smith was a tradition of the past.¹

Mayor Robert W. Speer is the symbol for a changed and improved Denver, though there were many factions against his proposed improvements which carried with them higher taxes. Previous to his election to the office of Mayor, Robert Speer had had other duties in the city government as the Chairman of the Board of Public Works from 1901-1904. With this background, the new Mayor launched his campaign, built on the need for planning a beautiful city with parks, boulevards and other improvements. Evidently the people agreed with him for they elected him to two terms of office, during which time the city of Denver changed remarkably.

A part of Mayor Speer’s plan for improvement called for a civic center. Many of the buildings previously in the area between Colfax and Thirteenth Avenue west of Broadway, were condemned and torn down in 1907, making room for the present Civic-center buildings. The boulevard which now runs along Cherry Creek was constructed when the creek was walled in, and the sunken gardens in front of West High School were built on top of the old city dump. In the Mayor’s honor the boulevard was later named “Speer.” The need was seen for a city auditorium, and in preparation for the Democratic National Convention in 1912, the auditorium was constructed where it now stands (1956) on the corner of Fourteenth and Curtis Streets.

Boulevards such as East Sixth and East Seventh Parkways, Montview Boulevard, Monaco Boulevard, and others were planned as an effort to beautify the city. Certainly improvements such as these are indispensable for an attractive city. The “welcome” arch at the north end of Seventeenth Street was built that all visitors to the city who came by rail would be welcomed by the impressive sign. This was not torn down until 1931.

All telephone lines and telegraph cables were placed underground, making the downtown area less cluttered with numerous wires. Many of the parks that are now scattered throughout the city were planned by Speer’s administration, including City Park, Cheeseman Park, Berkeley Park and Washington Park. At the last two named places bathing beaches were constructed. Such were some of the improvements suggested and carried out by Mayor Speer in his remarkable administration.²

Of course, such improvements took money and it was at this point that Speer became increasingly unpopular. Nevertheless, he was wise in administering what finances he had. The city was divided into four park districts in which bonds were issued. All the improvements in all four areas for the first eight years of Speer’s term of office amounted to \$620,000. Two and sometimes all three of the newspapers of the city were against Speer’s administration, charging that he was too close to the Public Service organizations because of his previous associations. It is noted however, that Speer so organized his improvements that only one ninth of the cost of the Twentieth Street viaduct was paid for by the city’s taxpayers. The rest of the money came from the railroad companies. The cost of the West Alameda Avenue under-pass was split in thirds; the city, the tramway corporation, and the railroads.

¹ Roland Ashford Phillips, “Denver, the City of Hope,” The Bohemian Magazine, 1908, p. 781.

² Colorado Writer’s Program, A Short History of Denver . . . , p. 67, 68.

In the year 1907 alone it is reported that \$1,171,000 were spent in public improvements. This is augmented by the \$300,000 spent for the YMCA building as it now stands at East Sixteenth and Lincoln. The emphasis was on keeping Denver dollars in Denver and letting them line the pockets of eastern bankers. Speer was dedicated to this task and carried it through remarkably well.¹

In addition to the plans to raze three city blocks for the proposed Civic Center, a law was passed in 1907 that forbade the construction of frame buildings within the city limits.² The results of such a law are seen in the large areas of Highlands, North Denver, Park Hill, Capitol Hill, South Denver and Washington Park and other sections where one may drive for miles without seeing anything but brick homes. Upon this particular phenomenon of Denver building visitors are prone to make comment. However, the building code has since been modified and frame structures re becoming quite common, especially in some of the newly developing suburban areas.

Denver added prestige to its city in 1907 when it became the seat of the National Western Stock Show, which remains to this day (1956) one of the main attractions of large numbers of cattlemen and others to Denver. Following this, Denver became one of the largest stock markets in the midwest.³

One further act of Mayor Speer is noted in 1912 when he was instrumental in persuading Denver to purchase its City Mountain Parks, which are still a great asset to the people of Denver. Such parks as Genesee, Dedisee, and many other areas in the nearby mountains are still maintained by the city and make excellent vacation spots for tourists, as well as ideal afternoon retreats and picnic areas for the people of Denver and vicinity.⁴

According to the Denver Chamber of Commerce reports in 1912, the city felt it had the leading stock market west of the Missouri River, and were one of the most progressive cities in the whole mid-west. In 1912 the present Post Office building was nearing completion which represented an expenditure of \$1,500,000 for the structure and \$500,000 for the city block upon which it still stands at Nineteenth and Champa Streets. In 1911 there had been building permits issued for a total of \$6,084,260 and a set of Civic Center plans which would cost approximately \$1,600,000 to carry out. These were only indicators of the rapid growth of the city until 1912, but are typical of what was being done in many other areas as well.⁵

Mayor Speer did not run for re-election in 1912, but the candidate which he favored was defeated. The organization rapidly shifted, and in 1913 the people decided to try the Commission plan of city government. However, the experiment proved unsatisfactory, and in 1916 Mayor Speer was again elected, at which time he continued to carry through the plans he had previously projected. He died in 1918 of pneumonia before some of his ideas materialized,

¹ Roland Ashford Phillips, "Denver, the City of Hope," The Bohemian Magazine, 1908, p. 781.

² Ibid.

³ Caroline Bancroft, Mile High Denver, (Denver: The Golden Press, 1952), p. 30.

⁴ LeRoy R. and Ann Hafen, The Colorado Story (Denver: The Old West Publishing Co., 1953), p. 454.

⁵ Chamber of Commerce Reports, 1912, on file in the Western History Department of the Denver Public Library.

however. His plans have since been completed which include, among other projects: a road to the top of Mount Evans, one of the Denver Mountain Parks; a City and County Building opposite the State Capitol building at Civic Center; and an art museum in Civic Center.¹ The second of these, the new City and County Building, was completed in 1932 at a total cost of \$3,000,000. We are sure that if Mayor Speer were to see the city today, he would feel that he had contributed some significant ideas to its development, but also that there are many more needed improvements to be made.

It is not quite accurate perhaps to think of Denver as only expanding during the decade 1900-1910, but that was certainly the trend. The city organization had been changed, a county of Denver took its place in the state system, and Mayor Speer had helped to build Denver into a real city of the mid-west. In addition, the illegal gambling and rackets which caused so much trouble for Governor Waite had been outgrown or eliminated from Denver, and it became a law-abiding and progressive mid-west city.

It is not surprising that during this period of time many new Methodist organizations appeared, some in newly developed areas, and some in areas previously developed, though neglected. The growth and expansion typical of this period is not true of the next thirty year period, however. From 1912 to 1944 neither the city of Denver nor the Methodist Church experienced any appreciable degree of expansion or change. Nevertheless the period ending with the death of Bishop Warren in 1912 was certainly one fraught with many possibilities, not only in the city, but also in the church. It is these specific developments which should occupy our time now.

¹ Colorado Writer's Program, A Short History of Denver . . . , p. 68.

CHAPTER XII

DENVER METHODISM

The years between 1900 and 1912 were progressive for the churches of Denver, and they continued the work that they had previously begun. Within the period the "City Missions" were at first under the jurisdiction of the Presiding Elder, but in 1909 all the charges became regularly recorded in the Journals, and the appointment of "City Missions" ceased. No doubt the expansion of the city was seen to be leveling off, and the pressing needs of 1890 were no longer present, hence there was no need for the particular appointment to City Missions. It is assumed however, that after this time the Presiding Elder still was responsible for the small missions, but following 1909 each mission had its statistics recorded as a regular charge. The work was then supervised by the Denver Church Extension Society.

As has been noted, the expansion of Denver was rapid, until 1904 when many new suburbs were annexed to the city, but the city did not make any annexations again until 1941. However, in checking the population of Denver, a gradual increase was recorded for every decade to the present.¹ There may be some question as to how the churches could have been maintaining their influence if no new churches were begun during the expanding period. It is probably to be explained by the fact that many of the churches were growing in membership, and there was less need for completely new organizations. Missions had been begun in almost every part of the city, and one by one they expanded to become churches. Some of them however, perished because of population shifts, or lack of development.

In 1900, metropolitan Denver had thirty-five Methodist churches, whereas in 1912, at the time of the retirement and subsequent death of Bishop Warren, the churches, including several small missions, numbered fifty-two in the metropolitan area. Hence, the administration of Warren ended with as much progress as had been evident at any time during his career. In a very real way, the Methodism of Denver owes its life and its vitality to the personality and the enthusiasm of Bishop Henry White Warren.

In the present rather lengthy chapter, the same organizational pattern will be followed as previously. First, the churches organized previous to 1900 will be analyzed and outlined up to 1912. This section lists the churches according to alphabetical order.

The second portion analyzes new organizations of the period according to the chronological order of their organization. A short summary of the area of town, or the specific tendencies or problems of a particular location are given first in order that the new organizations will be seen against the background of their own areas.

Argo Church

In the little suburb of Argo, immediately north of Denver, a little Methodist church was begun in 1880. The town itself was completely dependent upon the silver smelter as its main

¹ See the official Annexation Map at the end of this work, as published by the City Planning Office of Denver.

industry, hence the church's livelihood likewise depended upon the success or failure of the smelting industry. As is to be expected, the church was not strong, and was soon united on a circuit with Greenwood Church in the suburb of Globeville, next to Argo on the east. Even the two churches together did not make a strong charge in 1900.

The minister of the Argo-Greenwood circuit from 1899 to 1901 was Mr. H. J. Grace, whose records show little change in membership, but a decrease in the Sunday School enrollment. The membership had been 82 when he came, decreased the first year to 75 and the second to 72. The Sunday School records reported 194 when he came, 180 the first year, and 160 at the end of the second year.

In 1901 the minister was Dr. W. F. Steele, a professor from the University of Denver. The situation at Argo looked like it would grow, but the Greenwood situation was rather hopeless:

Dr. W. F. Steele has been pastor this year at Argo and Greenwood. Argo is a small church that has a pious, faithful, painstaking membership. Greenwood, in Globeville, is almost with a membership, surrounded by foreigners who are not protestants and but for the good Sunday School we have there, our work at both places would be barren indeed. Careful work has been done at both places, and if we can only hold our Sunday Schools we shall have strong churches in some future time.¹

The Conference appointment of 1902 is the last in which Argo and Greenwood were together as a circuit, and the minister that year was J. W. Rose. The health of the Rev. Mr. Rose was not its best, as reflected by the report in the Journal:

Rev. J. W. Rose began to do work in the University in connection with his pastorate at Argo and Greenwood. His health would not permit him to continue his studies, but he has taken care of Argo all the year, and since Brother Money left University Park, Brother Rose has preached there every Sunday morning. [The records show that J. W. Rose served also at University Park Church from April to September, 1903.]²

This particular church and town had depended almost wholly upon the smelter for its total existence, and now that the smelter work was declining, and that the town was appealing to many foreign non-protestants, the church was finding that its future was limited. The situation is analyzed in the Journal of 1904:

Argo is at the end of the Street car line in the north part of Denver. Our church is near the great smelters, and was originally built there as a place where the men might worship. The smelters remain, and the church remains, but the men have moved away. What is to be done is the question. We have a loyal membership, including the Rev. George Richardson and family, but none of them now live near the church. They have been famous for the prompt and generous support of pastors, and for large benevolent collections, but for the reasons I have mentioned they are not now making satisfactory

¹ Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church (Fortieth Session), 1902, p. 232.

² Ibid. (Forty-First Session), 1903, p. 373.

progress. Rev. J. T. Coulter has, with faithfulness and much regret for small results, been their pastor for the last year.¹

J. T. Coulter, the minister, reported at the end of this year 83 members and 85 registered in the Sunday School. Unfortunately we do not have statistics to show us the average attendance or the percentage of people who were “non-resident” members, that is, living in other parts of Denver, or in other towns.

S. H. Slutz became the minister in 1904, to remain one year. The same pessimistic outlook is reflected:

Argo, with its few loyal, generous members, has had little growth except in Sunday School. Brother George Richardson, a superannuated member of the Rock River Conference, is one of the best Sunday School superintendents in the state. So in spite of the fact that all our people live remote from the church building, which stands in the smoke of the great smelters, the Sunday School has steadily maintained the excellent character . . . Pastor S. H. Slutz has done as well as any one could do, but the outlook for building our work in that suburb is not very luminous.²

The successor was J. C. Bonnell who remained two years, and recorded a continual decline in membership. However, the Journal records that “J. C. Bonnell has at last seen the moving and rebuilding of the church at a cost of \$2,000.”³ (see Fig. 55). Unfortunately the extent of the rebuilding and the moving are not available.

A rapid succession of ministers followed, while the membership continued to decline. In 1907 the minister was Charles O. Thibodeau; 1908 the minister was Thomas C. Collister; and coming in 1911 to stay almost one year was O. P. Lee, the year having been filled out by T. J. Tramel; B. F. Young came in 1912 and at the Conference of 1913 reported the membership at 37 and the Sunday School enrollment at 100.

The situation was getting worse, and the leadership of the church was considering what should be done. We note their continued pessimism in the Journal:

Argo is one of our small churches and yet one of the oldest in the city. Removals from that section, due to the closing down of the smelter, have much weakened the church. Yet in spite of these trying circumstances, Pastor Thomas Collister and his courageous people have compelled victory.⁴

Argo did not have a bright future, though they continued their organization for several years following 1912. It was in the 1930” that they sold their building and disbanded. The building still stands at the corner of Jason and West Forth-Fourth Avenue, though in a bad state of disrepair. Being only a frame structure, its exterior has deteriorated rapidly. (see Fig. 55).

¹ Ibid. (Forty-Second Session), 1904, p. 59.

² Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church (Forty-Third Session), 1905, p. 226.

³ Ibid. (Forty-Fourth Session), 1906, p. 378.

⁴ Ibid., (Forty-Ninth Session), 1911, p. 428.

Periodically the building has been used by the Pillar of Fire Church, but even they have abandoned the old building. It stands now neglected, overgrown with weeds, and the exterior is badly in need of paint. The people have moved away from the area, the smelter is still, but the church remains, a symbol of the faith of many people of a past generation, and perhaps even a symbol of what is indestructible in the future.

Arvada Church

One of the earliest suburban churches was organized in Arvada in 1863. This organization has progressed, and remains one of the main suburbs as far as farming and business are concerned. The Arvada church has remained one of the strong suburban church also.

The first Methodist Church building at Arvada was built in 1877, though rather extensively rebuilt during the ministry of Isaac H. Beardsley, in 1889. In 1900 the minister was C. W. Simmons who had served the previous year also. The membership in 1900 was recorded at 73, with 150 registered in the Sunday School.

In 1901 the minister appointed to Arvada was J. R. Rader who remained three years, and reported 13 gain in membership and some substantial gains in the Sunday School. Also a part of J. R. Rader's ministry was helping to reorganize the Ralston Church, between Arvada and Golden. This had been a thriving church in years past, but had been unorganized for twenty years. Since Ralston is not a part of the metropolitan Denver area, it will not be included in this section.

In 1904 the minister was J. C. Gullette who remained two years. He died while serving this church. During his pastorate he reported no substantial changes in either membership or the Sunday School. It is noted: "A bad hailstorm in late spring completely destroyed all crops."¹ Yet, in another place it is stated: "The benevolence collections have been trebled . . . acetylene gas lights were installed in the church this year."²

In 1904 the Presiding Elder reported:

Arvada now an important suburb of Denver, reached by two railroads and one street car line. Half the buildings are new, and population lately doubled. Three new denominations of church work came into this town last year. Great opportunity invites us, and this opportunity must be grasped or lost by the conference. Improvement on property has been made this year to the amount of \$150.³

The two new denominations mentioned here seem to have been the Baptists and the Congregationalists, but then the town was growing rapidly and could easily support two other churches.⁴

¹ A history of Arvada Church published on the occasion of the dedication of the new building, 1931.

² Ibid.

³ Journal of the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Church (forty-Second Session,) 1904, p. 67.

⁴ History of Arvada Church . . . , 1931.

In 1906 the minister was Robert Sanderson who remained three years. He reported substantial gains in membership from 75 to 135, and a rather steady Sunday School. During his second year, though the crops were not prosperous, they built an addition to their church, and paid for it immediately.¹

A. W. Rice was appointed to the Arvada Church in 1909 to remain three years. He reported membership decreases to 116 and then up again to 135, where it had been in 1909. His Sunday School records show a total of 250 pupils, a good growth from the 135 of three years previously.

Arvada was a growing suburb, because it had recently become a terminal point for one or two of the railroads on the runs to the northwest of Denver and into the mountains. In 1923 it was decided that a new building was necessary to do the work in Arvada. Consequently they began an ambitious plan, but in 1923 they completed only the basement gymnasium and the foundation for the rest of the building. Another large section of the building was completed in 1931.² (see Fig. 20).

As one of the earliest suburban churches, Arvada continues to be one of the most significant and progressive of the outlying churches, now almost a part of Denver proper.

Asbury Church

Although there were early services in North Denver, the formal organization of this church took place not until 1880, with the name North Denver Methodist Church. In 1890 the church had changed its name to Asbury Church, as a new building was constructed. Hence, following the decade in which the new building was finished, 1890-1900, the Asbury Church began to gain new strength in spite of its large debt.

The minister of Asbury Church in 1890, for two years, was D. L. Rader. He came to a church recording a membership of 331 with 409 enrolled in Sunday School. He left two years later reporting a net membership gain of 11, and a net Sunday School gain of 41. This is the D. L. Rader who was previously mentioned as the minister of the Methodist Church, South, in Denver, and who later transferred to the Methodist Episcopal denomination, and had a long career until he retired to California in 1901 for health reasons.

The successor in 1901 was Benjamin Young, who remained three years. The significant item of this ministry is the reduction in the great debt which Asbury had carried for over a decade. The Presiding Elder reported in 1902 that the church had paid more than \$2,000 on the principal and was working on plans for another large payment in the near future.³

During the year 1902-1903, H. L. Beardsley was assistant at Asbury Church for a time, undoubtedly to relieve the minister of some of his duties that he might do more work to reduce the debt. By the end of the conference year the Journal recorded the good news:

¹ Journal of the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Church (Forty-Fifth Session), 1907, p. 528.

² History of Arvada Church . . . , 1931.

³ Journal of the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Church (Fortieth Session), 1902, p. 230.

Asbury, another debt paying success. Year began with debt of \$25,000 plus a lot of interest, and a pastor, Rev. Benjamin Young, has had a year of more work and anxiety than anyone ought to have if he expects to live long. Raised since last Conference \$11,200 on principal and interest leaving only \$15,000 debt.¹

Benjamin Young was appointed to Asbury for another year, 1903-1904, but in February was transferred to Salt Lake City, and N. H. Lee filled out the rest of the year.² During the pastorate of Benjamin Young the membership grew from 342 to 402, a net increase of 60; the Sunday School enrollment made little change from its 450.

One of the most significant pastorates of the church was the second ministry of James F. Harris, 1904-1910. It is to be remembered that under the leadership of James F. Harris in 1887-1891, the present Asbury Church building was planned and begun. Now in his second pastorate the last of the mortgage was paid and the church was out of debt for the first time in almost a quarter of a century.

Some of the situation which Harris faced as he went to the church is noted in the Journal:

Asbury with its \$15,000 debt, is well known. Brother Harris, who built the church, has rendered good service throughout the year. Mrs. Bishop Warren paid for frescoeing the auditorium, and the improvement is magnificent. Some floating debts have been paid, and the union revival gathered in a number of probationers. But the debt is heavy. I sometimes wish there never was a church that cost more than \$20,000.³

One year later the enthusiasm for the church is reflected by the Presiding Elder who reported the happy financial progress:

But the most single victory of the year is the achievement of Asbury Church. That withering, unyielding, historic debt, \$35,000, lately \$15,000, has been liquidated by the payment of some \$5,000 on principal, and securing the rest in bonds assumed. It was a most difficult feat. Of all the church debts in Denver and in all Colorado, this one has been most stubborn, and has caused us the most anxiety; because we had such excellent property at stake. At the close of the last Conference it was determined to wipe out that debt. That heroic board of men and women of meager means subscribed once more over \$4,000. Then we had a great day in the church, and raised the pledges up to \$11,000. We had already canvassed the city of Denver very generally, and had written our friends in distant places, asking for help, when we found our constituency seemingly exhausted. Every subscription was conditioned on getting it all. We lacked \$4,000. Dr. Harris and I [W. H. Phifer, the Presiding Elder] set out to get that money. We agreed never to stop until we got the last dollar. We tramped all over the city again and again. Once we went for four days and got nothing. We went thirteen times to see one corporation and failed. The next time \$250 was secured. The last \$25 we got from Mayor Speer. I did the

¹ Ibid., (Forty-First Session), 1903, pp. 375, 381.

² Ibid., (Forty-Second Session), 1904, p. 60.

³ Ibid., (Forty-Third Session), 1905, p. 218.

talking, Harris did the smiling, and the mayor did the paying. It was worthy of a noble people, and will never be forgotten. This struggle at Asbury is historic and so notable, that I can not forget the self-sacrificing, brave efforts to save this church made by Hissey and Spencer (and Phifer, editorial note by secretary in fairness to a modest participant), and Rader and Young and Lee and others many. The benevolences are paid in full. Souls have been converted to the church.¹

This enthusiasm did not really represent complete payment, but merely the underwriting of the debt with pledges, bonds, and other means. As a part of the plan, during the Conference year 1906-1907, the church collected over \$11,000 for all purposes, and met all its other debts, pastors salary, and operating expenses.²

By the Conference of 1908 the only remaining debt was \$3,500, which was still covered by bonds, and which was expected to be fully paid very soon.

The debt seemed to be the center of each Conference report, as the Presiding Elder had called it “the most troublesome debt in Colorado Methodism.”³

Finally the goal had been reached, as F. R. Hollenback the Presiding Elder reported in 1910:

J. F. Harris has had his best year at Asbury. That church has not been out of debt for thirty years. They have paid \$20,000 in interest alone. The final rally was held on July 3rd, Bishop Warren preaching the sermon. The people gave with sacramental gladness, and that noble structure, representing, interest charges included, a total outlay of \$100,000, stands free from debt for the first time in more than a quarter of a century.⁴

A glowing, and we might say “well deserved” tribute was given by Mr. Gildersleeve, a long-time member of Asbury Church:

In the second pastorate of Rev. J. F. Harris, by heroic effort, the remaining \$15,000 was raised during the last four years of this remarkable pastorate of six years from 1904-1910, during which time the Presiding Elder, Phifer, lent valuable assistance. Thus Rev. Harris has been peculiarly identified with Asbury Church as he who led the building enterprise and he who led the way out of debt – surely two marvelous pastorates.⁵

During the ministry of Harris, the membership recorded a net increase of 40, totaling 442 in 1910. The Sunday School recorded an increase from 445 to 620, for a net increase of 175. All in all, this was one of the most significant times for Asbury Church, and one to which it looked with pride.

¹ Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church (Forty-Fourth Session, 1906, p. 375.

² Ibid., (Forty-Fifth Session), 1907, p. 521.

³ Ibid., (Forty-Seventh Session), 1909, p. 50.

⁴ Ibid., (Forty-Eighth Session), 1910, p. 281.

⁵ From the records of the Memoirs of Mr. Gildersleeve, collected by L. George Pimlott, formerly minister of Asbury Church. On file in the office of Asbury Church.

In 1910 N. H. Lee returned to Asbury Church for his second pastorate in that church. It was during his administration that the church purchased its pipe organ from the Jewish Synagogue, which is still used today.¹ During the ministry of Lee the membership showed an increase from 442 to 493, for a net increase of 51.

The successor to Lee Was H. M. Pingree who remained for three years (1911-1914), and during whose ministry the highest Sunday School record of all time was recorded. In 1912-1913 the report stated that the Sunday School enrollment stood at 650, an increase of 190 in two years of Rev. Pingree's work. The membership climbed from 492 to 545 the first year, and dropped back to 450 the second year. The statistics later fall outside the scope of this work, so are not included here.

The work of the Rev. Mr. Pingree was a sincere effort to try to build the church program and membership now that the threat of mortgage foreclosure was something of the past. One incident from his ministry at Asbury is related by Dr. Pingree, still living in the University Park area and active in University Park Church:

1912 . . . During one of Billy Sunday's evangelistic campaigns, over 800 persons signed slips indicating Asbury as their preference. Feeling that a glorious harvest of members was in prospect with so many prospects to contact, Dr. Pingree with the help of a deaconess, contacted each and every one with the net result – not one new member.²

This is, of course, a rather pointed illustration of the futility and the lack of influence of this particular type of "high-pressure" evangelism.

Asbury Church seemed in 1912 to be embarking on the beginning of a glorious future, but this is not exactly the case. As early as 1912 the neighborhood around Asbury began to change. The Italian and Spanish-American populations began to move in as many of the original settlers and their descendents moved farther into the outskirts of growing Denver. In fact, this shift continued for several years and was not stabilized until 1948-1949 when Dr. Robert Klein was minister of Asbury Church. From the days of the depression, in 1929, Asbury Church had been unable to afford a full-time minister, and had had student ministers for many years. Dr. Klein was the last student minister they had, and as the situation looks now, perhaps the last for some time to come.

There was a time that the Methodist church thought of selling Asbury and moving to a new location, but this was not done, and now perhaps will not be done at least in the foreseeable future. Asbury church is no longer a leading church, financially and socially, that it was at one time, but it still has a significant place to work in its particular north Denver community.

The founders of Asbury Church built well for their day, and its work continues today. The heritage of the pioneers is still alive in the building which still stands high on a hill and can be seen from any part of downtown Denver.

¹ H. C. Roerig, "The Romance of Asbury" a lecture given at the meeting of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society, 1944.

² Ibid.

Berkeley Church

In the northwest corner of Denver is a section known as Berkeley. This was formerly an incorporated town adjoining Denver until it was annexed in 1904. In 1889 a Gospel tent was erected and the organization of a church begun. The Methodist group built their present building in 1891 and their present parsonage in 1893 just before the depression of the latter year caused problems for all churches with debts. The debt which had weighed heavily on their work for quite some time, was not removed until 1917 during the ministry of J. G. Brawn.¹

The minister appointed in 1900 was John H. Merritt who had already finished three years at Berkeley Church. He remained an additional two years, making a total of five years, or until the Conference of 1902. When Merritt came to the church its debt was \$1,800 with a membership of 44. He reduced the amount to \$1,545 the next year, 1898, which was rather sizable work it seems. Merritt continued in the same vein, to put the church on a sound financial basis.

During his five years the membership of the church went from 44 through a high of 58 and back down to 42. The Sunday School continued to grow gradually however, from 61 to 125 during the five years. Surely of the hard work of this man the Presiding Elder had adequate praise:

Dr. Merritt has had a good year at Berkeley. Long service in the Conference, sterling Christian character, a mind kept young by reading the latest books, and most considerate courtesy to all, have made a place in Denver hearts for this young man that any of us might well covet earnestly.²

The Rev. Mr. R. R. Adams succeeded Merritt for the two years 1902-1904. He recorded a sizeable increase in membership as well as in Sunday School. The membership climbed from 42 to 114 in two years, for an increase of 72. The Sunday School climbed from 125 to 175, for a net increase of 50.

Of the work that particular year (1902-1903) the Presiding Elder reported:

Rev. R. R. Adams has led a fine Methodist crusade at Berkeley this year. The church seems to be unfortunately situated. It is on the edge of the suburb, and some of its friends hope sometime to see it moved to a center, but with this and other drawbacks, the year was crowned with prosperity.³

Incidentally, the move suggested here did not materialize for at the present time Berkeley Church is situated on the same corner where the pioneers built in 1891. The next year the Presiding Elder again reflected on the difficult situation of Berkeley: "It is across the street from Denver in

¹ A history of Berkeley Church written by the Records Committee, 1954.

² Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church (Fortieth Session), 1902, p. 231.

³ Ibid., (Forty-First Session), 1903, p. 375.

Jefferson County, and consequently has the fag-end of what the city has to give in the way of light, walks, etc.”¹ However, as we have seen the membership increase was rather substantial despite the hardships which they recognized.

Samuel Knupp became the minister in 1904 and remained four years. He was enthusiastically received, and did some substantial building as far as membership goes, as well as Sunday School enrollment. In his four years we note the membership rose from 98 his first year to 136 his fourth year. The Sunday School remained more steady, averaging approximately 140 for the same period of time. The Presiding Elder reflected the happiness of the people:

Berkeley has been doing bravely for years, but this year has been an especially happy and prosperous one. The congregation has been good, prayer meetings . . . about 35 received into the church . . . Unanimous request for the return of Pastor Knupp.²

During the pastorate of Knupp there were new pews put into the church, costing \$451.00, all of which was paid for immediately.³

Following Knupp the minister was J. E. Bryan who remained two years. The membership for both his years is reported at 98, which was a substantial decrease from the previous record of Knupp. The Sunday School registered a high of 225 in 1909 however, a high so far for Berkeley Church; and 85 above the previous year.

D. C. Winship was the successor, coming in 1910 to stay two years. His record of membership is nearer to that set by Knupp, but otherwise the statistics are rather stable. In 1912 the minister was C. J. Mickelson who remained for only one year. The statistics at the end of the year, 1912-1913, stood: membership, 117; Sunday School a high of 270.

The situation at Berkeley was good, because they were on one of the growing edges of Denver, an area which had much potential from the standpoint of children at least. The church was in debt however, and did not clear this until 1917 during the ministry of J. G. Brawn.

Berkeley is still one of the significant community churches, though not a large group. They are one of the main churches in northwest Denver, and have built well in the past, and we are sure, will build well in the future.

Cameron Church

Cameron Church had been organized by John Collins in 1888, and the people had built their first building in 1890. This same building now stands on the corner of South Washington and East Iowa, one block east of the present Cameron building, and is used by them as a social hall. The people used their first structure until 1909 when they decided to rebuild, and moved into their partially completed new church in 1911. (see Fig. 14).

¹ *Ibid.*, (Forty-Second Session), 1904, p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, (Forty-Third Session), 1905, p. 226.

³ *Ibid.*, (Forty-Fifth Session), 1907, p. 522.

Through the first twelve years of its life, from 1888 to 1900 the church progressed rapidly, and in 1900 reported a membership of 145 with 140 registered in the Sunday School. They were located strategically in South Denver without any other Methodist groups close enough to cause competition, and hence grew rapidly in the growing area of Denver.

The minister from 1899 to 1902 was D. B. Allen who did good work, and reported the membership in 1902 at 206, a gain of 74; and a Sunday School enrollment of 186, a net gain of 36. In addition to this work Rev. Allen led in an enlargement of the church building at an expense of \$1,400, and redecorated the interior.¹

In 1902 A. L. Chase was appointed, to remain for three years. There was constant growth during his effective ministry, as the membership grew from 206 to 351, an increase of 145; while the Sunday School grew from 186 to 320, an increase of 134. Of the work of Rev. Chase the Presiding Elder had nothing but praise in 1903:

Cameron Memorial is one of the best churches in this world. There are larger and richer churches, but I do not know of a church where the spirit of Christ is more manifest than it is there. They are Christ-like in worship, in giving, and in sacrifice. The pastor, Rev. A. L. Chase, has been greeted all year with large and zealous congregations, and our great need is for a larger building.²

During his last year at Cameron (1904-1905), A. L. Chase led in the lifting of the complete parsonage debt.³ Unfortunately the details of the parsonage and its costs are not available.

From 1905 to 1908 the minister was H. M. Mayo who reported continued progress, enlarging membership, and larger budgets. The membership during his three years climbed from 351 to 400; while the Sunday School declined from 320 to 300. His salary for his last year was \$1,500, the highest Cameron Church had yet paid.

The minister coming in 1908 to remain four years was C. F. Seitter. During his ministry the plans for a new building were begun in earnest as a committee of five men were chosen to plan a new structure. They were: the Rev. Mr. Seitter, Frank E. Miller, R. R. Houghton, R. G. Warren, and F. a. Richardson.⁴ On January 25th, 1909, there was held the first meeting of this committee to consider the advisability of building a new Cameron Church. Two locations were suggested, and we may assume that both locations were available to the church committee. The first suggested was across Iowa on Washington, north of their first building. The second location was the one they chose, one block to the west of the corner of South Pearl and Iowa. These lots were then purchased for \$1,000 from a Mr. H. S. Crawford.⁵

¹ Ibid., (Fortieth Session), 1902, p. 230.

² Ibid., (Forty-Third Session), 1905, p. 208ff.

³ A History of Cameron Church written by Mrs. Ellermeier, a long-time member of Cameron Church. On file in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

In their planning they had decided that the new church should have a sanctuary to seat 500, and Sunday School space for 400. Of the needed cost, they decided they should have \$10,000 on hand before they began to build.¹ As for the type of building they constructed, we see that these recommendations were followed, and that the two-story building with basement was built of tan brick.

As a part of the financial drive, an attempt was made to sell their original building. The only buyer mentioned was the congregation of the Swedish Methodist Church meeting at their new building at 22nd and Court Place. The Swedish people had wanted to begin Sunday Schools in various parts of Denver, in order to meet the needs of their people better. This was finally accomplished in 1913.²

The enthusiasm of the new building project was reflected by the Presiding Elder in 1909:

For years Cameron has needed a new church edifice for its expanding work. This year, under the leadership of C. F. Seitter, the project was initiated. A new location in the same block was secured. Subscriptions netted ten thousand dollars secured and contracts being let for one of the neatest and completest plants in Denver Methodism. They also had a year of prosperity. Great opportunity here.³

The permit to build a brick structure, two stories, costing approximately \$25,000 was recorded in the Denver Times, October 6, 1909.⁴

The church group proceeded cautiously, learning from bitter experiences of other churches in previous years:

Cameron has this year put in place a fine foundation for the new church building. The money is being steadily paid on the material purchased for the erection of the superstructure. Considerable commendable caution is being used as not to incur too burdensome a debt.⁵

In the partially completed Sunday School wing of the new building the first services were held on February 26th, 1911.⁶ It was not until the ministry of Rev. W. F. Pitner that the cornerstone for the main building was laid by Chancellor H. A. Buchtel of the University of Denver, on March 9, 1913.⁷

After successful activity, the Rev. Mr. C. F. Seitter was replaced in 1912 by the Rev. Mr. W. F. Pitner who continued the good work, and during whose administration the new building was completed and first used. He recorded a membership increase of 18 his first year, and a

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church (Forty-Seventh Session), 1909, p. 46.

⁴ The Denver Times, October 6, 1909.

⁵ Journal of the Colorado Annual Conference of the Methodist Church (Forty-eighth Session, 1910, p. 276.

⁶ Mrs. Ellermeir's history of Cameron Church.

⁷ Ibid.

Sunday School increase of 59. The membership at the Conference of 1913 was 496 while the Sunday School enrollment was 540.

During the ministry of W. F. Pitner, on April 23, 1913, the old church property was sold to the Swedish people who were under the leadership of the Rev. Mr. Carl Eklund, for \$1,000. This price is just half of the price asked a few years earlier.¹ On June 13, 1913, the transfer of title was completed, in the name of the First Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church, to be used for one of their outlying Sunday School buildings.

The Cameron people had wanted to let the name “Cameron” continue with the original church, and had themselves begun to think in terms of “Calvary Methodist Church” as the name for their new church. However, when the Swedish people decided on the purchase they took rather the name “St. Peter’s,” at which time the original Cameron people retained their name, as they have done to the present day.²

The new Cameron Church was dedicated on July 30, 1913, by T. C. Iliff, at a total cost of \$35,306.44³ In tribute to the man who finally completed the task, we note the Journal gives commendation to the Rev. Mr. W. F. Pitner:

We have dedicated two new churches during this year. Cameron was dedicated July 20th. The property, as it now stands, cost \$34,000 and is one of the most complete plants in Denver. There is every facility for taking care of our large Sunday School and all other departments of the work. Dr. Pitner has been the leading genius of this new enterprise. One year ago, when he was appointed pastor of this church, no one dreamed of being able to complete the church during the year, but as a result of his forceful leadership, they now have a completed building.⁴

After several owners, the original building is again the property of the Cameron Methodist Church. The Swedish people had found it inadvisable to continue with the church and sold it June 17, 1918 to Mr. John Kamp for \$12,000. He used it for furniture storage until 1920. Then the Cameron people bought the property back, remodeled it, built on to it, dug a basement, and began to use it as a social hall for their youth or other large gatherings.⁵ On December 6, 1953, the old building was dedicated “Wesley Hall” to be used as the educational and recreational building of Cameron.⁶

It is indeed a tribute to the genius and the farsightedness of John Collins that he helped to establish Cameron Church at its strategic location. It has been one of the strong South Denver churches for three or more generations, and is continuing in the same manner.

¹ Ibid.

² Mrs. Ellermeier’s History. This is corroborated by the history of the Swedish Church (Emmanuel) as written by the Rev. Mr. J. Richard Palmer, 1948.

³ Journal of the Colorado Conference (1913), p. 185. Corroborated by Mrs. Ellermeier’s research.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Mrs. Ellermeier’s History of Cameron.

⁶ The Denver Post, December 6, 1953.

Christ Church

Christ Methodist Church began in 1871 under the name of “California Street Methodist Church” at 24th and California. In 1899, because of population shifts, and better advantages for the church, it was moved to East 22nd and Ogden where a permanent building was constructed. The building they built is still standing, and now (1956) houses the Scott Methodist Church. In 1927 further shifts in population came about, and it was again seen advisable to move, hence the present building at East Seventh Avenue and Colorado Boulevard was constructed.

By 1900 Christ Church had taken its place as one of the leaders in the denomination in the city as well as in the state. The minister of Christ Church in 1900 was the Rev. Mr. H. E. Warner, who finished a record of eight years at that church in 1903. During his ministry there he raised the funds and paid off a \$27,000 debt which had rested on the church since it was moved and rebuilt at 22nd and Ogden in 1889. During his total ministry the membership grew from 313 to 531, an increase of 218; and the Sunday School increased from 397 to 575 in three years, an increase of 178. However, by 1903 the Sunday School record had dropped to 392, lower than it was in 1895. Yet, at the turn of the century, one of the churches with a bright future in Denver was Christ Church.

We note the enthusiasm with which the Presiding Elder greeted the news that Christ Church was making progress in debt paying:

Christ Church has had what few Methodist Episcopal Churches have ever had; namely, a continuous pastorate for seven years. In these years Dr. H. E. Warner, the pastor, has gathered around him a large company of people who have been instructed in sacred things and trained to work together, till that church has a reputation of being preeminently a working church. The debt has been reduced to about \$3,200 and it is believed that all of it will be paid by the beginning of a new year.¹

The crowning work of the last year of Dr. H. E. Warner was the complete payment of the debt, and the burning of the mortgage:

A year ago Dr. H. E. Warner was appointed for the eighth time to Christ Church. For years this church has been paying the long-standing debt. The Pastor has been in poor health a good part of the year, and for several weeks past has not been able to work at all, but in spite of the unfortunate fact that final \$3,250 has been raised this year, and the mortgage will be burned next Sunday by the Trustees, Bishop Cranston striking the match.²

This Annual Conference met at Christ Church in 1903, and of course joined in on the burning of the mortgage. Of the spiritual success, and spiritual rejuvenation this payment represented, the Christ Church Chimes stated: “Who can tell how much the work of paying off the indebtedness on Christ Church has done, and will do, for its spiritual life?”³

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 209.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 375.

³ A History published on the occasion of its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary, 1946.

The ministry of David F. Howe lasted little over two years, though he was appointed to Christ Church for the third time in 1905. He did good work, if we accept the praise from the Presiding Elder:

Dr. David F. Howe came from Springfield, Illinois, to Christ Church one year ago, and though his health has not been the best, his people have been so much profited by his ministry, and have come to regard him so highly in every way, that they greatly desire his reappointment for another year.¹

However, the membership did not increase appreciably, nor did the Sunday School enrollment expand. It was during his third year that Dr. David F. Howe returned to Iowa for his wife's health, and the year 1905-1906 was finished out by Oren B. Waite.² Dr. Waite was appointed for a second year at Christ Church, but at the Conference of 1907, because of ill health was forced to discontinue his active ministry.³

The successor for a year was A. E. Chaffee, who reported the highest membership for the church, at 552, an increase of 54 during his first year. The Sunday School recorded a decline however. According to the Presiding Elder, the year was a good one, but nothing special is recorded.⁴

S. B. Warner was minister at Christ Church for two years, 1908-1910. Again there is little change in the membership, but the Sunday School increased from 300 to 410 during those years. In fact this was the beginning of a Sunday School increase which carried on well beyond the year 1912. However, financial problems arose again:

Christ Church faced an already accrued deficit in current expenses of about two thousand dollars. This deficit has been nearly wiped out and the current expenses of the year kept well in hand. S. B. Warner has led on in a harmonious and increasingly expectant work.⁵

Following S. B. Warner as minister was A. F. Ragatz who remained two and a half years, until the year 1913, when the last part of the year was completed by Guy E. Konkel, who remained the succeeding year also (1913-1914). At the end of his first portion of a year, at the Conference of 1913, Dr. Konkel reported the membership of Christ Church at 443, and the Sunday School enrollment at 487. It was still one of the main churches of Denver Methodism.

The future was bright for Christ Church, it seemed, but within a dozen years the population had so shifted that it was felt advisable to move again. Many sites were surveyed, but the decision fell to a corner near the eastern edge of the city, Seventh Avenue at Colorado Boulevard. In 1927 when the new Christ Church was completed at this address, there were few houses east of the church. However, now (1956) we know that there are thousands of homes to

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 375.

² Ibid., (Forty-Fourth Session), 1906, p. 368.

³ Ibid., (Forty-Fifth Session), 1907, p. 518.

⁴ Colorado Conference Journal (1908), p. 44.

⁵ Ibid., (1909), p. 45.

the east, and Christ Church remains one of the stable and constructive churches of the East Denver area.

Christ Church has been plagued with debts through many years of its life, and the new church proved no different. The final burning of the mortgage of the new church on Colorado Boulevard was not possible until 1946 under the able leadership of Dr. Harvey H. Potthoff.¹ This church, the second of the Methodist denomination organized in Denver, then known as the California Street Methodist Church, has indeed had a most colorful history, and we are sure, is just on the threshold of an even more significant future.

John A. Clough Memorial Methodist Church (formerly Ellsworth Mission and Wesley Chapel)

This small church had been organized near the corner of Ellsworth and South Kalamath (then known as South Eleventh), in 1891. Because of its proximity to Ellsworth Street it was named the Ellsworth Mission, often referred to as the mission on South Eleventh Street also.

The small congregation built a building during the Conference year 1896-1897, which building is still standing near this corner, though owned now by the Seventh Day Baptist Church. As they moved into their new building in 1897, they changed their name to "Wesley Chapel," and thus it took the name of the founder of Methodism.²

To this church Austin Chapman was appointed in 1901, to remain four years. At the same time the church was placed on a circuit with Wright Memorial Church. This arrangement made the circuit a Conference appointment, and neither church was any longer on the "City Mission" list. The work began to prosper a bit, but was still now what it probably should have been. The statistics are not available for Wesley Chapel previous to this arrangement, but the Wright Memorial Church reported 18 members the year previous. The end of the first year they were together they reported 73 members, and a Sunday School enrollment of 225 which indicates that both were prospering rather well.

The Superintendent reflected his delight at the progress made:

Wesley, the best of the City Missions, was taken out of that list and put with Wright Memorial Church. To take this charge the Rev. [Mr.] Austin Chapman was appointed. The work at Wesley has gone on prospering as well as ever, but the work at Wright has succeeded beyond all that we could ask or think. I cannot describe how sick my heart had been in other years over the condition of Wright. A few faithful souls rowing against a tide they could not stem. This year God has helped Brother Chapman and his wife to get that work into the most prosperous condition.³

The name of the Wesley Chapel was changed in 1903 to the John A. Clough Memorial Methodist Church, because of a gift he had made in his will through the Denver Church Extension Society. Mr. Clough had been a long-time member of Trinity Church, and left his

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, December 26, 1946.

² The Denver Republican, May 19, 1901.

³ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 231.

estate to be divided equally four ways: The Denver Church Extension Society, Trinity Methodist Church, the Preacher's Aid Society, and the University of Denver. Each of these received \$5,000. One stipulation was that the money could not be used for current expenses.¹

Reflecting the share of the gift which was given to Wesley Chapel the Superintendent related:

A few months ago John A. Clough was a city mission church called Wesley. From Mr. Clough's estate we got, through the Denver Church Extension Society, \$1,200 to help enlarge and decorate the building. So the name was changed and called Clough . . . It is now one of our desirable church houses, especially adapted to their aggressive Sunday School work.²

The boost that came from the gift to the church added much in the next few years. The membership from the first year to the fourth climbed from 73 to 163, a gain of 90. The Sunday School reflected an increase from 225 to 310, a gain of 85. The work of Austin Chapman went on, though he was finishing his work at the University of Denver, where he graduated in 1905.

I spoke last year about the great work done by Austin Chapman at Clough Memorial and Wright Memorial Churches. That splendid work has been continued till this day, and those two churches are prospering in a way that makes both preacher and people feel that the Lord of Hosts is with them.³

At the Conference of 1905 the John A. Clough Memorial Church and the Wright Memorial Church were separated, and each had their own minister. To Clough was appointed the Rev. Mr. William C. Millikan, who reported at the end of the year, a membership of 67, with a Sunday School enrollment of 160. The statistics for Wright Memorial Church reflect the probability that the churches before their separation were approximately equal, for their statistics following their separation are nearly the same.

During the ministry of Millikan there were ordered new pews for the church, a much needed addition.⁴ He was followed in 1906 by A. O. Jones who remained one year and reported an increase of 12 members and an increase of 7 in Sunday School. Sometime during his year the word was received that Mrs. Clough, in appreciation for the naming of a church after her husband, had promised to give a bequest to the church to build them a parsonage.⁵ This is reported as having been consummated before the Conference of 1908:

The bequest of Mrs. John A. Clough to the Clough Memorial Church has been made available and a neat little parsonage has been purchased. Pastor J. R. Edwards is comfortably housed in the new home and has closed a year of earnest, faithful service.⁶

¹ *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 233.

² *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 378.

³ *Ibid.*, (1904), p. 62.

⁴ *Ibid.*, (1906), p. 369.

⁵ *Ibid.*, (1907), p. 518.

⁶ *Ibid.*, (1908), p. 43.

The Rev. Mr. J. R. Edwards had come to the church in 1907 to remain three years. He recorded a continual decline in both membership and Sunday School attendance, despite the added property and parsonage. He came to a church numbering 79 members and left reporting 43. The Sunday School had decreased from 167 to 143.

Following in 1910 was Edwin Bowling who remained two years. He recorded a rather stable church, though small. The membership at the end of two years was reported at 50 with the Sunday School at 145. During his ministry it was realized that the future of Clough was not very bright. The church was located in an area of Denver which was not growing, and which was separated from the rest of the city by several barriers. Among these were the mass of railroad tracks to the north and east, the river and a highway on the west, and a main thoroughfare (Alameda) to the south, beyond which there were few homes. It is reported that the minister quit trying to spread to outlying areas, and emphasized rather, concentrated evangelism within his area.¹

John W. Fike came to the church in 1912, and was reappointed the next year. The slight increase of membership and Sunday School enrollment which he recorded was not indicative of a long and prosperous career.

The future of Clough Memorial Church was to include its being united in 1922 with the Wright Memorial Church, to take the name of the former, and to use the building of the former also. In 1926, because of proximity (seven blocks) and dwindling population, there was a union of the John A. Clough (which already included the Wright Memorial Church of Valverde) with the Fifth Avenue Methodist Church. The name of the new church was the "Wesley Institutional Church," when they took the building of the former Fifth Avenue Church, where they still worship at West Fifth and Galapago Streets.² The former Clough Methodist Church building was to become the "Wesley Social Center." Further details as to when this was sold, and when the Seventh Day Baptists began using the building are evidently unavailable.

The shifts of population certainly worked against all three of these churches, and a fourth, St. James Church of West Denver. The members of St. James had, in 1913, been united with the former Fifth Avenue Church when St. James ceased its activity and became the property of the Denver Church Extension Society. Thus the church we know today as Wesley Church carries in its organization four churches: Wright Memorial (Valverde), Wesley Chapel (John A. Clough Memorial), St. James, and Beckwourth Street (Fifth Avenue). The area of Denver represented by these four churches is no doubt one of the weakest for the Methodist Church. This is due, in part, to population shifts, nationality and racial changes, and the rather transient character of the people who live there. No one could have foretold the population shifts which would have their bearings on these churches, but the pioneers built well for their day, for which we must give them due credit and commendation.

Coronado Mission

¹ Ibid., (1911), p. 429.

² The Rocky Mountain News, May 1, 1926.

Though the information is scarce, there was begun a small mission in the vicinity of University Park in 1894 known as the “Coronado Mission.” This had a short life, evidently, though it appears in the Conference Journals until 1903. In 1902 it had been served by the University Park Church minister, seemingly a project of that particular church. One of the main leaders in the enterprise was Mr. W. C. Johnston, a layman.¹

The last note we find of the small mission appears in the Journal the next year:

Coronado is a short distance northeast of University Park. We have kept up a Sunday School there, and for the most part have preached every Sunday evening and have spent some money; but the neighborhood does not grow, and the gardeners, in the summer time especially, are somewhat indifferent to help. This is the smallest and least promising of the mission.²

Evidently the hardships they faced were unsurmountable, for we find no further reference to it. We wish we had at least the location of the mission, but this, too, evidently has not been preserved.

Edgewater Church

The town of Edgewater (to the west of Denver) was incorporated in 1901 after a heated election, and after many proposals had been made. The main point of contention among the people was the question of liquor and corrupt government which they feared would over-take an incorporated town since it would be less directly under the control of Jefferson County. All in all, it was no doubt a rather difficult place in which to work, and a difficult place in which to show progress in the church.

Since the Edgewater Church was organized in 1892, it had been one of the “City Missions” and hence had no report regularly in the Conference Journals. Our first records appear in 1902 when the Presiding Elders began to publish their reports in the Journals:

Rev. L. W. Bell, late from England, has been working at Edgewater and a great change has come to that mission. From a few cents a month that they used to pay the pastor, the support has come up to more than \$15 per month, and they are building a church at a cost of \$1,400 - \$1,500.³

The church mentioned here was built on the corner of West Twenty-sixth and Depaw Streets in 1902, and dedicated free of debt by Chancellor Buchtel of the University of Denver.⁴ This building still stands as a Boy-Scout meeting place. (see Fig. 46). It is a small frame building in need of repair, though slightly used now. This building was used until the people built their present sanctuary at 25th and Fenton, in 1921, during the ministry of Dr. Roy H. McVicker, at present (1956) minister of the Jefferson Avenue Methodist Church, Denver. (see Fig. 47).

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), P. 233.

² Ibid., (1903), p. 372.

³ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 232.

⁴ L. T. Tautfest, Edgewater's Golden Anniversary, p. 14.

In 1903 the announcement was made by the Denver Church Extension Society that the recent will of John A. Clough of Trinity Methodist Church had a gift in it for some of the most needy churches.¹ Edgewater was one of the churches which received some help of that gift, though the amount is not given. Some of the money at Edgewater was no doubt spent for completing their little frame building, for in 1903 the Presiding Elder reported:

At Edgewater we have dedicated and finished paying for a church this year which is coming rapidly forward toward self-support.²

H. L. Beardsley and W. L. Gaither were appointed to the Edgewater church in 1904, evidently one began and the other finished the year. At the end of the year the membership was noted for the first in the Conference Journals, and stood at 18. The Sunday School enrollment was 45.

The minister the next year, remaining for only one year, was Alvin O. Jones, who reported a total membership of 9 and a Sunday School enrollment of 25. At the end of this year the Presiding Elder reflected that it was the wisdom of all the leadership that the Edgewater and the Lakewood charges should be joined together.³ The latter had been supplied by the Wheat Ridge Church. This arrangement between Edgewater and Lakewood lasted one year, 1906-1907, with the minister being R. L. Johnston. At the end of his year he reported a membership of 36 for the two churches, and 103 in Sunday School enrollment. Evidently the group at Lakewood had a large Sunday School enrollment which counted in this figure.

In 1907 D. C. Winship was appointed to the Edgewater Church where he remained three years. The first two of these he served also the new little church of Vincent, just north of Denver in the area known as Welby. The statistics seem to have been reported separately however, as the two churches were in different districts. The membership in 1907, after Lakewood statistics had been removed stood at 27, with 80 in the Sunday School. In two more years there were added seven members and 70 pupils in the Sunday School. Of this ministry the Presiding Elder stated that D. C. Winship had "given superior service."⁴

The church showed progress during the years, and the people thought they needed more room: The Edgewater Sunday School has outgrown the seating capacity of the church and also the standing room, until there is nothing else to do but to build larger.⁵

However, their new building was not completed until 1921, twelve years after the above report.

In 1910 the minister was J. M. Flynn who stayed a year and a half. The minister reported a total increase in membership of 18, making a total of 52 at the time. Incidentally, John M. Flynn is now retired in Denver, and is an active participator in Warren Methodist Church.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 233.

² Ibid., (1903), p. 372.

³ Ibid., (1906), p. 371.

⁴ Colorado Conference Journal (1908), p. 48.

⁵ Ibid., (1909), p. 50ff.

As has been mentioned previously in this section, the church at Edgewater built a larger building in 1921 during the pastorate of Dr. Roy H. McVicker. The new church took the official name of the Edgewater Community Church because there were many denominations represented in their membership.

It is a tribute to Dr. Roy H. McVicker, still active in the Colorado Conference, that he led this group in this great project, to construct the building in which the people still worship in Edgewater. Dr. McVicker had a long pastorate there, and was greatly loved by all.

Despite the difficult beginnings of the church in its difficult situation, the people kept sight of some higher goals in life, and continued in their church organization to make it effective and adequate for the modern community of Edgewater.

Epworth Church

The original name for this small mission was the “Briggs Mission” founded in 1890 or 1891 by a Miss Melissa Briggs, one of the earliest Deaconesses in Denver. The location of the mission was the “hog ranch” area of Denver, the section between lower Larimer Street and Globeville, including the present stock yards. The name “hog ranch” seems to have been used mainly because of the social standing, or lack of it, prevailing throughout the area. It was the center of crime, gambling, liquor, and illegal pastimes of all types.

The mission grew slowly under Miss Briggs’ leadership, assisted by some student ministers who could be sent from time to time. The mission had several locations in rented buildings here and there until their first semi-permanent location was established in a small building between 31st and 32nd on Market Street in the year 1896.¹

Few details and statistics remain for until the Conference Journals begin to report the details in 1904. Even the complete list of ministers seems to be impossible to reconstruct.

By the year 1903 we find that the address is again different:

On Larimer Street, at 33rd, is Briggs Mission. The Presiding Elder has always had to bind the money to pay the rent for our rooms there, and sometimes he has been afraid that it is too near Simpson and Christ church; but the large and superior Sunday School work that is carried on in that mission (now by one of the leading Sunday School men of the state, Mr. J. H. Beggs) and the eager congregation that hear preaching every week, seem to point to a permanent church in that community.²

Perhaps some of the finest news to be received by Denver Methodists was the plan to build a truly mission church, an institutional church in a needed area. The Epworth Leagues of the state adopted the project for the year, and raised much of the money. The final name of the

¹ Beardsley, Echoes from Peak and Plain, p. 382.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 372.

church was probably taken from the loyalty with which the Epworth Leagues supported the project.

Some of the details were reported to the Conference in 1904:

The Denver Church Extension Society, under which City Missions operate, has now on hand a splendid project to build an institutional church at 29th and Market Streets, called the Epworth Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. J. M. Beggs leads the movement. Corner lots have been purchased and paid for, and the pastor, Rev. E. H. Peters, is greatly encouraged with the outlook.¹

Some of the details of the work of the youth in their Epworth Leagues has been reported by The Goodwill:

The young people of Trinity Church and Christ Church had sustained the work ever since the inception. In 1904 and 1905 these Epworth Leagues were aided by many others all over the state. The determination was to erect a \$5,000 building at the corner of 31st and Walnut Streets. Seven hundred Epworthians, young people of Colorado were placed on one side and a community that needed a church, reading rooms, club rooms, bath rooms, library, kitchen, etc., on the other. Funds were collected everywhere. Enthusiasm never waned. The first shovel of dirt was turned on November 13, 1904. In 1905 the new building was dedicated, with splendid recognition being given by the newspapers, Judge Lindsey and other community leaders.²

As might be expected, the juvenile court of Denver, as well as many social leaders and other interested persons backed the program wholeheartedly. They knew that the 500 youth that the institutional church would care for would be a good influence in the underprivileged community and the poorer section of town. It took the children and youth off the streets and out of the saloons for their recreation and fun.³

The building was finally constructed on the corner of 31st and Walnut, and was completed in 1905. (see Fig. 48). It was used continually until 1915 when the present church and center were built at 31st and Lawrence Streets. (see Fig. 49).

The report to the Annual Conference just before the church was completed gives us some interesting side-lights in the planning:

A notable church building movement has been started and the building nearly completed during the year at Epworth Mission Church. It is to have institutional features and facilities. It will be a fine Gospel enterprise when in full operation. It will cost about \$10,000. Contributions from Epworth Leagues and friends throughout the city and state

¹ Ibid., (1904), p. 64.

² The Goodwill, a publication of the Epworth Church and Goodwill Industries, September 1934. On file at Epworth Church.

³ Ibid.

are making this splendid structure possible. It is a ward of the entire conference, and should have sustained help until finished and equipped for the career awaiting it.¹

Of the new center, the Denver Republican gave its evaluation:

No neighborhood in the city could have been selected where such an institution is more needed. The poorest of Denver's population lives in this vicinity and the work will result in much to those who have been deprived of many things in life.²

The church was finally dedicated, debt free on July 8, 1906:

Having paid off the last incumbrance, a debt of \$2,500 yesterday, the Epworth Methodist Church and institution at 31st and Walnut Street will be dedicated this afternoon at 3:30 p.m. Bishop Warren will deliver the dedicatory sermon and there will be addresses by Judge Lindsey, Dr. W. E. Collett of the State Prison association and Rev. Austin Chapman, the pastor.³

Two further aspects of the early work of the mission are noted:

Last month the boys' gymnasium was closed because of the lack of a physical instructor. Last Monday a new one was secured and the opening of the room was hailed with delight by the boys.

The most popular feature of the mission is the free baths which were built especially for the boys, but on certain days are thrown open to the girls and women. Strange to say, the small boy in this neighborhood has not the small boy's usual aversion to soap and water. He is most fond of it if the crowd of youngsters who struggle to get into baths every day is an indication.⁴

The minister of the Institutional Church called Epworth was A. N. Chapman from 1905 through 1913. He showed membership increases from 64 to 122, a net gain of 58; and a remarkable Sunday School development from 170 to 504 in eight years. The success which they were having with the new project in Denver Methodism is reflected in the Presiding Elder's Report for 1910:

Six years ago Epworth was struggling Briggs Mission, housed in a rented store room on Larimer Street. Now it has moved into a fine \$11,000 edifice, now paid for, and to which rooms are now being added to provide extended facilities for work.⁵

Even the location at 31st and Walnut was not completely satisfactory, for the population of the area began to shift, and the racial character changed also. The area became predominantly negro, Catholic, or else it became business property.⁶ Hence, the people began to think of re-

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1905), p. 210.

² The Denver Republican, July 8, 1906.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Colorado Conference Journal (1910), p. 277ff.

⁶ Ibid., (1913), p. 186.

locating the Center to continue its effectiveness, and to alleviate some of these problems. The final plan seems to have hinged on the decision of the Burlington Railway to enlarge its facilities, which would condemn the property on which the old Epworth Center stood:

The ground upon which Epworth church stands will soon be taken by the Burlington Railway for additional trackage and a new and more complete church will be built in a better location. Aside from the usual work carried on by this Mission, many interesting features have been added. Four thousand meals have been served to underfed school children during the year at an average of one penny for each meal. The pastor and his workers have, during the summer months, cooperated with the City Garden Association. A plot of ground was prepared in the Epworth neighborhood, seed furnished by the church and water for irrigation purposes by the city. The children of forty-seven poor families have had an ample supply of vegetables, many of them for the first time in their lives. No more important work is being done in our city than the work done by these missions and these skilled mission workers.¹

Though it is beyond the scope of this particular work, we might mention that the Epworth Church was rebuilt on the corner of Thirty-First and Lawrence in 1915. Another important phase of their work was established in 1918 with the organization of the Goodwill Industries with headquarters at the Epworth Center.

The same type of work is still carried on by the Epworth Church and Community Center, which of course is continuing to fill a gap in its own part of Denver, working with the various nationalities which live in that area, and with the underprivileged children through recreation as well as Goodwill Industries. Miss Briggs would not recognize the work which she started, but no doubt she would feel that the purposes for her first work are still the guiding principles of the present Epworth Church and Community Center.

Fifth Avenue Church

The church formerly called Beckwourth Street Church was organized in 1882, with their first building being constructed that same year. During the ministry of S. W. Thornton, 1890, the church was enlarged at a cost of several thousand dollars. The church was almost completely rebuilt in 1907, and is now substantially the same, known as "Wesley Methodist Church" at West Fifth and Galapago Street.

When the church was founded in 1882 it was a small newly developed section in the southwest part of Denver. By 1890 this church was in the midst of one of the fastest growing areas of Denver, and it seemed that the potential was unlimited. However, with the establishment in 1891, of Wesley Chapel less than a mile southwest of Fifth Avenue Church, and with the hardships of the depression, the church did not grow to be a large church, but did good work within its own community.

The minister appointed in 1899 was H. B. Collins who remained two years, and showed the greatest growth in the Sunday School. In two years they had grown from 225 to 310.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1913), p. 186.

Unfortunately the growth did not continue past the turn of the century for 310 was the highest Sunday School enrollment they had between 1890 and 1912. A gradual decline began and continued for many years.

The minister in 1901, and remaining three years was N. H. Lee, whose main work seems to have been the complete redecorating of the church building, and the buying of new seats for the building. All was done for the sum of \$787:

Brother Lee believes that the Fifth Avenue Church is located in a great and promising field and that some of us may live to see it one of the largest churches in the city. A few more years like this will see it on its way.¹

Unfortunately, this hope was not realized.

The successor, just before the Conference of 1904 was J. W. Huston, who began his work well:

Rev. N. H. Lee was appointed twelve months ago to the Fifth Avenue Church for the third time. When he was removed to Asbury in February, his place was taken by Dr. J. W. Huston. Brother Huston took up the work where Brother Lee left off, and has wisely and diligently carried it forward, so that it can truly be said that Fifth Avenue was never in better condition than at the present, and its people unite in the earnest hope that their pastor be returned.²

Under Huston's leadership the membership grew from 157 to 235 within two years, a gain of 78. The Sunday School remained practically the same, averaging about 180 for the same period. There were at this time "rumors of a new church building . . . around Fifth Avenue location, with hopeful probability of their speedy realization."³ However, the next year it is seen that the hopes for a new building were not quite so promising:

Fifth Avenue had a quiet year. The church building project, so essential to its future efficiency, is quiescent for lack of available funds. Dr. Huston has been unostentatiously getting obstacles out of the way of the coming forward movement and putting the church at its best, in harmony and liberation from petty indebtedness.⁴

Although many of the details are not available, the Fifth Avenue Church was rather completely rebuilt during the Conference year 1906-1907. {see Fig. 51). This, of course, added much needed space for the Sunday School, though it had been declining for fifteen years:

Soon after opening of the year, the movement for a better building at Fifth Avenue took on surprising vigor. Immediate steps were taken to begin active operations. The old building was practically removed, the remnants which entered into the subsequent

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 230.

² Ibid., (1904), p. 62.

³ Ibid., (1905), p. 208.

⁴ Ibid., (1906), p. 369.

structure being scarcely appreciable. The church has done well under the administration of Dr. Huston.¹

The ministry of Dr. J. W. Huston seems to have been one of the most significant for some time. He remained six years, being appointed elsewhere in 1909. The membership had been 157 when he came, had risen to its high of 235 the second year, and continued relatively high until he left when they reported 230. The Sunday School did not fare quite so well, but increased from 185 to 216 during his several years as their minister. The Presiding Elder gives a good evaluation of his six year's work:

Fifth Avenue has reached a high-tide mark in the proportions and promptness of response to the benevolent calls of our church. Dr. Huston closes six years, successful.²

There were three different ministers between 1909 and 1912. In 1909 the minister was M. A. Head; in 1910 W. T. Miller served the church; and in 1911 S. G. Dorey became the minister and stayed three years. Throughout this period there was a continued decline to 1910 when the membership reached an all-time low of 111, and the Sunday School reached a low point of 168. The first two years of S. G. Dorey's ministry saw an increase in both areas of work, from 111 to 213 in the membership and from 168 to 210 in the Sunday School enrollment. The low figure is evaluated by the Presiding Elder as probably due to the removals of some strong families because of the heavy financial burden on the church.³ Since the church had been rebuilt in 1907, and up to May 1, 1945, a heavy debt was on the church, which hindered their work greatly.⁴ It was paid only recently when Bishop Wilbur E. Hammaker spoke at the mortgage-burning ceremonies.

Many interesting shifts of population and industry played their tricks on this particular church. In 1913 the old St. James Church membership was transferred to the Fifth Avenue Church, and the St. James Church became the property of the Denver Church Extension Society, and was used then by the Japanese Methodist People.

In 1922 the Wright Memorial Church (Valverde) was united with the John A. Clough Memorial Church, taking the name of the latter. In 1926, due to the proximity of the two churches – there was less than a mile between them – the Clough Church (including membership from Wright) was united with the Fifth Avenue Church (containing membership from St. James), to become the Wesley Institutional Methodist Church, using the building at West Fifth and Galapago.⁵ The old Clough building, still standing (1956) near the corner of West Ellsworth and South Kalamath, was to be used as the social center of the Wesley Church.

The details following this merger will not be considered in detail in this work, but since 1926 the old Clough Church has been sold, and is now (1956) the property of the Seventh Day Baptist group. Someone has completely defaced the cornerstone, that no information is available

¹ *Ibid.*, (1907), p. 517.

² *Ibid.*, (1909), p. 46

³ *Colorado Conference Journal* (1911), p. 429.

⁴ *Rocky Mountain News*, May 16, 1945.

⁵ *Rocky Mountain News*, May 1, 1926.

there, not even the original name of the church. Luckily one older member of the old Clough Methodist Church lives next door to the building, and corroborated the fact that the Methodists used to operate the building under that particular name.

The area in which the present Wesley Church is located, is one of the weakest for the Methodists in Denver, but despite their many handicaps, they are continuing the work and fulfilling the heritage which they have as originally rooting in four different Methodist organizations. The area in which they work is needy, and we must only hope that work will be maintained by the Methodists in their area for many years to come.

First German Church

The German church was first organized in Denver in 1872, and took the name of First German Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They were a part of the West German Conference including parts of seven mid-western states, although they cooperated well with the Colorado Annual Conference, which was of course all English-speaking.

The church progressed rather well, and in 1886 there were two German missions organized, one in West Denver at Eleventh and Kalamath; and the other in North Denver, at West Twenty-seventh at Umatilla.

In 1886 the German people built their new church on the corner of Twenty-fifth and California Streets where the building stands yet. It is now (1956) used however, as the home of the Japanese Methodist people.

The minister who came in 1900 was Friederich Hausser who remained for six years, until 1906. During his ministry the membership made no substantial growth, from 52 to 54, while the Sunday School grew from 28 to 56, and back down to 30. During this time of course, the other two missions were being supported, and were dividing the German people of Denver into three separate groups when they really did not have adequate potential to require three separate groups.

In 1906 the minister was H. C. Elfeldt who remained four years, until 1910. The membership grew from 54 to 70 in those four years, which seems like rather good progress. The Sunday School grew also from 30 to 47, evidence again of the hard work of this German minister.

In 1910 and for eight years following, the minister was W. R. Velte, later to become a member of the Colorado Conference, and most recently retired from his work at Merritt Memorial Church in Denver. Under the administration of W. R. Velte, the membership declined from 70 to 58 in three years. During the same three years the Sunday School increased from 47 to 62.

Second German Church (West Denver)

At Eleventh and Kalamath Streets in West Denver the Second German Society had been organized in 1886. It had built its own building, but did not progress rapidly. From earliest days the West German Church had been on a circuit with the North (West 27th Avenue) German Church. In 1899 G. J. Lenhert was appointed to serve West German Church alone. He reported a membership of 36 and a Sunday School enrollment of 85.

Following him in 1901 was W. B. Wostemeyer who remained two years. He reported little change in the membership or the Sunday School enrollment.

A significant ministry was begun in 1903 by Matthew Herrmann who served from 1903 to 1908, and showed at least one new venture in their organization. It is reported that in 1905 they began a mission in Globeville, a northern suburb of Denver, where the Sunday School was continued for a few years. The worship services, presumably led by the minister of the West German Church, were held in the afternoon.¹ At the West German Church during the ministry of Matthew Herrmann however, there was little substantial change in either membership or Sunday School enrollment.

The succeeding minister was John Klein in 1908, who remained for two years. In this year the West and North German churches were again united, and it is assumed, the Globeville Mission was no longer in operation. The membership of the West Church the year previous had been 32, while the West 27th Avenue Church had recorded 41. In 1909, with the combined statistics, the churches reported a membership at 78, 5 more than the combined statistics a year previous. However, the next year there was a drop of 22 members. The Sunday School statistics reflect a similar situation. The year previous to the merger the West Church recorded 37 Sunday School pupils, while the North Church recorded 42. The total that year would have been 79. However, the year after the merger the total was recorded at only 68.

The Rev. C. Steinel came as minister in 1910 and remained at the church four years. He recorded some change in the membership, as in 1913 he reported a total of 80 members for the two churches, and the same for the Sunday School.

West Twenty-seventh Avenue German Church

This small church had been founded in 1886, and until 1899 was on a circuit with the West German Church. In 1899 it was made a separate charge, and received W. J. Fricke as its minister. Fricke remained at the church for seven years though did little more than hold the status quo. When he first made a report on the individual church the membership stood at 30 and the Sunday School at 115. At the end of his seven years the membership stood at 51 with the Sunday School having decreased to 70.

However, during his ministry there was a thank offering taken, and a debt of \$700 still remaining on the church was paid in 1901.² Also they had decided that they should build a larger building, and remodel the old church into a parsonage. On March 30, 1903, the church

¹ Otto Kriege, and others, Souvenir der West Deutschen Konferenz der Bischoflichen Methodistenkirche, p. 146 ff.

² Ibid.

was closed for this purpose, and in October of 1903 the cornerstone was laid for the new structure. The following December the first meeting was held in the basement of the new church, with the upper rooms finished within the next year.¹ This small church was recently (1953) demolished to make way for the new Valley Highway running through Denver.

It was said that in 1904 the church represented assets of \$5,000, and was consecrated on July 9, 1905. The old church had been remodeled into a parsonage, and the minister moved into it the last day of 1905.²

The minister appointed in 1906 was A. J. Ross, followed by John Klein. In 1908 John Klein continued on at the church but it now as on a circuit with the West German church. The succession of ministers has already been given in connection with the West German Church, and includes John Klein, to 1910; C. Steinel, 1910-1914. As has been stated, the two churches at the Conference of 1912 reported a membership and a Sunday School enrollment both at 80.

The future of the Denver German Churches. – Many language churches had difficulties in maintaining their organizations more than a generation or two at the most. The children and grandchildren spoke English better than their “mother-tongue,” and began to use English even in their churches.

In 1916 came the union of all three Denver German Churches into the parent organization, taking the name “United Methodist Church.” Gradually the use of German was dispensed with, and finally the churches were English-speaking except for a very small portion of the older generations. In 1926 there was a merging of the German Church and the English, and following this date the original German Society became the California Street Methodist Church, a regular Colorado Conference appointment.³

The change of the times had caught up with this German organization, but while they a task to do, they did it diligently. It was logical, as well as inevitable, that the barrier of a language could not be maintained indefinitely. The same problem happened with the Swedish group, and is now happening with the Japanese and Spanish-speaking peoples of Denver.

Nevertheless, the chapter of German Methodist history in Denver, as in all cities and states, was a colorful section of history, and a record of great achievement for Methodism.

Grace Church

The people in the Evans Addition of Denver, where the Civic Center now stands, founded a small Sunday School in 1873, and were the recipients of the Evans Chapel given by John Evans in 1878. They were known by the name of “Evans Chapel” until 1889 when the new church was built, at which time the church took the name “Grace” though Evans Chapel was a part of the total structure.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ A folder published on the occasion of the Sixtieth Anniversary, 1932.

The church between 1890 and 1900 was one of the wealthiest of the city, and was situated at the heart of one of the most prosperous sections of town as well. The church built well, paid high salaries, but did not appeal to the large population around the church. Hence, when the wealth began to shift, the church found itself unable to maintain its program with a smaller income, and unable to get many of the new members which it needed for adequate support.

The minister in 1900 was M. A. Rader, who remained for three years, and who seemed to have stopped the decline for a time. He came to the church when it had 193 members and in three years built it back to 315, an increase of 122. The Sunday School also showed an increase, from 160 to 275 in the same three years, for an increase of 115.

During the ministry of Rader the new parsonage was first occupied. It stands next to the church at 1257 Bannock Street. Of the work and dedication which it took to get this addition to the church property we note the Presiding Elder's comments:

About the beginning of the year the pastor at Grace Church took possession of the new parsonage. It is a beautiful building of nine rooms; modern throughout, built without debt, most of the cost of it coming from the sale of the old parsonage. Brother M. A. Rader has had much to be thankful for at Grace all the year. Increasing congregations, growing Sunday Schools, friendly people, deepening spirituality, etc. While he has spoken out as fearlessly against vice as he did last year, no little judge called him into court to answer for his utterances. Some of the financial achievements at Grace are as follows: Parsonage cost \$4,300; addition to Evans Chapel, \$550; heating plant \$975; repairs on the church, \$600. Grace will also be credited with \$3,000 for education.¹

M. A. Rader left before the Conference of 1903, to become a missionary in the Philippine Islands.² His successor was Christian F. Reisner from Kansas City, Kansas. Reisner was one of the most energetic men of the whole period, as far as his records reflect. His early work was appreciated, and was well done:

Bishop Warren appointed the Rev. C. F. Reisner, of Kansas City, Kansas, who came and began with good sense, and energy and efficiency, that he has won a larger place in the confidence and love of the congregation every week since . . . Grace Church which has given us much anxiety in the past, is coming to be our joy. In my knowledge of it, it has never been in such good condition as it now is.³

During the ministry of Reisner, it was decided that if Grace Church ever would have a future, it had to change its approach radically. Trinity Church was only five blocks away, with more facilities, a larger staff, and more prestige. Grace could not compete with them. The old members of Grace had moved to Capitol Hill, Park Hill, or other out-skirts, and were no longer interested in coming downtown for their church activities. Reisner began an extensive campaign

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 229ff.

² Ibid., (1903), p. 376.

³ Ibid., 1903), p. 376.

of advertisement of all kinds, of special programs, and other popular appeals. His Sunday evening services became something people came to just to see what he might have “up his sleeve.”¹

Of the work that year the Presiding Elder reported:

Christian F. Reisner continues to set the pace for energetic work in Grace Church. Without ceasing, I give thanks to its activity . . . Grace is better now than when I took over as Presiding Elder.²

One other report of his own work reflects a similar attitude:

Grace, with its heterogeneous congregation is in the hands of an ecclesiastical wizard. Rev. C. F. Reisner has had this best year in the pastorate of Grace Church, that former problem of the Conference. It is a delight to the heart that loves the downtown region and the homeless multitudes, to watch the actual achievements of Grace Church and its corps of vigorous workers in reaching and holding to the religious life the shifting populations with which it has so largely to deal.³

Another report reads:

Grace continues to gather in full houses. By variety, surprise and personal charm, C. F. Reisner secures an increasing hold on the people he is set to reach. Work is remarkable, and invites study and emulation.⁴

Reisner was transferred to Grace Church, New York City, in 1910, and was succeeded by E. E. Higley who remained three years. Seemingly the high point in Reisner’s ministry was his variety and ingenious way of appealing to the people who would not otherwise be interested in the church. The people of the area had become a transient population with roots in no church, and with no loyalties in Denver. The strangers could feel welcome at his church, and the curious were usually surprised.

During Reisner’s ministry the membership climbed from 315 in 1903 to a high of 900 in 1909, and back down to 712 during his last year. The Sunday School does not reflect quite such rapid growth, from 275 in 1903 to 478 in 1909.

E. E. Higley remained at the church until 1913, but reported a gradual decline in membership. The main problem again for Grace Church was how it could minister to transient peoples when its members were scattered all over Denver from Arvada to University Park. Their church was large, and their utility bills were high, but the financial resources were not forthcoming.

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, June 28, 1953.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1904), p. 60.

³ Ibid., (1907), p. 515.

⁴ Ibid., (1908), p. 45.

The same problem remained with Grace Church through the years, and was met in different ways at different times. For example, in 1919 the Grace Community Center was built with the express purpose of getting youth off the streets into some type of wholesome, planned recreation. During the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Lackland, during the early 1920's, the church became known as the church for the working man, the laboring people. They formed within the church a Denver Labor College and a Denver Open Forum to appeal to the people living in that particular area. The Social Service motif was also present in all phases of the Center's activity.

In the 1930's the minister was Edgar M. Wahlberg who served almost two decades, and who emphasized again the recreation, social action, labor and social service functions.

In 1949 the Robert W. Speer Club presented a plaque to Grace Community Church to commemorate the 135th birthday of the late Governor John Evans who had helped to organize the church in 1873 and had donated the original building known as "Evans Chapel."

December 27, 1953 marked the last service held by the Methodists at Grace Church. It had been decided by the Methodist officials that the church should be abandoned and relocated. The name of Grace Church was consequently taken to University Hills, a new addition to the southeast corner of Denver, where at the present time one may see a new and modern Grace Church carrying on the same tradition of the former location.

Grant Avenue Church

This church located in a developing section of South Denver had been organized in 1890 under the general direction of O. L. Fisher who was at that time in charge of the "City Mission" projects. The group developed rapidly and at the end of their ninth year they reported a membership of 231 and a Sunday School enrollment of 220. Truly they were one of the fastest growing churches of the period, and were situated in one of the most strategic areas. Their challenge seemed almost unlimited.

The minister in 1900 was N. H. Lee who had first been appointed in 1897. He finished four years and was succeeded in 1901 by M. D. Hornbeck. The ministry of Lee recorded a growth in membership from 215 to 259, while the Sunday School grew from 241 to a high of 257 and back down to 238. It was during the ministry of N. H. Lee that the second portion of the building was completed, standing where most of the present educational wing stands. The congregation had left the corner vacant for their new sanctuary which was not constructed until 1908.

Marquis D. Hornbeck came to Grant Avenue Church in 1901 and remained until 1910. His was one of the most remarkable ministries in the history of the church. During his nine years the membership grew from 259 to 553, and the Sunday School grew from 238 to 561, both of which were over one-hundred per cent increases.

The first year he was at Grant Avenue there was need of a parsonage, and they purchased a home in the area. The exact address is not available.¹ Despite his illness and accident early the

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 230.

next year, his work went on.¹ Of the preaching of Hornbeck, the Presiding Elder made his point in a humorous way:

I believe that there are not many preachers of any denomination who give their congregation so much beef steak and so little breakfast foot as does Marquis D. Hornbeck.²

Another interesting comment about Dr. Hornbeck is recorded by the Presiding Elder the next year:

On account of defective hearing Dr. Hornbeck cannot gossip much, and has a great deal of time to commune with God and books, and has become one of the wisest men in Colorado. Some think he is the best preacher in the state. Rev. E. E. Bean who was appointed his assistant last year has done some valuable work on one of the city missions and is also the secretary of that organization that is arranging for the Epworth League Convention that meets in Denver next year.³

In 1905 it is reported that Hornbeck led the church in its eradication of the last debt, which had been hard on the organization since they constructed their building in 1899. Immediately following this, they made plans to construct a new sanctuary, and raised considerable subscriptions for that particular project.⁴

Under the continuing inspiration of Dr. Hornbeck, the money kept coming in, and the plans were continued toward the early erection of a new sanctuary:

[We had] efficient leadership under Hornbeck. Money is accumulating for the new structure. Under the wise administration of Dr. M. D. Hornbeck, supporting by a vigorous Official Board, this church is fast surging toward a model ecclesiastical organization. Seldom is found a church where all departments of religious work are so systematically and energetically conducted.⁵

Before the Conference of 1907 the building was well on its way to completion, and was no doubt one of the great achievements for that year of Denver Methodism:

The walls of the new church are up, the roof is on, the interior is being crowded to completion. When the whole design is realized Grant Avenue will have one of the most delightful church homes in Denver Methodism. In the prosecution of this work it became necessary, in order to get needed room, to purchase the residence adjacent to the new building. This has been remodeled into a commodious parsonage. Dr. Hornbeck loyally supported by these workers, has shown a masterful hand in undertaking these changes.⁶

¹ *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 376.

² *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 376.

³ *Ibid.*, (1904), p. 62.

⁴ *Ibid.*, (1905), pp. 208-210.

⁵ *Ibid.*, (1906), p. 369.

⁶ *Ibid.*, (1907), p. 516.

By the Conference of 1908 the building at Grant Avenue was completed, and the church and parsonage together were valued at \$40,000.¹ (see Fig. 23). The Presiding Elder felt that this was now one of the most efficient and effective churches in the city. It reflected the great work and devotion of the minister, M. D. Hornbeck, and his loyal workers. The building was dedicated January 12-19, 1908,² and except for a lengthening of the sanctuary and the building of the educational wing in 1918, the church is substantially the same to this day.³ The original sanctuary seated 500, but the present one seats considerably more.

On June 16, 1935, a picture was dedicated in Grant Avenue Church in memory of this beloved minister and his wife, given by their son. On the occasion of this particular celebration the church wrote a tribute to the Rev. Mr. Hornbeck and Mrs. Hornbeck, giving some of their career at Grant Avenue, and also a sketch of their life following that time until their deaths in the 1920's. This tribute is quoted in its entirety:

Rev. Dr. Marquis D. Hornbeck was pastor of Grand Avenue Methodist Church from 1901 to 1910 and was one of the best loved ministers this church has ever had. The church prospered in every way under his wise and devoted leadership. It was during his pastorate that our present beautiful auditorium was designed and built and has been changed only by extending its length. It is therefore, peculiarly fitting that this memorial painting be placed in this room. Dr. Hornbeck was a keen and well trained student and a warm hearted and effective preacher. He had a degree, A.B., from Illinois Wesleyan University; S.T.B. from Boston and a Ph.D. from Denver. He was sometime President of Wesleyan Seminary of Danville, Illinois, and President of Chaddock College, Quincy, Illinois. He was listed in "Who's Who in America." Mrs. Hornbeck was a talented college woman holding degrees A.B. and M.A. from Illinois Wesleyan University. She was in every way fitted to be the wife of her distinguished husband and shared with him in the love and esteem of the people who knew them.

Dr. and Mrs. Hornbeck retired from the active ministry in 1912 and made their home in University Park, Denver, where, in the shadows of this great school they enjoyed a well-earned rest, happy in the knowledge of long lives of usefulness and accomplishment.

Dr. Hornbeck died December 1923, and Mrs. Hornbeck died February, 1926.⁴

Following Dr. Hornbeck in 1910 was O. W. Auman who remained four years, and later became the Presiding Elder of the Denver District. Dr. Auman reported no substantial changes in membership but in Sunday School enrollment recorded a gain from 561 to 733 his first year, and then declined to 681 by 1913. During his ministry the good work of Dr. Hornbeck was carried on, and he is said to have built firmly on the broad foundations laid by the Hornbecks.⁵

¹ *Ibid.*, (1908), p. 42.

² A Journal of the Fair held at Grant Avenue Church November 18-20, 1931.

³ A personal letter to the writer from Mrs. Marion S. Hollingsworth, long-time member of Grant Avenue Church.

⁴ A Memorial Program on the occasion of dedicating the picture in memory of the Hornbecks, by their son, June 16, 1935. This is on file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

⁵ A Journal of the Fair held at Grant Avenue Church November 18-20, 1931.

Following 1912 there has been some change in the building including an addition to the end of the sanctuary and the building of the new educational building. The church has maintained its good work, and the membership has grown continually until today it is one of the significant South Denver churches, doing a good work in fine fashion.

Greenwood Church

The little church founded in 1890 in the smelting section of north central Denver, immediately east of the town of Argo, had a hard struggle, and finally was disbanded in 1911. In 1891 the people had built a small chapel, which has long since been demolished, and they had hopes of maintaining their work uninterrupted. However, they were so closely allied with the smelting industry, and the whole area gradually withered away when the smelter was closed.

The Greenwood Church had been served by the minister of the Argo church from its founding until the Conference of 1902. The last minister of the combined churches was W. F. Steele of the University. The work at Argo seemed to have been going fairly well, but pessimism filled the thoughts of the Presiding Elder concerning Greenwood:

Dr. W. F. Steele has been pastor this year at Argo and Greenwood . . . Greenwood, in Globeville, is almost without membership, surrounded by foreigners who are not protestants, and but for the good Sunday School we have there, our work at both places would be barren indeed. Careful work has been done at both places, and if we can only hold our Sunday School we shall have strong churches in some future time.¹

Unfortunately, his hope of maintaining work in order to establish a good church later on did not materialize. In fact, there were few if any people of any type to support a church within a few years following 1902.

There was never any membership recorded for Greenwood as a separate church. Until 1902 it was recorded with Argo, and following 1902 there is no report of membership. The Sunday School reported 102 in 1906 and dwindled to 75 by 1910, the last report given.

A partial list of the ministers within the last decade is given. W. F. Steele was succeeded in 1902 by J. W. Rose, presumably a student at the University of Denver. He remained one year, though no reports of membership, salary, or Sunday School enrollment appear in the Journals. The next appointment was in 1905 when A. F. Glover was appointed. Following this year, A. N. Chapman was appointed to supply the church at Greenwood, in addition to his work at Epworth Church. He was usually assisted there by students from the University. The last mention of his supplying the Greenwood Church was in 1911, when no membership or Sunday School statistics are recorded. It was during this year that the work at Globeville was disbanded, due to declining population, the increase in numbers of foreign peoples, and the proximity to the Greek Orthodox Church where most of the foreign people were in attendance.

Today, 1956, there is little left to remind one of the once thriving town of Globeville and the heroic effort of the struggling little church. The area is but slightly rebuilt, but is still more or

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 232.

less industrial. However, the silver smelters have long since been disbanded, and for the most part, have been moved away.

The Haymarket Mission

This unique mission, an interdenominational project, was begun by one of the members of the Colorado Annual Conference in 1892, in the rented Haymarket Theatre in downtown Denver. The Rev. Mr. Arthur C. Peck was the founder, and the minister for most his life. He had become conscious of a lack of church programs for the drunken people, the gamblers, and the unfortunate people living in lower Denver. He felt it was his duty to do something about this particular area, hence the mission began as a reflection of his own deep interests, and expanded to something quite more extensive than even the founder had originally supposed.

Many of the records of this project are unavailable, but some records have been preserved, from which we may obtain a sketch of the work done there. The Conference Journal reports in 1904, as it had several other times:

A. C. Peck, a member of this Conference, has for years been appointed to an independent work in Denver, called the City Temple Church. He and his wife have made a record for good works among the poor especially, that will endure.¹

It is interesting to note that at approximately the turn of the century the work was transferred out of the Haymarket Theatre into a building of its own, and thus took the new name of "City Temple Church." Statistics, or even the address of the work are unknown.

In a letter to Peter Winne, a layman of Trinity Methodist Church, Dean Arthur C. Peck wrote of many of the details of the mission. Because of the little known information, this letter is quoted in its entirety. Of the letter Dean Peck said, "Everything in it is technically correct":

On November 13, 1892, I instituted, and, for seven years conducted evangelical meetings every night in the Haymarket Theatre, Denver, an auditorium seating 1,500 people. Thousands of people professed conversion at the altar of the Haymarket Mission.

The work of the City Temple Institutional Society grew up about these meetings. The following institutions form the corporation:

(1) The City Temple; (2) The Clifton Hughes Training School for girls; (3) The Lafayette Young Women's Club; (4) The Belle Lennox Home for Children; (5) The Lennox Hall for boys; (6) The May Miller Kindergarten; (7) The Hospital.

In these various institutions, homes are provided for an average of nearly 300 women and children. Over 30 helpers are constantly employed in their care. Over 90,000 lodgings and 275,000 meals are annually provided. The yearly expenditure is about 40,000. Sewing schools are maintained for the making of new, and the remaking and mending of old garments, which are distributed where needed.

Without doubt other thousands have been led to better and higher lives by the work of this field alone.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1904), p. 65.

Mrs. Peck has been the efficient and honored president of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Colorado Conference for twenty-five years. She is also the head of the Evangelistic Committee of the National Woman's Home Mission Society. In the City Temple she has immediate charge of the women and children. The quality of her work attracts the wide attention of people interested in the young.

The schools are not for incorrigibles, but for girls and boys who desire to do their best. Nearly 2,500 have been helped to higher and better lives through efforts in this direction. Any child from 8 to 14 years of age is eligible, who can show that a real need or crises exists in their life, and who agrees to put forth their best effort. Some of these children have fathers but not mothers; some have mothers but not fathers; some neither; some few have both. Where those interested in the children have money, payment is required. The children are received in the order of their application, whether they have money or not. The course of study in the training school for girls is designed to fit the students for a practical life.

The atmosphere and influence of these schools are strictly Christian, without being sectarian. The principle that governs the work is that regeneration is infinitely better than reformation.

If I had time and space I would like to devote pages to the excellent work that is being done by these earnest workers for bettering the condition of human kind.

Signed,
Arthur C. Peck¹

A tribute written about the work of Peck at the City Temple project, undated, appears in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society. He had the support of the Juvenile court, social agencies, and many interested individuals.² Of his extremely good reputation, and the constant demand on his time we note the following:

The pulpit and platform work of Dean Peck, during the past few years, has been nation-wide. He has been unable, on account of the pressure of work at home, to respond to but few of the calls extended for lectures, sermons and special addresses. He has been in constant demand of YMCA Sunday theatre services.³

Further information and statistics have not been found concerning this particular independent work. It had a wide influence, and drew rather widely from all areas of downtown Denver, to be sure. Who can measure the good that has come from this type of work, and from the energy that A. C. Peck expended on this particular project which was near to his heart? The Methodists were supporting Epworth Community Center, the People's Mission, and later, the Grace Community Center. However, it seems they did not have a project with the same appeal on an interdenominational level as this mission. Dean Peck called it "Christian, yet non sectarian."

¹ A letter dated January 13, 1916, from A. C. Peck to Peter Winne of Trinity Church. On file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

² A leaflet, undated, "Dean Peck and His Work" in the Archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

³ Ibid.

Dean Peck died at the Presbyterian Hospital in Denver in 1932, after have retired from his work only five years previously. He was associated with that work for thirty-five years. His obituary is included in the Conference Journal for 1933.¹

Hess Methodist Church

Originally organized as the “Epworth Mission” of Simpson Church, the Nina Cobb Hess Memorial Methodist Church dates back to the year 1892. It was one of the “City Missions” until 1907 and hence, the statistics are often lacking.

According to the memory of Mr. Jim Reed,² the ministers beginning in 1901, mostly students were: the Rev. Mr. Stauffer for one year; 1902, T. E. Ashby; 1903, The Rev. Mr. Ammons; and in 1904, A. R. Klein. Of the work of these men we have no record and Mr. Reed could not supply anything but the names.

The Conference Journal does report one item about the church:

At 30th and Elizabeth [actually 31st and Elizabeth] is a beautiful little chapel called Hess Memorial. When I first came I thought we should have rapid growth at that point. But while the city has not spread rapidly in that direction as in some others, and while we have not had large increase in membership, we have been able to do steady work, and our church is planted there to stay.³

The Hess Church had regular records in the Journal beginning in 1905 and at the end of the year reported a membership of 34 with a Sunday School enrollment of 115. The minister that first year was Carl L. Anderson who received a total salary of \$135.00. He was followed in 1906 by C. E. Wakefield who remained four years.

During the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Wakefield the church was completely redecorated and re-carpeted on the inside and repainted on the outside. New seats were also installed. The costs were all paid, even though they amounted to several hundred dollars.⁴ It was at the Conference of 1907 that the Hess Church asked to be set apart as a separate church, outside the category of “Mission” churches.⁵ The request was granted during the 1907 Conference session.

The next year it is noted that rapid progress had been made. The salary had been raised from \$206 to \$720, and the membership rose from 38 to 98 within the year. The people were then thinking of a larger building to accommodate their crowds. Their decision to enlarge their building is recorded in the Conference Journal:

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1933), p. 195.

² An interview with Mr. Jim Reed, 2110 South Gilpin, a charter member of Hess Church.

³ Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 372.

⁴ Ibid., (1907), p. 516.

⁵ Ibid.

Extreme East Denver witnessed another notable event. Hess Church, but two years ago, one of our City Missions, reconstructed and greatly enlarged, makes a goodly church home for the congregation and Sunday School, the latter having more than doubled during the year. Under leadership of C. E. Wakefield, stepped to front rank of churches.¹

The Sunday School statistics for this year report an increase from 130 to 316 which is well over 100 per cent increase.

For the total ministry of our years by C. E. Wakefield, we note a remarkable growth in membership from 34 to 147, in Sunday School enrollment a growth from 115 to 255 and a salary increase from \$135.00 to \$1,000. In addition he had established the small mission as a church in its own right, and had led them in enlarging their building. However, in 1908 Simpson Methodist Church moved from 37th and Lafayette Streets to 34th and High, only nine blocks away from Hess. This was the beginning of the end of Hess Church.

J. W. Mahood was the minister from 1910 to 1912, and began to record the decline which did not stop. From 147 the membership dropped to 116 in two years; from 255 the Sunday School enrollment decreased to 195 during the same period. Some of the reasons for the decline were probably the heavy debt the congregation had maintained for several years and the lack of population which they had hoped would move at that time into East Denver.

The Hess Methodist Church was disbanded in 1917. The members transferred to Simpson and the building later became the property of the Christian Science group who maintain it to this day with slight modifications. They have taken the tall spire off the church and substituted a rounded dome. The Cornerstone has been so plastered over that it is unreadable, and the whole exterior has received a coat of white stucco. Nevertheless, the building is substantially the same as it was when the Methodists last remodeled it in 1909.

Highlands Methodist Church

The church in the town of Highlands was organized in 1891 and has kept the same name even after the town became a part of Denver in 1896. It had been organized in "Barrows Barn" across the street north from the present location of the church on the corner of West 32nd and Osceola Streets.

The original church was constructed in 1896-1897 on the southwest corner of the lot. It was approximately thirty feet wide and forty-eight feet long and cost approximately \$700.00. On March 3, 1901 the mortgage was burned at a dedication service and the people then felt that they could begin another part of their project.

The minister from 1899 to 1902 was J. C. Gullette who reported no substantial gains in membership, but reported a gain from 150 to 200 enrolled in the Sunday School. It was during this ministry that the debt had been finally paid.

¹ Ibid., (1909), p. 41.

In the early 1900's several factors worked to the advantage of Highlands Church. The area became known as one of the most desirable areas for people to live and hence it grew in population. The new people were anxious to become related to a church and Highlands was the logical church of the Methodist denomination. After the reputation of the church was solidly established, members from Asbury, Trinity and Grace began to transfer into Highlands because it was nearer to their homes and presented fewer transportation problems.

In 1902 the minister was C. W. Simmons who reported no substantial change, though a slight drop in membership is recorded. In 1903 George Winterbourne was the minister. Again there was little change. The Presiding Elder reports that the minister was much loved and was anxiously requested to return for another year.¹

With the coming to Highlands of M. A. Head in 1905 the progress of the decade was just beginning. Continuous prosperity for the church seemed to be in the offing. He remained as the minister for four years and recorded exceptional progress. The membership had been 96 in 1905 and after four years he recorded the membership at 220. The Sunday School increased from 160 to 250 in the same four-year period.

Toward the beginning of this period of expansion the people decided that their membership probably would continue to grow. To meet the needs they anticipated in the future, they decided they ought to build an addition to their church.

Mr. Head was appointed chairman of a building committee and plans were made to erect a new sanctuary not to exceed \$3,000 including the furnishings. They stipulated that half the money should be in the bank before the work would be started. On July 6, 1906, the cornerstone was laid, and the whole building was completed within a few months.² (see Fig. 37). The new church was built immediately to the east of the original church, on the ground now (1956) occupied by the new educational building. In order to make the church efficient, they connected the two buildings and had much more room for Sunday School as well as for congregational worship.

Of the progress, the Presiding Elder reported:

A remarkable uplift characterizes the year's work. Dr. Head and his people have built up every department of church life. The plant overgrew the old building before Christmas. More room was necessary. Happy am I to report today the enlargement of the property at a cost of \$4,000. From this time forth Highlands will take the front rank among the Denver Churches. This was but a mission a few years ago, worshipping in a stable.³

The two churches connected together as they were, were used continually until 1934 when both were destroyed by fire.

¹ *Ibid.*, (1904), p. 63.

² A folder published on the occasion of the Sixtieth Anniversary, 1952.

³ *Colorado Conference Journal*, p. 376.

Of the future plans of the church, the Presiding Elder reported later:

At a cost of some \$5,000 the little Mission church has been transformed into a magnificent city church . . . splendid improvement paid for. Besides this, lots between the church and 32nd Avenue bought. New parsonage to be built there after Conference, and if it grows fast, will soon build a new auditorium. On account of their improvement, they do not need mission money any more. The Pastor's support is advanced to \$1,200. Dr. Head great in organization.¹

The parsonage and the new sanctuary have been built, as we know, along the front lots facing 32nd Avenue.

Following the ministry of M. A. Head, the appointments read: 1909, J. W. Huston; 1910, C. E. Wakefield; and 1911, C. O. Thibodeau who remained several years. The membership reported by Dr. Thibodeau in 1913 was 268, while the Sunday School record of the year previous, 1912, was the highest to that time, 407. It was during the ministry of Dr. Thibodeau that the present parsonage of Highlands was built next door to the church in 1915.²

As for the new church building, the basement was dug during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. James G. Brawn in 1921. The auditorium which still serves as the sanctuary was completed in 1925 during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. John L. Spargo. (see Fig. 38).

After the fire in 1934 which destroyed the two older buildings to the south of the new church and parsonage, the people felt that it was necessary to rebuild in order to make educational space adequate for their needs. However, financial barriers prevented this for several years.

Finally, the long-awaited educational building of Highlands Church was begun in 1950 and completed in 1951, during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. M. L. Jackson. At the time of the consecration of this new building the membership stood at approximately 1,200.

Through long and hard times Highland Church has come, but today it remains one of the significant Methodist churches in Denver, and we predict it has a long and glorious future ahead of it.

John Collins Church

In the section called Rosedale, in South Denver, John Collins began to work in 1893. The organization then formed took the name of Warren Avenue Church, and in 1895 the name was changed to Collins Chapel in honor of the person who had come most to organize it.

The building was constructed in 1900 during the ministry of L. M. Potashinsky, a student at Denver University, who also worked in the beginnings of the Methodist work in Englewood.

¹ *Ibid.*, (1907), p. 524.

² A folder published on the occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary, 1932.

L. M. Potashinsky served for three years and was appointed elsewhere in 1902. At that time he reported the membership at 42 with 110 registered in Sunday School. The work of this student was certainly well done:

Rev. L. M. Potashinsky, in addition to his college work, has pushed on with his important church enterprise at the John Collins Church. The debt on the beautiful church building has been reduced to less than \$1,000, and this money has been gathered from sterile places by patient gleaning. A few more such pastorates as the last, and we will have at that place a charge strong and desirable.¹

Succeeding Potashinsky was the Rev. Mr. M. L. Whitaker, also a Denver University student, who had to resign within a few months because of the accidental loss of an eye.² The year was finished by Dr. W. F. Steele. It was reported at the Conference of 1903 that the last of the debt of the church had been paid through an arrangement with Mr. Pike who had given a large amount previously.³

Appointed in 1904 was W. L. Decker who remained one year. During the year the membership had increased from 35 to 60, though the Sunday School remained constant at 100. The next minister was E. Burns Martin. During his ministry of one year the Sunday School recorded an increase of 47 pupils.

Dr. C. O. Thibodeau became the minister in 1906, himself a student at Denver University. He remained one year and reported a membership drop from 63 to 32. His Sunday School statistics recorded a decrease also from 147 to 114. It is to be remembered that C. O. Thibodeau was later the minister at Highlands Church when the present parsonage was built in 1915. Later he had a thirteen-year pastorate at St. Paul Church, Denver (formerly South), where he retired in 1952.

In 1907 the minister was S. H. Slutz who remained two years. During his first year there were hardships and illness, which hindered the work.⁴ Nevertheless he recorded an increase of 33 members and a Sunday School increase of 5. The next year S. H. Slutz was returned to John Collins Church and they hoped it would then become a self-supporting church, and no longer be a student charge.

However, the added financial burden was too much, and the next year again returned to the student charge category. The minister appointed in 1909 was Samuel Knupp who recorded a total membership of 80 and a Sunday School enrollment of 144, an increase in both area. Knupp stayed for two years and did excellent work at building the program of the church:

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 232.

² Ibid., (1903), p. 374.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Colorado Conference Journal (1907), p. 518.

It is believed during the year there was in the church substantial spiritual growth. Was some increase in the membership. All church interests were carried forward with some degree of success and the church encouraged to expect a brighter future.¹

In 1911 the minister appointed was C. E. Holman who remained one year. During this year he recorded a decrease of 25 members and an increase of 20 in the Sunday School. Many of the removals of members were by transfer of letter, though the records are not clear as to where or why.²

In 1912 the minister was Edwin Bowling who found the financial problems too heavy and left before the end of the year. It is mentioned that during his ministry a parsonage building plan was launched but they found the finances were inadequate to build free of debt. Whether they ever built a parsonage is not clear by the records.³

The long needed educational building was constructed in 1951 for an estimated cost of \$40,000.⁴ The minister at the beginning of the building enterprise was J. Robert Dibble, a student at the Iliff School of Theology. Through the years John Collins Church has been a student charge more times than it has been otherwise. Though it is still a small church and is still a student charge, it has a large area in which to minister, and an area which demands its significant work.

Littleton Church

Methodist work in Littleton had been inaugurated as early as 1871, but no permanent organization was established until 1890. The people worshipped at first in a tent-tabernacle constructed between Curtice and Nevada on Main Street. The building in which they still worship at 155 North Nevada in Littleton, was constructed in 1900 although it has been remodeled and a basement dug since then.

In 1900 B. E. Jacobs became the minister and reported the membership in 1901 at 81 with 75 enrolled in the Sunday School. His salary for the year was \$375.00. In 1901 the minister appointed was S. H. Witherbee who stayed two years and recorded no substantial change in membership but a slight increase in the Sunday School. The church grew with the community, and as early as 1902 it was thought that Littleton would soon be connected with Denver in the inter-urban tram-car service.⁵ This would tend to give the little town prestige, and make it possible to grow even more. The optimism of the future of Littleton was reflected by the Presiding Elder:

Littleton will soon be in Denver. It is now a remote suburb. Our church there has had rapid growth in the six years of my ministry to it. If the dignity of a prophet were a little more becoming to me, I should predict that in ten years more we shall have a great

¹ Handwritten history of John Collins Church, author unknown. In the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The Rocky Mountain News, May 7, 1951.

⁵ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 233.

church in Littleton. Brother A. B. Glockner has been unable to live among his people, but in spite of that handicap he has seen the arm of the Lord displayed in the conversion of sinners . . . it had been a good year.¹

A. B. Glockner had been appointed minister in 1903 and remained almost two years. He was succeeded for a few months and an additional year by Edward Nottle, from the summer of 1904 to the Conference of 1905.

By the Conference of 1904 the membership had passed 100, as had the Sunday School again. Also a "neat" parsonage was built for the Littleton charge.² The location of this parsonage, or how long it was used, is not known.

J. E. Bryan became the minister in 1906 and did effective work to help pay the debt still remaining on the parsonage.³ In 1907 his successor was J. M. Eldridge who stayed four years. During his first year the final debt was paid on the parsonage.⁴

During the ministry of J. M. Eldridge the membership climbed from 85 to 140 the first year and then dropped to 116 by 1911. The Sunday School maintained itself rather steadily at approximately 140-150.

Succeeding Eldridge was W. F. Clark who came in 1911 and remained through 1912. There was no substantial change in the church recorded during his ministry.

Although there was not a Methodist church organized very early in Littleton, there had been Methodist work there for many years previous to 1890. The work had been maintained to the present day, and is now in need of another building, since they have made no major changes except the basement, since 1900 when it was built. The new parsonage next door to the church was completed in 1948 and is a nice addition to the property.

Merritt Memorial Church

The church in Lake Park was first organized in 1891 and was maintained as a small mission for some time. In 1899, so the story goes,⁵ a physician approached the Presiding Elder and insisted that a church be established in the Lake Park region because of the growing population. Because the mission was already established, it was decided that it ought to be developed into a church. In order to become a church quickly it was decided that a building was necessary, and a drive for funds was carried out. One of the contributors was the Rev. Mr. John H. Merritt, at that time the minister of Berkeley Methodist Church of Denver. Because of his generosity, the church was named for him, and bears the same name today. Unfortunately the details and even the amount of the gift are unavailable.

¹ *Ibid.*, (1904), p. 59.

² *Ibid.*, (1905), p. 209.

³ *Ibid.*, (1907), p. 516.

⁴ *Ibid.*, (1908), p. 43.

⁵ From the Homecoming Bulletin, published by the church September 17, 1939.

At the time of the organization of the church there were 16 members at the Mission. The first minister, in 1901, was W. A. Edwards who recorded a membership of 43 at the end of his first year with 65 enrolled in the Sunday School.

In the summer of 1902 the building was begun, and was finished that fall. It was first used for worship in October, 1902, with consecration services being held March 1, 1903. (see Fig. 53). The total cost was estimated at \$6,000-\$7,000.¹

The minister from 1902-1903 was J. N. Bailey, with E. E. Bean finishing the year. During this year the announcement of the will of John A. Clough was made, which was to divide \$20,000 equally among four agencies previously mentioned in this chapter. The Denver Church Extension Society received \$5,000 and of this amount Merritt Church was given a gift of \$1,000² This was not to be used for current expenses, so they no doubt applied it on their debt of over one thousand dollars.

The succeeding minister in 1903-1904 was Samuel Knupp who had recently come from the Missouri Conference. Of his work, and of Merritt Church's progress, the Presiding Elder reported:

Rev. Samuel Knupp has been for one year pastor of our beautiful church in North Denver called Merritt Memorial. Too much can not be said of the faithful work, and the Christ-like spirit of this brother beloved . . . It should be repeated that Merritt . . . is a monument to the Rev. Dr. Merritt, who came to Colorado some time after the mountains were made, and has furnished salt in large quantities for the preservation of this country since the memory of man runneth not the contrary. He is one of our Conference evangelists, and has done good work in various parts of the state during the year.³

Succeeding to the ministry of the church in 1904 was Robert R. Adams, a recent graduate (1900) of The Iliff School of Theology. Rev. Adams made progress in many areas of the church's activity. He arranged a lectureship with Bishop McCabe and raised almost \$1,000 for the building fund debt, reducing it in the year 1904-1905 to \$1,050. In addition he took an interest in the youth and organized a Boy's Brigade similar to our present Boy Scout organization.⁴ During this same pastorate much progress is noted in the membership and the Sunday School records. During the two years he doubled the membership from 54 to 105; and raised the Sunday School enrollment substantially, from 130 to 175.

Of his first year high praise is given this young energetic minister:

R. R. Adams has had a year of remarkable growth at Merritt. At the First Quarterly Conference a new financial plan was adopted, the old debt refunded, and the interest raised a year in advance. The membership has doubled this year. All financial claims have been met. Audience good. Forty converted. Bishop McCabe's lecture made

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1902), p. 233.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 233.

³ Ibid., (1904), p. 63.

⁴ Homecoming Bulletin, 1931.

this church the sum of \$800 on its debt. Robert R. Adams is the pastor, efficient and happy, though single. This church pays four times as much missionary money as last year, and every apportionment met in full.¹

Because of the rapid growth of the city in the direction of the Merritt Memorial Methodist Church, the leadership thought it was destined to be a great church with a large membership. However, the growth of the population did not result in that outcome, but Merritt remained a good influence, though small, in its community.

In 1906 W. C. Millikan was appointed to the church. The successor in 1907 was G. S. Parker who recorded decreases in both membership and Sunday School attendance.

Guy E. Konkel became minister of the church in 1908 to remain two years. He showed an increase in the membership from 81 to 117 the first year, and an increase in the Sunday School from 123 to 203 during the same time. The addition of graded streets and cement sidewalks during this ministry are noted.²

Succeeding ministers were: 1910, M. A. Head; 1911, T. J. Hooper. At the Conference of 1912 the membership was recorded at 109 and the Sunday School enrollment at 197.

Though Merritt has never been a church with a large membership, and has been in the midst of difficulty much of the time, it has continued to progress and to meet the needs of its people well. As far as it is concerned, it is not the size that has made its influence, but concentrated effort that has told the story.

Milleson Mission

The little mission carrying the name of Milleson was founded in 1891 in the area now known as “Jerome Park” west of the river between Colfax and Eighth Avenue. This includes the area now along the edges and underneath the West Colfax viaduct.

The work seems to have fluctuated up and down for several years, but does not appear in the Conference minutes until 1905 when the City Missions report gives the membership as 18, with 90 in the Sunday School. The minister for that year was A. E. Spencer and his total salary was \$60.00.

Although no statistics are available, one Presiding Elder’s report precedes this, and gives some of the uncertain future of this particular mission:

Milleson Mission is on the river, at West Tenth Avenue, is one of our oldest missions. Here we have struggled against odds that have been most discouraging. Jews abound. Unsanctified people of all sorts have withstood our gospel, but we have a good

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1905), p. 219.

² Homecoming Bulletin, 1931.

Sunday School and a few people who hear preaching and we have never doubted that the river region needs us.¹

The minister for the year 1905-1906 was L. L. Gaither who was followed in 1906 by G. Carl St. Clair. The latter minister, a student, became ill and died while serving this mission, but good work among the people had been accomplished nevertheless. The membership grew from 19 to 25 within the year, and the Sunday School almost doubled, from 65 to 125. Sometime during this year Mr. Frank Jerome deeded some of his land, including an old building, to the Milleson Mission Church. Before Conference the people wired it for electricity and replaced many of the windows. The Mission was thus housed in its own building in Jerome Park, although the exact address is not given.²

In 1907 the Rev. Mr. M. Flanagan was appointed to the mission for a year followed by S.E. Cooley who stayed two years. In 1910 the minister was H. S. Catterall who served a little more than a year, followed by I. O. Tweedy who stayed until the summer of 1912, a little less than a year. The minister for the next two years was William Pepper. During this rapid succession of student ministers the membership of the mission remained on the average about twenty, but the Sunday School declined from a high of 125 in 1907 to 48 in 1913.

The situation of Milleson Mission was difficult. It is a credit to the leaders that they could maintain even a small mission against such odds of poverty, disinterest, non-Christian influences, shifting populations, and finally an almost complete abandonment of a part of the area, especially east of the river between Eighth Avenue and Colfax. The Mission is mentioned little following 1913, and presumably died out within a few years, although the records are not included here.

Myrtle Hill Church (later Washington Park)

The little mission in Myrtle Hill had been organized in 1893, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lort, which home is still standing at 725 South High. Although the area is now known as Washington Park, the church was known as the Myrtle Hill Church until 1912. The first small building was constructed in 1893 on the corner of South High and Tennessee, and used for over two decades. (see Fig. 30). The new building was completed in 1918, on the corner of South Race and Arizona. (see Fig. 31).

The membership of the small church in 1900 was 39 with the Sunday School reporting 85. The minister for three years, 1899-1902, was W. E. Perry who seemed to have done good work since the membership and Sunday School grew gradually.

In 1902 H. E. Crowell became the minister and recorded little change in membership, but slight increases in the Sunday School enrollments. It is to the credit of the small church that even in its early days it was "ecumenical." It welcomed into its membership people from several

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 373.

² Ibid., (1907), p. 514.

denominations who happened to live in the area. In fact this particular minister, Rev. Crowell, was from the Baptist Church.¹

The successor in 1904 was E. E. Hicks for a portion of a year, to be followed for a few months by P. M. Spencer. At the end of the Conference year the membership was reported at 42 with 105 in the Sunday School.

A significant pastorate was begun in 1905, lasting four years. Paul Mansfield Spencer came to the church on a half-time basis since he spent the rest of his time at People's Mission on Larimer Street during the first year. His second year at Myrtle Hill was also a part-time job, for in this year he organized the Capitol Hill Methodist Church which has since merged with the Warren Methodist Church. The combined group now worship at the corner of East 14th and Gilpin, as the Warren Memorial Methodist Church.

During the ministry of Paul M. Spencer the membership at Myrtle Hill Church climbed from 42 to 136, more than 200 per cent increase. The Sunday School enrollment increased from 105 to 216, over 100 per cent increase. During his ministry also, the first mention was made of an enlarged building, or perhaps a completely new church structure.

At the end of the first year, 1906, the Presiding Elder reported on the excellent progress being made:

[Myrtle Hill Church] has undergone remarkable transformation under the ministry of Dr. P. M. Spencer. In strength and hopeful enthusiasm. Nine hundred dollars of improvements have made the little church a gem. Benevolences have tripled; salary has practically doubled. Probably the most improved church in the Conference.²

The salary increase mentioned here was from \$312 to \$600 in one year, a substantial increase. The next year the salary was reported at \$900.00.

Before the Conference of 1909 the church was cramped for space, the Sunday School having grown from 43 to 216 in a little over ten years. The congregation added some additional Sunday School rooms in a recently completed basement, and also built an addition to the building.³ The work of P. M. Spencer still received the highest commendations.

Following him in 1901 was C. R. Garver who further increased the membership from 136 to 172, and the Sunday School from 216 to 250. It is recorded that the people were still talking about building a new building.⁴

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the church's Fiftieth Anniversary, 1943. On file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1906), p. 369.

³ Ibid., (1909), p. 45.

⁴ Ibid., (1910), p. 276.

In 1911 the minister appointed was Roy L. Smith, a young energetic man who was destined for a great career. Dr. Smith is one of the best known Methodists today, and is now (1956) living in California. He remained at Myrtle Hill Church from 1911 to 1916.

During Dr. Smith's ministry the church name was changed from Myrtle Hill to Washington Park Community Methodist Church, having the additional caption "A center for Christian Friendliness."¹ In 1912 Dr. Smith recorded a total membership of 184, and a Sunday School enrollment of 229.

Some further history of Washington Park should be sketched since it is today (1956) a much different organization than it was in 1912. The new building which the people had been anticipating for ten years was completed in 1918, on the corner of South Race and Arizona Avenues.² The land had been given to the church by Mr. John Evans, Jr.³ The building was constructed during the early stages of World War I when the people found the payments were hard to meet. The final mortgage was not paid off until the ministry of Dr. Samuel Maxwell at the Fiftieth Anniversary celebration in 1943. The building they had anticipated was estimated originally at \$12,000. However, as they planned for their needs they raised their estimate to \$20,000, \$30,000, \$50,000, and arrived at the final figure of \$70,000. It was a magnificent structure in its day, and one of the most beautiful churches in Denver for years to come.⁴

The total investment in 1943 at the fiftieth anniversary, stood at approximately \$100,000. In addition to this, the members have more recently constructed their new educational building joining the original church on the west. This was completed during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. R. O. Gilpin in 1950.

Through the years it has been proven that this little Myrtle Hill Church, begun by John Collins in a sparsely settled section outside the Denver City limits, was a wise move. The strong influence of the present Washington Park Church with almost 2,000 members is adequate evidence of the wisdom of this early move.

Overland Mission Church

Methodist work was begun in the section surrounding the Overland Cotton Mills in 1895, and had relative success, depending on the prosperity of the mills. This industrial area lay to the south of Mississippi Avenue and east of the river. Little information has been found about the mission, but some items are mentioned here.

The Presiding Elder gave an evaluation of the work in 1903:

¹ Lort, A Church Bell Rings in Denver, p. 49.

² Ibid., p. 62.

³ Ibid., p. 60.

⁴ A folder on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary, 1943.

For a long time we have done good steady work in our little church at Overland. We minister to a cotton mill population, and they need us, as we alone offer them spiritual help.¹

There is no statistical record in the Conference Journal until 1905 which lets us have only a partial picture of the mission's work. The minister appointed in 1905 was M. G. Young who reported a membership of 22, with a Sunday School of 80. He was appointed again the next year, received the whole sum of \$10.00 for his year's work, and reported a membership of 9 and a Sunday School of 50.

The succession of ministers, undoubtedly mostly students, following 1907 was: 1907-1909, Howard Baker; 1909-1912, H. E. Jones; and 1912- , Carl Stevenson. The membership fluctuated during this period from a high of 22 in 1910 to 8 the next year, back up to a high of 30 in 1912, and 28 in 1913. The Sunday School reached a high in 1907 of 125, but remained nearer an average of 60 the rest of the time. As the work at the Overland Mills ceased, the people moved away, leaving the church without membership.

People's Mission

In the old Lawrence Street Methodist Church a downtown Mission was established in 1890 as "The Church of the Strangers." The express purpose of this project was to minister to the transients and the people in lower Denver where no other Methodist work was operating.

Because of various locations, there have been many names for this mission: Eleventh Street Mission, Larimer Street Mission, and Eighth Street Mission. The newest name, and the one by which it was known in the early 1900's was the "People's Mission," and was located between Eighth and Ninth on Larimer Street. This was in the old section of Denver originally known as Auraria, and long since built up as business area with only an occasional rooming house or apartment building.

The work was rather successful and meeting the purposes for which it was organized, according to the report:

People's Mission is on Larimer Street near Ninth. We own there a valuable property on a business street. Mr. W. C. Johnston has lately taken hold of the Sunday School and is helping to make it a marvel of enthusiastic success.²

When the Conference Journals began their statistical records of this particular mission, the minister was Paul M. Spencer who came in 1904 and remained for two years. It is worthy of note that during his second year here he was also the minister of Myrtle Hill (Washington Park) Methodist Church. At the end of Spencer's second year (1906) he reported a membership of 40 and a Sunday School enrollment of 175. It is evident from this that there was a need for a mission in this part of Denver, and that this need was being at least partially fulfilled.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1903), p. 372.

² Ibid., (1903), p. 372.

The dream of some of the people was that this little mission might be developed into a Community Center program like the recent development at the Epworth Community Center. Their hopes were recorded thus:

People's Mission, on Larimer Street, has deeply interested friends who are waiting for the opportune moment when thousands of dollars will be put into another finely equipped mission plant like Epworth Church. There is now under immediate way the opening of a great Methodist every-day mission on Larimer Street, touching Market Street. It will be an all-around rescue station for men and women in that needy region where the rocks lie thick and many a storm-tossed soul goes to wreck.¹

Their hopes were not realized however, although some of the ideas were carried out by Jessee Andrew Dean who was minister of the Mission from 1906-1909:

Jessee Andrew Dean has closed a year in which some features of institutional work have been applied. Early in the year the chapel building was repaired at considerable expense. What is needed here, in order to reach the community, is money and effort. Until this is done results will be comparatively meager.²

Even now however, the leadership was beginning to become discouraged about the future of this particular mission. Jessee Andrew Dean remained until 1909, in face of these discouragements.

In 1909 the minister at People's Mission was George L. Nuckolls, a student at Denver University. He showed rather substantial progress in the membership, recording an increase from 75 to 83, a net increase of 8; and a Sunday School increase from 104 to 152, a growth of 48 in two years. The Presiding Elder felt that his work was well done, and reported that "it is an exceptional thing for any service to close in that church without someone's being converted."³

Following George L. Nuckolls was C. M. Mikkelsen who stayed one year. He recorded a decrease of 35 in membership and 30 in the Sunday School. The mission had fulfilled its place, but began to dwindle. It was maintained for a few years, but then was seen to be a hopeless situation, and was disbanded.

St. James Church

St. James Church had been founded in 1872 as one of the oldest Methodist churches in Denver. It had maintained its work in West Denver until the city grew out to it, and then grew on past it for several miles. Their small building was built in 1875 and torn down in 1889. The new and larger building was completed in 1892 during the ministry of G. W. Ray. This is the building which has been only recently demolished (1953) to make way for expanding industry in downtown Denver.

¹ *Ibid.*, (1905), pp. 208-210.

² *Ibid.*, (1908), p. 42..

³ *Ibid.*, (1911), p. 430.

The minister in 1900 was A. A. Johnson who remained two years. Although the Presiding Elder reported an illness in the family, and the death of their little girl in 1902, the work went on.¹ The church did, however, record a decrease in both membership and Sunday School pupils. In 1900 the reports had been: membership, 293; Sunday School, 234. Two years later they read: membership, 249; Sunday School, 200.

C. B. Allen followed as minister and remained two years. He had been minister previously from 1894 to 1899 and now was beginning his second pastorate in this church. During his first pastorate the membership had been almost doubled and much money was raised to apply on the debt still remaining on the church. In his second pastorate there was an increase in membership to 302 in 1903 and a high Sunday School enrollment of 240 in 1904. In referring to this ministry the Presiding Elder stated that:

the benevolences are fully collected, and the Epworth League and Sunday School and preachings have been full of interest . . . The expenses of the year are all paid and there is money in the treasury.²

During the year 1903-1904 the minister's health failed, and he was given a five-months vacation in California. There was only slight decrease in the membership, and a large increase in Sunday School enrollment, from 118 to 240.

John R. Wood became the minister in 1904 and remained almost two years. There was substantial payment on the indebtedness the first year, but in the second year there were financial difficulties. John R. Wood felt that he had to retire, and his second year was finished by A. F. Ragatz. The membership declined during this year from 220 to 108, and the Sunday School declined from 200 to 162.

A. F. Ragatz was appointed one more year and did good work in the financial aspect of the church:

Most notable piece of difficult financial work of the year. Paid \$600 on principal of mortgage aside from interest. A floating debt of \$800 has also been cancelled. The church building has been gone over from roof to furnace, needed repairs made. The entire structure cleaned, upstairs and down, the auditorium replastered in places and refrescoed.³

In 1907 T. J. Hooper was appointed to the church where he remained for three years. It was during his ministry that the decline in the church began and was never stopped. As a result the church was disbanded and the membership transferred to Fifty Avenue Church (now Wesley) in 1913.

There was great financial achievement during this ministry as we note from two reports from the Presiding Elder:

¹ *Ibid.*, (1902), p. 231.

² *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 377.

³ *Ibid.*, (1907), p. 515.

St. James, under T. J. Hooper, had great financial achievement. After a great effort of the year before in repairs and debt payment, the boldness and success of the present year's undertaking are thrown out into still distincter relief. Too much credit cannot be given the minister. A few months at the farthest, the debt of St. James Church will have been utterly extinguished and thus the decks cleared for a new era of spiritual victory.¹

St. James brings a report of the most notable financial occurrence that has happened during the year on the district. St. James church building, after the discouraging struggle of the years, is without one dollar of indebtedness. To the benevolence of the pastor, T. J. Hooper, and his loyal wife, belongs the credit . . . they put the debt all on the parsonage. It may be lost but the church is safe.²

During the same period however, the membership declined from 131 to 84, but the Sunday School grew from 125 to 204. Between the Conferences of 1907 and 1908 the salary payments decreased from \$1,200 to \$500.00, the latter supplemented by \$60.00 of Mission money.

In 1910 the minister was T. W. Vaughan who remained one year. In 1911 the appointment read, M. J. Fields and in 1912, William Pepper. By the time of the 1913 Conference the membership of St. James Church had declined to 73 and the Sunday School to 135. The population of the town was shifting and St. James Church reflected the trend.

In 1913 the membership of the church was transferred to Fifth Avenue Church, twelve blocks to the south and west. St. James' building became the property of the Denver Church Extension Society. The fate of the parsonage is not known.

The building was used for five years by the Japanese Methodist Church and then became the Colfax Community Church where Dean Arthur C. Peck continued his institutional work. In 1922 a phase of this work included a Spanish group who developed into what is now (1956) First Spanish Methodist Church of Denver.³

Sometime after this date, probably at the retirement of Dean Peck in 1928, the church became the property of the First Spanish Methodist Church who used it until 1953 when they purchased another building and the old St. James structure was condemned and torn down to make way for Denver business expansion.

St. Paul Methodist Church, South

The first church of the Methodist Church, South, was organized in Denver in 1860, but was soon disbanded because most of the people of this church left for the South during the Civil War. In 1871 the organization was reconstituted, and it remains continuous to the present day.

¹ Ibid., (1907), p. 515.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1909), p. 45.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, October 1, 1922.

In 1887 the congregation dedicated their new building at the corner of 21st and Welton Streets, taking the name St. Paul. (see Fig. 17). They worshipped in this building until it was demolished in 1910, following which time they worshipped in a building at the corner of 16th and Ogden Streets. They maintain this church to the present day. (see Fig. 18). However, since 1939 the three Methodist bodies – Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Protestant, and Methodist Episcopal, South – have been united. At that time St. Paul became a part of the Colorado Conference, and has received its ministers from that body ever since.

Because the records of the St. Paul church were not a part of the Colorado Conference previous to 1939, they have been difficult to locate. Some of the information has been preserved in the 80th Anniversary program of the church, published in 1940, and some from the records of the Denver Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In checking the Journals of the Denver Conference, the following ministers and the years of their appointments are recorded: 1899-1901, O. M. Rickman, reporting a membership of 170 his second year; W. E. Edmonson, one year; J. T. Leggett, one year; W. T. Thompson, one year; P. T. Ramsey from 1904-1910; and R. E. Dickenson from 1910 until at least 1913. It was the last named minister who was in charge of the church at the time of the completion of the new building at 16th and Ogden in 1910.

Membership statistics were highest in 1911 when there were 280 persons registered. The increase had been almost steady since 1904 to the time of the completion of the new building. Sunday School statistics appear in our records for only five years, 1905-1910. They averaged less than 200. For the same five year period the salary was shown to have increased from \$500 to \$800.

The old church and parsonage were sold for \$16,000 in 1910 when plans were being made to move to the new location.¹

An interesting item appears during the planning stages of the new church. Although the whole project was not completed, the South church was also thinking in terms of a Community Center program. Why the plans were not completed we cannot ascertain without further records, but the church which they planned does stand, and has been used continually since it was opened in 1910:

James R. Killian, clerk of the state supreme court, has bought from C. C. Curtis, through the John C. Gallup Real Estate agency, four lots at 16th and Ogden for \$7,500 for the purpose of erecting thereon the institutional church of St. Paul's Methodist Church, South, of Denver. A site at 20th and Lincoln was under contemplation for several months for this church and the idea of locating permanently at the old site of the church, 21st and Welton, was considered, but these have finally been abandoned.

A hotel will be one of the features of the institutional church and this will be conducted officially by the congregation. It will be four stories in height and will be modern in every particular. The church edifice proper will adjoin the hotel, and plans for both structures to occupy the entire four lots are being prepared.

¹ An undated newspaper clipping from the Western History Department, Denver Public Library.

It is planned to house in the hotel women and girls who are employed in the city and no denominational lines will be drawn. Every effort will be made to produce as homelike a hotel as possible. If the hotel is not filled with permanent guests there will be no objection to tourists occupying rooms at the church hotel.

It is estimated that the entire cost of church and hotel will be in the neighborhood of \$75,000.¹

Simpson Church

Simpson Church was organized in 1871 by O. L. Fisher while he was minister of the California Street (Christ) Methodist Church. Simpson's location was at East 37th and Lafayette, in the midst of one of the early growing edges of the city. They built a new building in 1888-1889 which stands today almost as it was when it was build, although now it is owned by the Roman Catholic Church.

The minister from 1899 to 1901 was G. R. Graff. In 1900 the membership was 120 with 175 persons reported in the Sunday School. However, a debt remained on the property, which they had been paying since 1884. It caused many problems as well as anxiety.

In 1901 a significant ministry of three years was begun by the Rev. M. C. F. Seitter. The membership was increased to 190, a total gain of 70, while the Sunday School enrollment reached a high of 230 and declined to 150 during the same period of time.

One of the strongest points of the ministry of C. F. Seitter was his ability to raise money. This was begun in his first year, when the Presiding Elder reflected his optimism at the payments made on the debt and the progress of the church in general. He predicted that "it will not be long at the present rate of progress till that will be one of our best Denver churches."² The year all will remember however, was 1903 when they were successful in paying their last debt and could face the world with new hope and courage:

Rev. C. V. Seitter has finished his second year at Simpson. The faithful efforts of last year, and of other pastorates, have culminated this year in a long-looked-forward-to event. On the 9th and the month, amid much rejoicing and smoke, the mortgage was burned and the church property declared free from a debt that has been on it since 1884, and on which they have paid \$3,232 interest. In the two years of Brother Seitter's pastorate they have paid \$168 interest and \$1,600 principal. And so that incubus is gone, and we can give ourselves to better things. But better things have not been neglected in the midst of the church debt paying. A fine Epworth League, Sunday School, prayer meeting and all other departments of a well organized church have been cherished. Souls have been save, and benevolent collections taken to meet the full apportionments.³

¹ The Denver Republican, October 23, 1909.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 233.

³ Ibid., (1903), p. 374.

In 1904 the minister was G. A. W. Cage who remained only a portion of the year. O. P. Wright finished the year and was appointed for two more, 1905-1907. Dr. Wright's experience added much to developing the program at Simpson, but the membership and Sunday School records show little change except a decrease from 140 to 104 in the Sunday School enrollment during his last year.

Following in 1907 the Rev. Mr. W. T. Miller became the minister. His records show a net loss of ten in membership, and a gain of 30 in the Sunday School. One of the problems at this time is suggested by the Presiding Elder, i.e., the growing Roman Catholic population in the area:

Simpson is continuing the struggle in a growing Roman Catholic center. W. T. Miller assisted most efficiently by his gifted and consecrated wife, has given a year of best service . . . problem still awaits solution.¹

A significant pastor in the history of Simpson Church was Olin P. Lee who served the church for three years, 1908-1911. Although in his ministry he recorded only a net increase of 27 members and 59 pupils in the Sunday School, it was he who led in a major move and a rebuilding project. The old location at 37th and Lafayette was becoming more and more unsatisfactory, so they sold their property and moved. As has been mentioned, their old church still stands but is used by the Roman Catholics. The details of this sale and move are given by the Presiding Elder:

Simpson has felt the stifling process of submergence by an ever-increasing Roman Catholic population. School, church, and nunnery joined with railroad tracks and shops to flank our little church on every side. Thus located, its near extinction was a foregone conclusion. O. P. Lee led off in a radical move to give Simpson church a new career of expectant life. It was the immediate sale of the old property, the purchase of a new site and the erection of a new edifice. The old property sold; four beautiful lots on the corner of 34th a high immediately bought in a promising residential section, and more convenient to most of the present membership. A substantial subscription from the congregation itself, and the proceeds of the old property provide for the inauguration of the enterprise. Simpson church now tents on the new ground, and with new vigor and harmony, while the work of planning and constructing the new building goes on.²

Succeeding O. P. Lee in 1911 was A. O. Amundson who remained two years and recorded the highest membership so far in the history of the church. During his ministry the membership grew from 177 to 226, while the Sunday School grew also from 193 to 250. The inspiration of the new building and the new location was paying off. This was the beginning of a new lease on life for this small church and it has continued to minister favorably to this day. (see Fig. 16).

The move to this new location had adverse effects on another Methodist church however. The Simpson congregation were within ten blocks of a church they themselves had organized,

¹ *Ibid.*, 1908), p. 44.

² *Ibid.*, (1909), p. 44.

the Hess Memorial Church at East 31st and Elizabeth. The result was that Hess Church suffered because of loss of members, and finally in 1917 closed its doors as a Methodist organization. The building still stands as a church of the Christian Science sect.

In 1924 a parsonage was bought at 3421 Race, next door to the Simpson church, and in the same year the church received \$1,000 which had been the proceeds from the sale of the Hess Church property. It was to be used to strengthen the work of Simpson Church in the same area in which Hess had previously worked.

In 1954 the Simpson congregation proudly opened their new educational building for use, at a cost of \$35,000. So once again, they have built for the future in their strategic location.¹

Swedish Church (Emmanuel)

Organized in 1880-1883 because of an interest in maintaining religious worship in a foreign language, the Swedish church progressed but slowly, but maintained their organization. They had tried to buy several churches or lots, and lost most of them because of financial problems. In 1895 they bought an old church at the corner of 19th and Pennsylvania where they worshipped for a time.

Their main step forward however, was the decision to sell their old property and rebuild on the corner of 22nd Avenue and Court Place, where they worshipped until 1945. (see Fig. 11). This was accomplished during the ministry of C. O. Carlson who served the church from 1901 to 1904.² The site of the former church at 19th and Pennsylvania is the present site of the St. Luke's Hospital Nurses' Home. Following the sale of the building, while the new church was being built, the congregation worshipped again in Trinity Methodist Church where they had previously worshipped temporarily.

Bishop Warren participated in this church's ceremonies when they laid their cornerstone, the symbol of the first church building they had ever constructed for themselves, after so many attempts. The newspaper of the day reports:

Bishop Warren laid the cornerstone of the new First Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church at 22nd and Logan Avenue yesterday. The services were in Swedish and English. Flags were entwined over the platform and there were other appropriate decorations. The pastor, Rev. C. O. Karlson, Rev. Peter Munson of Lincoln, Nebraska, Rev. Frost Craft of Trinity Church, Denver, Rev. W. L. Wickman of Nebraska, and Rev. J. H. Merritt and Rev. R. A. Carnine, participated in the services.³

No records are available for the church during the first part of this century, but their memberships fluctuated as they had before. It was with optimism that in 1913 they established several Sunday Schools in the city of Denver, one of which was called St. Peter's and located in the old Cameron Methodist Church building at South Washington and East Iowa Avenues. This

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, September 20, 1954.

² A History of Emmanuel Church, written by their former minister, the Rev. Mr. J. Richard Palmer, 1949.

³ The Denver Times, July 14, 1902.

particular project lasted five years before being disbanded, but reflects the enthusiasm of the Swedish people as they tried to maintain their culture and their language amid a changing world.

In 1912 they built their parsonage, near the church, at a cost of approximately \$5,000, during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Eklund.¹ Thus within a decade they had completed two building projects which shows that they had most of their financial difficulties behind them.

A complete list of their ministers between 1900 and 1912 is given: 1897-1901, J. A. Gabrielson; 1901-1904, C. O. Carlson; 1904-1905, C. A. Anderson; 1905-1908, C. P. Schildt; January-June 1908, F. J. Swanson; June-October 1908, E. F. Lund; 1908-1911, Paul Munson, 1911-1914, C. P. Eklund.²

During the years, as happened with all foreign language groups, they began to use English more and more in their church, until the “mother tongue” was completely disregarded. This happened in the German churches, in the Swedish, and is now (1956) happening in the Spanish and the Japanese churches in Denver. By the year 1939, during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Lowell Swan, they decided to cease using the Swedish language and hence, became “Emmanuel” Church instead. However, they were no longer in a strategic location since there were other Colorado Conference churches nearby. In time they found their membership and influence dwindling to almost nothing.

In 1945, during the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Richard Palmer, the Quarterly Conference voted to sell their property and re-locate in South Denver. They began holding services in Asbury School, South Marion Street at Asbury, until they constructed the first unit of their new building at South Downing and East Yale in 1948. This debt was completely paid within three years and they were ready to build again. The new sanctuary, one of the finest in Denver, was opened for worship in 1955. The minister who carried through this last phase of their growth is the Rev. Mr. Vern Klingman who is still the minister at Emmanuel (1956).

Thus we see that through many struggles, the Swedish people heroically planned their organization, but now in 1956, the church is a strong force for Methodism in Denver, although the language barrier has been dismissed and forgotten.

Trinity Church

The oldest Methodist congregation in the area was organized in 1859 as a mission for two small villages, Auraria and Denver City. In 1863 the group built the Lawrence Street Methodist Church near 14th Street, where they worshipped until 1888 when they decided a larger building was needed and began to plan the present Trinity Methodist building at 18th and Broadway. The most important minister of the early days was probably Henry Augustus Buchtel, who led the people through the building campaign and almost doubled their membership in five years, 1886-1891.

¹ A folder published on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the church, October 1, 1933.

² A History of Emmanuel Church, written by their former minister, the Rev. Mr. J. Richard Palmer, 1949.

In 1900 the minister at Trinity was Camden Coburn who had first come in 1896 and remained until 1902. For his last four years John Collins had been the assistant at Trinity. The membership in 1900 stood at 1,088 with a Sunday School enrollment of 750. The salary at that time was \$4,600, a sizeable amount for 1900. However, Buchtel had received a total of \$8,500 in 1889-1890.

Despite the seeming progress, Trinity still had a large debt which had to be paid. This was subscribed during the ministry of Frost Craft who came in 1902 and remained two years. It is reported that more was pledged than was actually needed:

More than \$25,000 pledged at celebration of the 44th anniversary of the Church. Rev. Camden M. Coburn (former minister) in attendance. Frost Craft is the present minister, paid off the mortgage, and released them of paying \$1,200 interest on the principal each year. Cleared the debt with almost \$1,000 to spare. One parishioner, when lacking \$700, said he would pay \$100 if the other \$600 were raised . . . quickly so many subscriptions that we lost count.¹

Evidently, Camden Coburn had returned especially for this celebration, though he had been gone but approximately one year. Surely he was happy to see their success also.

Of this progress, the Presiding Elder has reported:

Dr. Craft has fearlessly and faithfully pushed on the work at Trinity. During the year the entire debt of \$29,000 which had stood against the church since its erection, was subscribed, and subscribed in such a way that it will be paid. At least I inquired carefully of the Trustees at the Fourth Quarterly Conference and they assured me that there would be little or no shrinkage.²

The successor was W. P. George who stayed for a portion of the year 1904-1905 followed for a few months by J. S. Montgomery. A new idea seems to have been proposed during this ministry which stirred up some controversy:

The pastor of Trinity Church proposed that ladies remove their hats at church service and seemed to meet with approval from ladies of the congregation. A discussion of the subject has been going on in the papers. The opponents are afraid of catching cold and not showing reverence for the place of worship.³

A new day dawned for Trinity when in 1905 Louis A. Banks was appointed as minister. He remained four years and registered phenomenal growth in the membership and relatively good success in the Sunday School as well. In 1905 the membership stood at 960 and in 1909 the membership was recorded at 2,249. The largest gain in a single year seems to have been

¹ The Denver Republican, November 23, 1903.

² Colorado Conference Journal (1904), p. 63.

³ A Bulletin from the Cameron Methodist Church, March 12, 1905. On file in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

1906-1907 when the net gain was 633. The Sunday School registered 700 in 1905 and in 1909 it had grown to 840.

As important as membership is in a church, Trinity knew it had some other interests which needed attention. The Presiding Elder reports that Banks had been giving his attention to some of these:

Trinity is also quietly cutting down its debt. On some glad day in the not distant future we will wake to read that the magnificent church property is absolutely free.¹

In 1909 the Rev. Mr. Banks was transferred to Kansas City because of his wife's health, and was succeeded by C. B. Wilcox.

The Rev. Mr. Wilcox was minister at Trinity from 1909 through 1912. During this time the membership declined from the high of 2,249 to 971 while the Sunday School went from 840 up to 1,143 and down again to 535 in 1912. A part of the problem is explained by the Presiding Elder. He stated that the members were transferring into the outlying churches nearer their home. In 1911 "less than ten per cent of the members live within a mile of the church."² Of course as the neighborhoods developed their own churches, the people would tend to go to them, although even to the present time Trinity has drawn its membership from all over the city.

Trinity continued to develop nevertheless, and planned to erect an adjoining building for offices and for religious education space. This was completed in 1926 at a cost of approximately \$150,000 with approximately \$100,000 spent for furnishings and lots, making a total investment of about \$250,000.³

The old Lawrence Street Church was used for a time by the Church of the Strangers, a Methodist Mission. Later it was used for Salvation Army work and soon after the turn of the century was torn down to make room for a tramway company building.

Thus Trinity Church has the longest and perhaps the most colorful history of all the Denver Methodist churches, mainly because it has been the leading church throughout the years. Its influence continues, especially in its ministry to the hotel and transient population, as well as many people who drive from remote parts of Denver to maintain their membership in the downtown church.

University Park Church

When the University decided to rebuild in the south and east of Denver proper because of overcrowding downtown, a small settlement grew up around the first buildings. This was known as University Park and a Methodist church of the same name was established there in 1894. The population did not quickly come to University Park, and many of those who did retained their

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1907), p. 515.

² Ibid., (1911), p. 428.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, March 14, 1926.

church membership in a downtown church. Hence, the little church did not grow rapidly, but built solidly as it developed.

The minister in 1900 was E. E. Bean who had been appointed there first in 1899 and remained two years. The membership in 1900 was recorded as 77 with 60 registered in the Sunday School. When Mr. Bean left, the membership stood at 88 with 70 in the Sunday School, a good increase during his last year. He was required to give up his work at the church due to his wife's health.¹

Succeeding Mr. Bean in 1902 was Kenneth Money who stayed less than a year because his own health would not permit him to continue. For a few months the church was served by John W. Rose. During this year 1902-1903, the high of 100 was registered for the Sunday School.

In 1903, the Rev. Mr. R. H. Forrester came to serve the church. His records show that the Sunday School dropped to 65. It was during the ministry of F. A. Hawke that the church began to prosper. He was appointed in 1904 and remained until 1910. During this time the membership climbed from 86 to 171 and the Sunday School from 65 to 165.

It was under Mr. Hawke's leadership that the first parsonage for the church was purchased at a cost of \$3,250, located at 2075 South Columbine. Of his good ministry this year, the Presiding Elder reported:

University Park is a popular suburb, residence capacity being so far below the demand for homes that he who would breathe the salubrious air of the intellectual center must possess himself of alertness, strategy and money if he would secure and keep a roof over his head . . . it was necessary that we provide a parsonage . . . a neat parsonage has been secured. Dr. Hawke has done well.²

The work progressed well, and in comparison with other church organizations, there was enough activity at University Park to have begun a building enterprise. The people were anxious to do this, but the situation did not develop to make this feasible until much later (1927).³

In 1910 the minister appointed to University Park was Frost Craft who had previously been the minister of Trinity and Capitol Hill Churches. During most of his ministry, from 1910 to 1916, he was the business manager of the University. Because of the added burdens of this work he had an associate, J. A. Davis who also worked in connection with the University.⁴

Between 1910 and 1912 the church reported a membership gain from 171 to 187 and a Sunday School increase from 165 to 225. Thus in 1912 it was one of the significant churches of the city, but had no building of its own. The people worshipped in the University Chapel,

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 233.

² Ibid., (1907), p. 517.

³ Ibid., (1908), p. 44.

⁴ Martin Rist, "A Short History of University Park Methodist Church," written on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary, 1944.

although it was too small for them as time went on and Sunday School classes had to meet either in the University buildings or in The Iliff School of Theology rooms. Even after the new chapel of the University was constructed in 1918, the University Park people met in that chapel.

The first building project of the University Park congregation was undertaken during the ministry of Dr. William C. Wasser in 1926-1927. They built the present sanctuary of the church, including the basement and the back parlors. After a long and fruitful ministry in the Methodist church, Dr. Wasser is now retired and is actively associated with University Park Church. He is also an active participant in the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

The final stage of the University Park building as it now stands was undertaken during the significant ministry of Alexander C. Bryans who first came to the church in 1944. The educational building of the church was constructed in 1952-1953 at a cost of approximately \$84,050.¹

Many more interesting aspects of the University Park Church program of later years could be included, but this is outside the scope of this particular work. However, enough has been sketched to show the development of this significant church from 1912 to the present time.

Wheat Ridge Church

In a growing farming suburb of Denver, on West Thirty-Eighth Avenue, the Methodists organized a church in 1874. The original location seems to have been in a school building located on West Thirty-Eighth Avenue near Otis Street, where the present Wheat Ridge High School stands. In 1886 the congregation built their first building on the corner of West Thirty-Second and Wadsworth, six blocks south of their present location.

In 1900 the membership stood at 151 with 200 registered in the Sunday School. The minister for the year 1900-1901 was D. C. Winship who had also served the previous year.

In 1901 the appointment was J. R. Wood who remained for three years, and recorded a membership increase to 180, a gain of 29 members. His Sunday School record shows 393, an increase from 200. However, this probably included some statistics from the work at Lakewood which was a separate Sunday School maintained by the Wheat Ridge Church. Previous to their organization as a church in 1904, the Sunday School at Fruitdale (now Jefferson Avenue) was related to Wheat Ridge also.

The congregation decided that they ought to add to their small frame building, and in the fall of 1901 they did this at a cost of \$600.00. The Presiding Elder reports:

Our Church at Wheat Ridge has been enlarged at a cost of \$600, all paid for. Congregation excellent, membership increased, and in spite of bad crops, Methodism succeeds and all claims paid. Two appointments in the country are vigorous and both need churches.²

¹ The Denver Post, January 4, 1953.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 233.

The country churches mentioned here are Lakewood and the forerunner of Jefferson Avenue Church at West 44th and Jefferson. Lakewood was two miles south of Wheat Ridge, along Colfax Avenue, while the Jefferson Avenue organization was to the northwest.

Appearing with the Wheat Ridge records is the mention of the original land bought in Lakewood for the erection of a Methodist church:

Wheat Ridge has had a good year. Lots for a church at Lakewood have been bought and paid for, and a fair sum on subscription for the building. They plan to build this fall. There are three appointments on the charge.¹

In February, 1904, the offer was made to Wesley Slater to give the Wheat Ridge church some lots on the corner of West Thirty-Eighth and Wadsworth for a new church and parsonage. The lots were to be 150 feet by 200 feet which seemed to be approximately the size that was needed.² This is the location of the present Wheat Ridge church where they built in 1930.

At the Conference of 1904 Wheat Ridge asked to be set off as a station with a full-time minister. The two other charges on the circuit, Lakewood and Fruitdale (Jefferson Avenue), were to be developed into churches in their own right.³ It was in 1904 that the Jefferson Avenue Church was organized separately, but the Lakewood appointment remained with the Wheat Ridge charge until 1906.

In 1904 John A. Long was appointed to Wheat Ridge-Lakewood, and recorded interesting statistics. The first report he made after Jefferson Avenue Church was organized, the membership dropped from 180 to 120. It is presumed that a large portion of this represents the membership which was associated with the newly formed church to the northwest. In the same period the Sunday School reported a drop from 393 to 190 which again reflects the strength of the Jefferson Avenue Church. The first year of operation at the new organization, the membership stood at 45 with a Sunday School of 150 which is almost equal to the drop recorded at Wheat Ridge.

In 1904 the new building at Jefferson Avenue was begun and completed before the Conference of 1905. Also constructed this year was the small building at Lakewood, dedicated in August, 1904, at a cost of \$1,500. The Lakewood location was West Colfax Avenue at Brown Avenue.⁴

In the year 1906 the Wheat Ridge Church was made a separate charge, and the minister, J. A. Long remained another year. Again we see a decrease in the statistics as the new church took part of the membership which had previously been included in the Wheat Ridge statistics. The decrease this time was from 118 to 108 in membership and from 300 to 225 in Sunday School enrollment. The Lakewood charge reported a membership of 20 and a Sunday School

¹ *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 372.

² Official Records of Wheat Ridge Church, filed in the church office.

³ *Colorado Conference Journal*, (1904), p. 74.

⁴ Official Records of Wheat Ridge Church, filed in the church office.

enrollment of 54. In 1906 it is noted that the church building at Wheat Ridge was first wired for electric lights.¹

The Lakewood charge was again served by the minister of Wheat Ridge in 1907 with the minister of both being A. O. Amundson. The relationship with the Lakewood charge remained for three years, served by Mr. Amundson. Lakewood was for three years seemingly a separate church however, and kept separate statistics. The Lakewood membership had fluctuated between 15 and 20 for the whole four-year period that they were a separate church. Their Sunday School had gone as high as 90 in 1910, which shows that it was a significant church, although not strong enough to maintain itself separately. Hence, in 1910 it was again united with the Wheat Ridge Church and the statistics are listed together.

During the Rev. Mr. Amundson's ministry at Wheat Ridge (1903-1907), the membership climbed from 108 to 154 while the Sunday School increased from 225 to 317, the last year of which includes the statistics of the Lakewood charge, although these account for but about 90 increase in Sunday School enrollment. During this ministry there were improvements made on both the Lakewood and the Wheat Ridge charges, although the details are not available on either.²

The minister in 1911 was G. A. Gibson who reported a membership drop to 105 and a decrease in Sunday School enrollment to 271. Thus the Wheat Ridge Church stood in 1912, in a farming community, yet close to a city. In fact later on the parsonage was located on an acre of ground opposite the Crown Hill Cemetery, surrounded by big cottonwood trees, and the minister was nicknamed "Methodist Farmer."³

In 1930 the first section of their new building was constructed on the corner of West 38th and Wadsworth where they maintain their church to this day. (see Fig. 22). An educational addition was completed in 1950 and a completely new wing in 1954 which almost doubled their space. The latter is known as the E. Gladys Anderson Education Building in memory of one of their Sunday School Superintendents.

Wheat Ridge is today one of the fast-growing suburbs of Denver, and the church is trying desperately to keep pace with its community. The growth in this area of Denver seems almost unlimited at the present time.

Wright Memorial Church

In Valverde, to the south and west of Denver's center, across the river to the west of Alameda, was organized the Valverde Methodist Church. In 1890, because of a gift by a Mr. Wright, the name of the church was changed accordingly. The only building they worshipped in was constructed in 1889-1890, and was used until it was torn down approximately 1921-1922.

¹ Ibid.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1908), p. 48.

³ The Rocky Mountain News, January 15, 1923.

The church was never large and had several types of problems. It was isolated from much of Denver and the population did not develop in their direction in the early days. In 1901 the Wright Memorial Church was placed on a circuit with the little mission called Wesley Chapel, later called the John A. Clough Memorial Methodist Church, located near the corner of Ellsworth and South Kalamath. It was consequently only one mile between the two churches, although they were separated by the wide channel of the river.

In 1901 the minister appointed was Austin Chapman, who served the two churches until 1905 when they were made separate charges. The statistics were unavailable for the separate charges, but in 1906 the membership of the Wright Memorial Church was listed at 72 with 115 in the Sunday School. During the ministry of Mr. Chapman, some of the difficulty is suggested by the Presiding Elder:

Situating on the river in Valverde, it was not able for several years to pay more than \$100 annually for pastoral support, and its congregation were reduced to the faithful few. Brother Chapman has seen a complete change for the better at this point. They have increased in numbers and in financial strength in the surprising way, and the spiritual interest is up . . . Brother Chapman has shown that a healthy industrious man can take full work in the University and serve two churches well. This he did only with the assistance of his wife.¹

Following the four years of Chapman's ministry the pastor was I. N. Parvin who stayed one year. In 1906 Jesse Albert Dean was appointed and remained three years. During his ministry a gradual decline is noted in the membership, from 72 to 60. However, the Sunday School developed from 115 to 241 in the same period of time. All the ministers about this time were students at the University which meant that they could not give the church as much time as it needed. Neither was their salary large. Until 1908 the average salary paid was \$500 which included some missionary support.

The following ministries are recorded: 1909-1911, W. L. Wade; 1911-1912, W. T. Kidd; 1912-1913, I. L. Morgan. In 1913 the low membership was recorded at 24 and the salary that year was \$264.00. The Sunday School maintained a relatively high level however, as it registered 183.

Wright Memorial Church, linked much of the time with the Clough Church, continued to decline until the Conference year 1921-1922 when it was decided that they should disband. The membership was combined with the John A. Clough Church, which in turn was united in 1926 with the Fifth Avenue Church to make the present Wesley Methodist Church meeting yet at West Fifth Avenue and Galapago Street.

Population shifts, industrial developments and the lack of financial backing caused this little mission to disintegrate. However, today we see that this is the main area in Denver in which the Methodists are not at work. The Valverde area is one of the newest subdivisions to be intensively settled, and if there were a Methodist church in the area they would have an exceptional challenge.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1903), p. 378.

Summary: -- The foregoing churches were organized previous to 1900, and their work has been summarized to show their development as they took their place in Denver Methodism. The patterns are interesting. Some churches were blessed with population shifts and grew accordingly. Others which originally had been strategically located were victims of population or industrial changes and suffered. But in addition to these were the churches which remained active in their local communities, neither showing remarkable gain nor loss, but which built well and influenced their people for good.

Parallel to the development of these churches were the little missions developed after 1900, several of which have, in fifty years, become the churches with the most potential in the city. Among these rapidly growing churches organized following 1900 are: Lakewood, Englewood, Park Hill and Warren Memorial (formed through the union of two small missions). In addition there were several churches which never became large in membership, but which ministered well and continue to minister in their communities. Unfortunately, as in every period, we note several missions which were begun with great vision and foresight, but which later proved unable to continue.

Let us now look at the record of each of these churches, founded between 1900 and 1912. They are again listed in chronological order according to the dates of their organization.

Capitol Hill Church

In the 1890's the section to the east of the State Capitol was developed and took the name "Capitol Hill." The wealth of Denver was concentrated in that area, and the homes which were built testified to the fact. Many of the people had attended Trinity, Grace or Christ Churches, and before 1900 the Methodist leadership was hesitant to organize a church in that area, believing it would weaken the other three which were drawing their membership from the Capitol Hill area. In fact B. T. Vincent records a conversation he had had about the situation there:

I have been approached, and once or twice censured on the subject of a church on Capitol Hill . . . John Collins was given the right to begin churches where he wanted to and if he did not act in that line who could, or would have the temerity to try.¹

In addition to this, Vincent replied to his critic that the work "mission" would hardly befit the type of people who lived on Capitol Hill and who would support the church.

The actual impetus to further this organization seems to have come in 1899 when the Christ Methodist Epworth League decided to organize a mission on Capitol Hill. Christ Church was located at that time at 22nd and Ogden, approximately a mile from the area generally called Capitol Hill.

The Presiding Elder, R. A. Carnine, suggested then that the trustees of the new church be appointed from Trinity, Grace and Christ churches, since they were related to the same

¹ Vincent Papers, 1898.

downtown area. Three were appointed from Grace, thinking it was closer in relationship, while two were appointed from the other two churches. They were listed as: C. A. Murray, E. L. Shannon, and J. Stanley Edwards of Grace Church; A. L. Doud and Peter Winne of Trinity; R. H. Beggs and Frank McDonough of Christ Church.¹

Enthusiasm is expressed by the minister of Christ Church at the proposed plan to construct a new church in the same area:

All friends of Denver Methodist will be gratified at the tangible form that our church movement on Capitol Hill is assuming. The Annual Conference appointed Rev. D. O. P. Wright as pastor of the Capitol Hill Church. He has moved into a commodious home at 1311 Columbine Street, and taken hold of the new enterprise with vigor. He represented his important work to our people from our pulpit on last Sunday morning, September 16. It is hoped that a temporary place of worship can be secured in the Miss Wolcott school building or elsewhere in that general region, giving at once to the new church a local habitation. None extended to this long needed venture a heartier God-speed than the people of Christ Church. This new-born sister, in the family of Denver churches, is welcomed with open hearts and arms.²

This appointment, mentioned by Dr. Warner of Christ Church, referred to Dr. O. P. Wright who was appointed at the Annual Conference of 1900 and immediately began making plans and arrangements for the purchase of five lots on the corner of East 14th and Gilpin. The price of the lots then was given at \$10,500, although only a portion was paid by the beginning church organization.³ On November 1, 1900 the church was incorporated and the ground was broken for the new church – a memorable day in the history of this particular church.

The small chapel was finished the next spring, and with its furnishings, including a gas furnace, it had cost \$1,200. (see Fig. 43). The original seating is said to have consisted of antique kitchen chairs.⁴ Regular services were begun on January 20, 1901, when Chancellor Buchtel of the University of Denver preached.⁵ The membership reached 100 “charter” members by April, and at the end of the first year the same number remained. There were 125 enrolled in the Sunday School.

O. P. Wright who organized the church in 1900 remained four years. By the end of his ministry the membership stood at 210 with the Sunday School reporting 250. This is remarkable growth for a church only four years old. One of the strong programs was the youth, as it reported that in 1902 they had the largest Junior League in the state.⁶

¹ A folder published by Warren Church on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary, 1950.

² Christ Church Chimes, September, 1900.

³ Warren Church Fiftieth Anniversary folder, 1950.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 231.

By the end of 1902, because of increased crowds, an addition was built to the south end of the original building. The next year a similar wing was built to the north, and the church was more than doubled in its original space.¹

Under the leadership of O. P. Wright the people grew not only in numbers, but paid considerable on the debts which they originally incurred. This is probably accounted for by the type of neighborhood in which the little church was built, a neighborhood in which the membership did not have to wonder from whence their next church payment was to come. Some of the enthusiasm for this new church is recorded by the Presiding Elder:

I want to record my belief, that if ever God's providence assisted in the making of an appointment, it was when Dr. O. P. Wright was appointed to Capitol Hill Church in August, 1900. During his four years' pastorate he has been wise, patient, far-sighted, untiring and devout, and the church has increased by leaps and bounds.²

In 1904 Frost Craft was appointed to the new church, and was to remain for six years, during which time further progress was noted. The membership grew from 210 to 328 in six years, while the Sunday School grew from 250 to 300. Much work is noted in respect to the payment of the debt. However, in 1907 they began to plan a new building to take care of their increasing responsibilities to the community. Enthusiasm permeated all phases of their activity:

Capitol Hill is entering upon a new era in its development. Subscriptions have been raised for the Sunday School part of another splendid church in Denver Methodism. Plans are completed for an immediate start in active building . . . Dr. Craft, with characteristic reserve, is cautiously but steadily urging on this important enterprise among the people of whom he is so greatly beloved.³

The building in the planning stages was completed before the Conference of 1908, and was located in "one of the best residence areas of the city."⁴ The building was first used on Easter Sunday, 1909, when Chancellor Buchtel again preached the sermon. (see Fig. 44). Total costs of the new structure were approximately \$35,000.⁵ This building, still standing, and being used as the Warren Memorial Methodist Church, is a credit to the sincerity and the hard work of the minister, Frost Craft, who had previously been minister of Trinity Church and later was to become the minister of University Park Methodist Church.

However, during this same ministry of Dr. Craft, an interesting newspaper story appeared, another tribute perhaps, to his devotion and his sincerity:

Dissatisfied with the conduct of the congregation which he has served as pastor for five years, believing that members of his church were being lured away by theaters and other amusements and feeling that the time has come for a "shakeing up" to change

¹ Warren Church Fiftieth Anniversary folder, 1950.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1904), p. 601.

³ Ibid., (1907), p. 517.

⁴ Ibid., (1908), p. 42.

⁵ A folder published by Warren Church on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary, 1950.

indifference and lethargy to action, the Rev. Frost Craft in charge of the Capitol Hill Methodist Episcopal Church at Gilpin and Fourteenth Avenues, has notified the official board of the church of his determination to ask for a transfer to some other charge . . .

Capitol Hill church has a membership of more than 300, all the members being wealthy or well-to-do. During his pastorate Mr. Craft has brought about the erection of a new house of worship for the congregation, at a cost of \$25,000, and the church is said to be in good financial condition, but it is admitted that its spiritual affairs have not recently been what they should be. The members do not attribute this to any fault of the pastor, but it is admitted that the “society” element in the church has become too strong and that a large portion of the membership has shown more devotion to dances, bridge and the theater than to the affairs of the church. This has caused dissatisfaction on the part of the pastor, and unless there is a sudden change in the spirit among the members he will not remain in the pastorate.¹

The proposed resignation did not occur however, and we may assume that perhaps some changes were made in the attitude of the church members, or perhaps Frost Craft was prevailed upon to stay for another year for the good of the church, and to complete some of the work he had undertaken. Whatever might have been the reason, the Rev. Mr. Craft remained at the church until 1910. During this last year a new pipe organ was installed in the church.²

In 1910 R. H. Forrester became the minister. In 1911 his successor was W. T. Scott who remained two years. During these three years following 1910, much progress is noted especially in the membership, for in 1910 the membership had been 328, while in 1913 it had risen to 417. The Sunday School at this time had had an enrollment of 250.

At the Conference of 1913 it was decided to unite the two churches on Capitol Hill into one. The second on the “hill” had been organized at the corner of East 8th and Ogden in 1906, and had taken the name, Warren Methodist. However, in the few years that had intervened it was decided that this was not satisfactory, being too close to the Capitol Hill Church. Hence, in 1913 the two were united at the location of the Capitol Hill Church, East 14th and Gilpin. The name they took was Warren Memorial Methodist Church, in honor of the bishop who had died in 1912.

It is at this particular corner that we find today the active church which has lately (1952) constructed an addition to their church, used mainly for education activities. Warren Memorial Church is now doing fine work, and is a worthy tribute to the honor of the man whose name it bears.

Englewood Church

The main suburb to the south of Denver is now known as Englewood, having a population of over 20,000. Of course its north city limits, where it joins Denver, are not discernable, as one cannot tell where one stops and the other begins. Southwest of Englewood, and practically joining in the same manner, is Littleton. Previous to 1900 there were but few

¹ The Denver Times, July 17, 1909.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1910), p. 276.

homes scattered between Denver and Littleton. The post office on South Broadway was called Cherrelyn, south of the main section of the city of Englewood. To the west of the present center of Englewood, on Hampden Boulevard was the small suburb called Petersburg where an early Methodist mission was founded at least by 1902.

There was organized in 1894, in the Hawthorne School house, a Union Sunday School. It was evidently a rural school and the people organized a rural Sunday School to further their children's religious education. The location is unknown, but was probably south of the present main section of Englewood. Presumably it is an outgrowth of this Sunday School which became the Bethel Mission of the Methodist Church, organized in the settlement known as Cherrelyn.¹

During his ministry at John Collins Church, in 1900, the Rev. Mr. L. M. Potashinsky was asked to serve periodically as the minister of a small mission on South Broadway, where people were holding services in a school house. By August, 1901, the minister in cooperation with the Presiding Elder organized the Bethel Mission at that location.² We note that there were nine charter members.³ In August of 1901, W. S. Whittaker, minister of the Petersburg Mission, was asked to take charge of this new mission.

Soon the people wished to erect a building in which they could worship more conveniently. Consequently they began to plan and soon constructed a building on the corner of Greene and South Grant Avenue at a cost of \$1,250.⁴ The building was out of debt and dedicated on August 10 of that year, 1902.⁵ A part of the needed funds no doubt came from the will of John A. Clough, which had given \$20,000 to be divided four ways equally; Trinity Church where Mr. Clough had been a member, the University of Denver, the Preacher's Aid Society, and the Denver Church Extension Society. It was from this latter portion that several churches received help on their building expenses, including Merritt Memorial, Edgewater, Wesley Chapel called John A. Clough Memorial, and the Cherrelyn Mission in Englewood.⁶

Following Wittaker there were students from the University who continued the work. One was probably Dorr Ammerman, who is known to have worked in the City Missions projects, and the Rev. Mr. E. E. Bean, the assistant at Grant Avenue Church. It is noted that E. E. Bean was assistant minister and minister also of one of the City Missions.⁷ Because he was appointed to the Bethel Mission the next year, 1904-1905, it is assumed that he had been the minister previously at this little mission. Also, Mrs. Bean's membership was transferred to the Bethel Mission previous to the Conference of that year (1904), evidently because of her husband's work there.

Of the early work of this mission, the Presiding Elder reported:

¹ A history of Englewood Church, written on the occasion of the dedication of the new building, October 15, 1922.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Colorado Conference Journal, (1902), p. 232.

⁵ Ibid., (1902), p. 232.

⁶ Ibid., (1903), p. 233.

⁷ Ibid., (1904), p. 60.

A few months ago we went out to the extreme South end of Broadway where the wheat and alfalfa fields begin, and begged a lot and built a little frame church. We had a great struggle. It looked for a while as if our service was not needed there, but a short time ago we got a little hint of encouragement . . . and if the present rate of progress is continued we shall have a good church of active, useful members there before many more moons. This church is called Bethel. It was dedicated just before last Conference, but it has come into its heritage this year.¹

The statistics of the Bethel Mission are first included in the Conference Journal for the year 1905-1906, and we note that this year there were 21 members and 50 in Sunday School. The minister this year had been T. E. Ashby who remained for a portion of the next year, 1906-1907, and was succeeded by C. G. Smith. It was during the ministry of Charles G. Smith that saloons were driven from Englewood.² It is to be noted however, that the Petersburg settlement which was still very active, could supply liquor to anyone who wanted to make but a short journey from Englewood or Cherrelyn. Another minister of this period was R. P. Carson.³

In 1907 it was decided that Bethel should become a regular Conference appointment, and cease being a mission. It was thought that they could develop enough support within their own group to make this possible. The minister appointed in 1907 was J. H. Fiedler, although the year was finished by James Mahood.

This ministry by Mahood was to prove rather strategic to the church, for in 1909, it was felt that the location at Greene Street and South Grant was not central enough to be adequate. Consequently the people voted to move the church building to a new location on the corner of South Acoma and West Mansfield. There they constructed a new foundation and dug a full basement. Hence, in the year 1909, the name was changed to the Englewood Methodist Church. It reported at the end of that particular year a membership of 96 with a Sunday School enrollment of 160.

The five years following the moving of the building are recorded as some of the best years of the church in its early history. The minister appointed in 1910 was Jessee Andrew Dean who remained two years and who reported a membership increase from 96 to 152 and a comparable Sunday School increase from 160 to 263.

Thus in 1912 the church remained in a small frame structure on the corner of South Acoma and West Mansfield. The new building which has been used for many years now, was constructed on South Broadway at Mansfield and was dedicated free of debt on October 15, 1922. (see Fig. 54). Only recently, in 1953, the church completed another addition to the building, a basement for social rooms and a new kitchen. Over this is to be constructed a new sanctuary in the near future.

¹ *Ibid.*, (1903), p. 372.

² A history of Englewood Church, written on the occasion of the dedication of the new building, Oct. 15, 1922.

³ *Colorado Conference Journal*, (1907), p. 514.

Englewood as a suburb is not old, for it consisted of but a few houses in 1900. It has increased in size and importance remarkably in the last few years, and if its growth is any indication, the church located there has a glorious and progressive future ahead of it.

Petersburg Mission

The town known as Petersburg was located at the point where West Hampden Avenue crosses the railroad tracks. The present Englewood railway depot was originally the depot for Petersburg, and on the corners which are now Santa Fe Boulevard and West Hampden were located some of the most lawless of liquor violators between 1900 and 1910. The last remnant of this “brightest of bright spots of the gold rush days” was a hotel on this particular corner, which was torn down in 1939.¹ In later years the town of Petersburg merged with the town called Sheridan.

A Methodist Mission appears in Petersburg at least as early as 1902. The minister of the small mission in 1902 was M. L. Whittaker who also served the new mission of Bethel on South Broadway (now the Englewood Methodist Church).

Reflecting the difficult situation at the Petersburg Mission, the Presiding Elder stated: “At Petersburg we have a problem more stubborn than Bethel.”²

The first statistics given for the small mission are in 1905-1906, when the membership is recorded at 36 with 40 in the Sunday School. The minister for five years, between 1905 and 1910 was F. E. Miller. Of his good work we note that an addition was made to the small mission church in 1905 although we have no details of the address or the size of the building.³ We note that F. E. Miller seemed to have a meaningful approach to this particular situation:

Petersburg, in spite of its saloons and dissipation, enjoyed a most helpful revival season. Rev. F. E. Miller carries the revival fires around with him in his heart; his churches always catch the flame. He feels he must be relieved this year. City Missions will miss him.

F. E. Miller was replaced in 1907 for a few months by the Rev. Mr. Walter Coffman, but returned and remained until the Conference of 1910. Other ministers of the Petersburg Mission to 1912 were: 1910-1911, William Pepper; and 1911-1912, H. J. Catterall. The total membership in 1912 was 17, with 20 in Sunday School. These figures had dropped from the high recorded in 1907 of 40 members and 36 in Sunday School.

The intervening history of this small mission is evidently lost, but we know that the town of Petersburg dwindled away, and we assume that shortly after 1912 the mission disappeared.

¹ The Rocky Mountain News, May 21, 1939.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1903), p. 232.

³ Ibid., (1905), p. 208.

Jefferson Avenue Church

The Section of Jefferson county northwest of Wheat Ridge in which the Jefferson Avenue Church is located was originally called Fruitdale. The name comes, no doubt, from the fertile land and the valley which is along the banks of Clear Creek, in which berries and fruit are still grown profusely.

In the area of Fruitdale, there was a Ladies' Aid Society as early as March 19, 1902.¹ At the time they were discussing the advisability of purchasing a tent to be used for recreation and social activities in their community. Later they thought they ought to build a hall purely for social functions. However, in April, 1903, they decided that the main function of the building should be that of a church. An interesting item in reference to the various parts of the building is noted: "Mrs. Schroeder donated a side-saddle to be sold – the money to go toward a window of the new church."²

In March of 1903 the ladies contacted the minister at Wheat Ridge, the Rev. Mr. John R. Wood, about the proposed church and in their discussion with him they decided that it ought to be a Methodist church.

Two locations were suggested, both on Jefferson Avenue. The first was suggested on the corner of Prospect Avenue (38th) while the second was suggested on the corner of 44th where the church is now located. The stipulations were that the building should be facing Jefferson Avenue, and should be called the Jefferson Avenue Methodist Church.

Under the direction of Mr. Wood of the Wheat Ridge Church, a meeting was called on April 26, 1903, where the first board of Trustees was elected: Peter Peterson, Phil H. Kendall, S. B. White, Mary Townsend, Minnie A. Lee, Juniette Heines, Arnold S. Hall and A. M. Connell. In the course of the same meeting the church was officially incorporated.

Plans were discussed and they finally selected plan Number 202A as their church, and it is presumably according to that plan that their church was built. The original estimate of cost was between \$1,500 and \$2,000.³

In December, 1903, the Church Extension Society had decided to allow \$300 to the project and the building was begun in December, 1903. Of this project the Presiding Elder reported:

At Jefferson Avenue, four miles north of Wheatridge, A Society of thirty members has been organized, with a new Sunday School averaging 50, and a new young people's Society organization. Soon the need of a church was emphasized by our being compelled to hold all services in dwelling houses. Pastor Wood said: "Let us build a church." Brother Kendall said "I agree with you. Let us see Brother Hall." He said,

¹ Official Minutes of the Ladies' Aid Society of Fruitdale. These are filed in the office of the Jefferson Avenue Methodist Church.

² Ibid., October 8, 1903.

³ Official Records of Jefferson Avenue Church, hand-written, filed in the church office.

“Yes, I’ve been thinking about it myself.” Work on the new church began the next week. June 5th it was dedicated. It is one of the finest buildings of the kind to be seen anywhere. The material is salmon brick, floor bowled, excellent Grand Rapids seats, stainless glass windows, good lecture room, heated by furnace, with a splendid bell in the belfry, and costing \$5,000. Jefferson Avenue asks to be made a charge by itself and will support their own minister hereafter . . .¹

According to their wish, they were set aside as a separate charge, and the statistical record in the Conference Journal begins at the Conference of 1904. Their building had been opened for use in June of 1904, just preceding this Conference. While the final estimate had been \$2,000, the actual cost of the building was approximately \$5,500.² (see Fig. 33).

The first minister reported in the Journal after they became a separate charge was James R. Barr, who reported the membership at 45 with the Sunday School enrollment at 150. He was succeeded for a few months by O. L. Fisher whose health failed, and the year was completed by Dr. W. F. Steele of the University of Denver. On January 1, 1906, the church was completely free from debt and the note was burned with \$21.00 to spare.³

Succeeding as minister in 1906 was J. G. Coulter who reported a membership increase from 47 to 71. The quick succession of ministers following this was: 1907-1908, Homer Slutz; 1908-1909, E. Burns Martin; 1909-1910, C. J. Rose; 1910-1911, M. J. Field; and 1911-1914, W. L. Wake. The membership in 1912 was 62 and the Sunday School reported 115.

Thus this small church in a farming community maintained its church and Sunday School and grew very gradually. They are still a farming community and are still maintaining their work. In 1949 Dr. Roy H. McVicker became their first full-time minister. It is to be remembered that Dr. McVicker is the minister responsible for the present building of the Edgewater Community Methodist Church built in 1922. Previous to 1949 all ministers had been students at The Iliff School of Theology or local supplies. During this ministry the new educational building was constructed and first used in 1954. The church membership is not large, and probably never will be, but has a great challenge to maintain its interest in its particular rural center.

Lakewood Church

Much of the history of the rapidly growing community and church in Lakewood falls after the date of 1912. In fact previous to 1912 the suburb was little developed, and only since World War II has it begun its rapid expansion. A member of the Lakewood Church, Mrs. James M. White, has written a rather careful history of the church from its early beginnings, and has sketched in some of the major happenings which changed Lakewood from a village into a center

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1904), p. 74.

² Ibid., (1905), p. 220.

³ Official Records of Jefferson Avenue Church, hand-written, filed in the church office.

of over 20,000 population. This section is deeply indebted to the history as written by Mrs. White in 1954.¹

Although the first mention of the church in Lakewood appears in the Conference Minutes of 1902, there was some organized religious activity in Lakewood previous to that time. Mrs. White has used records and recollections of some of the older residents of Lakewood to sketch the beginnings as early as 1881 when a Union Sunday School was organized, first in private homes and then in a white school house near the corner of Wadsworth and Colfax Avenue. After this school house burned in 1892 a new school was constructed at Tenth and Wadsworth – although at that time the streets did not run through, and there were farmers’ fences crossing Wadsworth in many places.

Mrs. White’s earliest records report the progress of the Sunday School to 1895 when six classes are mentioned. There were periodic visits to the Sunday School by ministers from several denominations, but soon after 1900 a Methodist circuit was organized which included preaching services during the afternoons at the Lakewood location. The minister of this circuit, J. R. Wood, had his primary responsibilities at Wheat Ridge, three miles to the north. From the Conference Records, it is assumed that this was at least the year preceding the Conference of 1903,² for at that time it is mentioned that there are three charges on the circuit, including Lakewood and what later became Jefferson Avenue Church.

Approximately the year 1902 a Miss Hanna Robb of Lakewood gave a half-acre at West Colfax and Allison Street with the stipulation that a Methodist Church be built there within five years. This building was begun in 1903:

In the fall of 1903, the men of the church began the excavation but were hampered by cold weather until the following spring, when the white frame chapel was built. All the work was done by the men of the church under supervision of John Penrod, a local carpenter. The simply furnishings consisted of a pulpit platform at the west end, thirty heavy wooden chairs, and an organ, while at the opposite end, a kitchen range provided not only heat but many a turkey dinner cooked and served by the women of the congregation.³

Other records give the location of the land as West Colfax and Brown Avenue, one block farther west.⁴ This particular building was dedicated by Bishop David H. Moore and the Presiding Elder, W. D. Phifer on August 28, 1904, for a total value of \$1,500.⁵

Summarizing somewhat the same period, the Presiding Elder reflected in 1904:

Three miles south of Wheatridge is the Lakewood appointment. For years we have been worshipping sometimes in a store, and sometimes in a schoolhouse. The

¹ Mrs. James M. White, “A Short History of Lakewood Methodist Church,” written on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary, 1954.

² *Colorado Conference Journal*, (1903), p. 372.

³ Mrs. White, “A Short History of Lakewood Church.”

⁴ Official Records of the Wheat Ridge Church, on file in the church office.

⁵ *Ibid.*

society was weak, but began to strengthen . . . last spring a new church was begun. Last Sunday Brother Wood and myself dedicated it, free of all debt, and \$97 to spare. This makes two new churches on the Wheatridge charge this year. They cost \$7,200. All the old property we had before is worth \$3,500. We began the year with one church worth \$3,000 and ended the year with three churches and a parsonage worth \$11,300. But this is not all. Wesley Slater has donated a magnificent site for another church . . . ¹

The new site mentioned here was at the corner of Thirty-Eighth and Wadsworth, the present location of the Wheat Ridge Methodist Church. The third church mentioned on this circuit was the Jefferson Avenue Church at West Forty-Fourth and Jefferson, set apart as a station in 1904.

Previous to 1906 there are no statistical records of the Lakewood Church in the Conference Minutes, and the ministers were the same as those for the Wheat Ridge Church: 1901-1904, J. R. Wood; 1904-1906, J. A. Long. In 1906, because of the request of Wheat Ridge, the Lakewood church became a part of the circuit with Edgewater, that the minister of Wheat Ridge could give full-time to that church. However, the arrangement with Edgewater did not work out, and in 1907 the Lakewood work was supplied by the minister at Wheat Ridge again.

The first record we have of membership for the Lakewood Church is in 1907 when R. L. Johnston of the Edgewater Church reported separate statistics for Lakewood. He reported the membership at 20 and the Sunday School enrollment at 54. During the next three years the minister of the Wheat Ridge-Lakewood circuit was A. O. Amundson. He reported the membership fluctuating, although below 20 all the time. The Sunday School enrollment had grown to a high of 90.

Following the Conference of 1910, the Lakewood charge was linked with Wheat Ridge and the statistics are one and the same, since the membership at Lakewood was dwindling and they could not maintain a separate church. From this date until 1912 the records of the Lakewood Church are not available, though it was not again set apart as a separate station until 1923. They disbanded their organization at Lakewood for a portion of the year in 1919, but resumed again that fall.²

In 1928, because of a minority faction, the Lakewood Church voted to withdraw from the Methodist organization and maintained their group as an independent church for almost a year. However, with the resignation of the Rev. Mr. Steeme, the people again expressed the desire to become affiliated with the Methodists, which they did in 1929.³

A significant ministry in Lakewood Church history began in 1941 when a young man by the name of H. Preston Childress became the minister. On his first Sunday there were reportedly 35 people in church and 65 in Sunday School.⁴ The Rev. Mr. Childress remained eleven years,

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1904), p. 75.

² Mrs. White, "A Short History of Lakewood Church."

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

during which time there were industrial developments in and around Lakewood and the village grew to be a major suburb of Denver.

In 1945 the official board purchased land on 14th Avenue between Balsam and Brentwood Streets for a proposed new church. This was completed in 1950 when in a single day there had been more than 1,000 persons worshipping in the newly dedicated church in Lakewood. The Rev. Mr. Childress finished an eleven-year pastorate in 1952.

The church continues to grow. Only recently (1955) they completed a major addition to the church, a new sanctuary, in which they have increased their space almost 200 per cent. The church is one of the fastest growing in Denver, and is located in a rapidly developing section also.

Scott Methodist

The only church in Denver of the Methodist Episcopal denomination serving the Negroes is Scott Methodist, first organized in 1904 as a part of the Lincoln Conference, and now a part of the Central Jurisdiction.

The founder is given as the Rev. Mr. C. W. Holmes, in 1904 the minister of the People's Methodist Church in Colorado Springs.¹ The first board of Trustees was composed of Frank D. McPherson, Dr. J. A. Harper, Attorney George G. Ross and Dr. J.H.P. Westbrook.²

Until the Conference of 1905 the minister had been Mr. Holmes, but a new minister, the Rev. Mr. Wooten, was appointed in 1905. A need had been seen for a meeting place for the small group of people so in 1905 they rented the upstairs of a building then on the corner of Welton and 27th.

The first really permanent property was obtained in 1906 when the Rev. Mr. J. E. Williams got some help from other Methodist Churches in Denver and made the initial payment on property at 801 East 26th Avenue. (see Fig. 57). Of the help they received from other Methodists we note:

The encouragement given by Bishop Warren, his advice, and counsel can hardly be overstated. There were many times when the little flock, no doubt, would have disbanded had it not been for the hope, the faith, and the optimism inspired by Bishop Warren and the thought all Methodists were giving to the enterprise. Through his influence the Colorado Conference appropriated \$150 annually for several years.³

In 1907-1908 the church was a part of the Colorado Annual Conference. The reports at the end of that year read: membership, 40; Sunday School, 40. The Presiding Elder reported

¹ A Short History of Scott Methodist Church published in a folder on the occasion of the 37th Anniversary, and the burning of the mortgage, November, 1941.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

that year that the church seemed to be getting better financial support from its own people, as well as enlarging its numbers.¹ The minister was C. W. Holmes again, the original founder.

In 1910 the minister was J.N. Wallace who remained until 1913. Of his work their history reports that much progress was made in membership, even more than in other areas of work.

Interestingly enough, in 1913 they did not have a regular minister so J. R. Rader, retired member of the Colorado Conference, supplied for them. However, their situation became more difficult because there was no concentrated ministerial and pastoral leadership.²

The last mortgage of the property at Ogden and 26th was paid off in 1919 and they began to look ahead to a new future. One of their dynamic leaders was the Rev. Mr. Matthew W. Clair, Jr., then (1925) a student at The Iliff School of Theology, and now a Bishop of the Methodist Church.

Early in 1927 the Christ Church congregation moved to their new location at East 7th and Colorado Boulevard. Almost immediately, under the leadership of Matthew Clair, arrangements were made to buy the old Christ Church at 22nd and Ogden for the new location of the Scott Methodist Church. (see Fig. 56). The week of October 16, 1927, was set aside as a special week in commemoration of this great event in the life of their church.

In 1949 all were shocked to hear of the damaging fire which destroyed approximately \$100,000 worth of equipment, just before the church had prepared to make the last payment on its indebtedness. Happily, the building is restored, and the Scott Methodist Church is still active and doing work in its neighborhood among the Negro population.

West Forty-Third Avenue Church

A short-lived church which appeared in the Conference Journal for only one year was the Forty-Third Avenue Church. No details are available about this church except the report which the Presiding Elder gave in 1905:

At West Forty-Third and Alcott we have another such plant [the same type of project] as the new Harkness Heights organization, a mile and three-fourths from Asbury, through a dense population all the way. Here we have a three-lot corner, but have not had time to erect a building. These are churches, not missions.³

It was thought that to call the organizations “churches” rather than missions would add to their prestige, especially because of the type of residential area in which they were located. Further information of this church is unavailable. Perhaps it was soon combined with Harkness Heights (Grandview) less than a mile to the west.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1907), p. 510.

² A History of Scott Church, 1941.

³ Colorado Conference Journal, (1905), p. 223.

Harkness Heights Church

The new section of Denver west of Federal Boulevard along Forty-Fourth Avenue was known as Harkness Heights, and is known today as Grandview. It developed early into one of the finest residential areas of Denver, and it was a credit to the Methodists to have established a church there as early as they did.

Of the organization of the church the Presiding Elder reports:

In North Denver, Methodism has increased by the addition of two churches. [Harkness Heights (Grandview) and Forty-Third Avenue.] One of these was organized at Harkness Heights. Boulevard F [44th] has been graded and paved and curbed . . . Restrictions are placed on the architecture and quality of buildings, and requires fine houses and forbids shacks in Harkness Heights. One day a man said to me: "I have two lots in another part of the city to give to Methodism if they will build a church in Harkness Heights." I said: "We'll take the lots." In ninety days we dedicated a new pressed brick church on a four-lot corner and had a piece of property worth \$2,500 all paid for but \$750. Harkness Heights is 331 feet higher than all other points in the County and City of Denver, and our church stands at the height of the crest. We have a Sunday School of 50, an Epworth League of 35, a church membership of 31, and a rapidly growing population around us. Soon this will be one of the finest residence portions of Denver, and ours one of the best churches.¹

The first year the Harkness Heights project was organized the minister was James R. Barr. The membership reported was 28 with 75 registered in the Sunday School. The next year the minister was George Winterbourne who reported the membership at 38 and again 75 registered in the Sunday School.

In 1906 it was reported that the Harkness Heights project was even more promising. Lots had been purchased for the permanent church, near 44th and Irving, the present location of the Grandview Congregational Church. The building they had been using for the church was to be converted into the parsonage as soon as the permanent church could be built. The area was still developing as one of the most desirable residential sections of the city.

G. F. Brock was appointed to the Harkness Heights Church in 1906 to remain one year. The membership remained almost constant as did the Sunday School. The minister in 1907 was C. J. Rose who stayed two years and reported a membership gain from 38 to 94 and a Sunday School increase from 100 to 165. Again the church was proving that it had been strategically located and was progressing well.

In 1908 the Presiding Elder reported concerning the project:

The Harkness Heights Church is an enthusiasm of succeeding. The brick church and four corner lots are paid for, the mortgage was burned last Sunday evening. The

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1905), p. 223.

membership has increased 120 per cent this year. The permanent new church should be built the coming year, as the congregations have outgrown the building.¹

The people constructed an addition to their original church in 1909.²

The minister from 1909 to 1911 was W. M. Dye, who reported gains in the Sunday School from 165 to 224 and back down to 204. However, the membership did not show an increase for the two years.

From 1911 to 1912 the minister was O. E. Barker who reported the membership that year at 78 with the Sunday School at 188. In 1913 the membership had climbed again to 108. Thus the church stood in 1912, well organized, and with a seemingly good future ahead of it. The Presiding Elder again stated that the church should have a suitable building within a few years.³

Unfortunately for the Methodists, the property and the church at Harkness Heights, later called Grandview, was lost at the beginning of the depression. The magnificent church which they had planned was constructed in the early 1920's, but the planning and administration was not wisely done. Consequently when the depression was at its height the payments could not be made and today the building which the Methodists worked so hard to retain is the property of the Congregational Church. It is still used by them and called the Grandview Congregational Church. (see Fig. 28).

Of all the areas of Denver where the Methodists ought to have a church, it is Grandview. There is today not another Methodist church for almost two miles, Highlands Methodist Church being the nearest. The area is continuing to grow rapidly.

Vincent (Welby) Church

Scant evidence has been found for the organization of a small church in a small suburb of Denver now known as Welby. The exact location of the church is unobtainable, but the suburb called Welby was immediately north of the Denver City limits along Washington Street Highway. This would then be immediately north of the section formerly known as Globeville.

In the Conference Journal of 1906 the following note appears:

Wesley and Vincent form a circuit near Denver. E. E. Brace, the pastor, is beloved of all the people. I have not been able to detect a single jar in the running of the machinery of that charge this whole year.⁴

Evidently, according to this, the organization of the church was at least in the year previous – 1905.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1908), p. 48.

² Ibid., (1909), p. 50.

³ Ibid., (1910), p. 282.

⁴ Ibid., (1906), p. 379.

The exact location of the church called Wesley is also unobtainable, but there was no church in Denver proper at this time which was known by this name. The Wesley Church appears again the next year (1906-1907), but disappears from the Conference records after that. The Vincent Church remains however, and its statistics are reported each year through 1912.

In 1907 the Presiding Elder reported that two students, Huston and Hinds, had supplied the Vincent charge and that Dr. Merritt had also helped.¹ The membership at the Conference of 1907 was 45 for the two churches, with 34 in Sunday School.

Vincent was placed on the circuit with Edgewater in 1907, and for two years the minister was the same as shown in the Edgewater records. In 1907 C. L. Wright began the year, but it was finished by D. C. Winship. The latter was appointed another year and remained until the Conference of 1909. At the end of his full year, the membership was reported at 36 with 70 in Sunday School. Also at the Conference of 1909 the two churches were made separate charges.

For the year 1909-1910 the minister was J. H. Epler but no records appear in the Conference Journal for that year. Another item has been recorded however, which gives further light on the little church:

The Laramie Land and Investment Company, which has recently laid out the townsite of Welby near this Vincent church, has donated two choice lots to the trustees on condition that the church building be moved thither at once. The sale of the ground upon which the church now stands will probably defray all costs.²

We may assume that this move was completed, for following this date the church appears in the Journal as Welby rather than Vincent.

The minister in 1910 was G. E. Winterbourne, during whose administration presumably the move of the church was made. His total salary for the year had been \$250.00. He reported 32 members and 34 in Sunday School. Evidently he had been a student minister.

The Minister from 1911 to 1913 was R. W. Howes who reported the membership both years at 29 and the Sunday School enrollment in the latter year at 45.

Presumably the church had a short life, for there has been no mention of a Methodist organization in Welby for many years. The area remains mainly a truck-farming area and is not yet really a part of the metropolitan area. The population of the area is not great and no doubt the Methodists in the region now attend some nearby church of another denomination.

Manchester Mission Church

The region of Denver known as Manchester is located south of Mississippi Avenue to Florida Avenue (four blocks), and west of the river. In 1889-1891 this was a thriving industrial center, including the Overland Cotton Mills, a match factory, knitting mills, a paper company as

¹ Ibid., (1907), p. 522.

² Ibid., (1910), p. 282.

well as hotels and residences.¹ The town was maintained only through its manufacturing and, of course, disappeared approximately 1912 when the industries were abandoned.

Details are not clear as to the exact location of the Manchester Methodist Mission. A mission is listed for Manchester first in the Conference Journal of 1905 when the appointment read "T. E. Kilgrove." This year he received the sum of \$10.00, reported 5 members and a Sunday School of 30. His second year showed little improvement but two members were added along with six Sunday School pupils. The going was hard, as reflected by the Presiding Elder's report.²

Other ministers of the mission were: 1907-1908, Roy Clark; 1908-1909, W. J. Searle; 1909-1910, E. E. Tuck; 1910-1912, A. P. Gains; 1912-1913, J. A. Dean. The highest membership recorded in these years was 7 though most of the time it was six. The highest Sunday School record was 40 although it was 25 more of the time.

Few records were kept of the small mission, and its influence seems to have been rather slight. However, the industrial workers were probably thankful for the influence of a church even though its life was not destined to be long.

It was this small building which was later moved to the present location of Barnum Methodist Church (now called Bethany Methodist Church) about the year 1914. It was used as the sanctuary of this small mission group. (see Fig. 35). Hence, even though Manchester no longer had use for a church building, this structure continued to serve as a Methodist church until 1953 when the Bethany congregation completed a new church and the old frame structure was dismantled. Much of the lumber was incorporated into their new parsonage.³

Warren Methodist Church

The little church which first bore the Bishop's name in Denver was organized in 1906 near the corner of East Eighth and South Ogden Streets. This was approximately one mile south and west of the church then known as Capitol Hill.

Warren Church was organized as one of the Denver City Missions, and after nine months as a mission it was ready to become a regular appointment at the Conference of 1907. The minister for its first nine months as a mission, was Paul M. Spencer, who served in addition to his responsibilities at Myrtle Hill (Washington Park) Church. At the end of this year he reported the membership at 13 with 35 enrolled in the Sunday School. The salary for the first nine months was a total of \$119.00.

In 1907 Dr. O. P. Wright was appointed to the church where he remained four years. It is to be remembered that it was Dr. Wright who had been minister of the Capitol Hill Church from 1900 to 1904 and had done so much commendable work there. During his first year at Warren

¹ The Denver Republican, September 16, 1891.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1907), p. 515.

³ Mrs. May Kruger, "A History of Bethany (Barnum) Methodist Church," 1953. Mrs. Kruger is a long-time member of the church, and at the present time is the church historian.

Church he made plans to secure lots, and again led a congregation in constructing a temporary building at the corner of East Eighth and Ogden costing \$2,500. (see Fig. 45). His previous leadership in building was in connection with the Capitol Hill Church where he likewise had led in a building project. His administrative ability is further demonstrated as we see that the total amount of the Warren Church building was paid by the opening of the building, March 1908.¹

During this significant ministry the membership grew from 13 to 100, a substantial growth for four years. The Sunday School grew from 35 to 236, indicative of the fact that the area had a large number of children who needed the Sunday School.

However, the good times were not to continue. In 1911 R. H. Ayres became the minister and remained two years. He reported the membership at 121 at the end of his first year, but the Sunday School dropped to 150. With several problems involved, the main one being the nearness of a stronger church, Capitol Hill, it was decided in 1913 to merge the two churches taking the property of Capitol Hill and the name of Warren. The decision was well recorded by Mrs. J. Stanley Edwards:

This union was accomplished in the summer of 1913 and Capitol Hill played the role of the bride at the ceremony by dropping her own name and taking that of Warren. The word "Memorial" was added, since Bishop Warren had recently died. The united church stands as a memorial to Bishop H. W. Warren, peerless leader of Colorado Methodism for several years. [actually 28 years]²

The first minister of the combined churches was Dr. Orien W. Fifer, who showed outstanding developments during his four years at the new Warren Memorial Methodist Church.

Several other factors are important in order to know the church as it exists today. In the intervening period of time between 1912 and the present, wealthy Capitol Hill has become an apartment-house section, with the owners living farther to the outskirts of the city. This has, of course, caused a major shift in the emphasis of the church program. Another problem faced by the church was to decide whether or not it should re-locate farther to the east in the growing neighborhood along Colorado Boulevard. The church which was to re-locate first, however, was Christ Church which moved in 1927 to East Seventh and Colorado Boulevard.

In 1953 Warren Church began using its new building, an educational unit in memory of Dr. Frederick J. Cox, one of the most significant ministers in the history of the church. He died suddenly in 1947 after almost twenty years service at the church.

During the present ministry of Dr. Lowell B. Swan, the Warren Church program is geared for the future. The heritage of the Bishop is worthily carried forth in the forward-looking church which bears his name, and we predict a bright future for it.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1908), p. 41.

² A folder published on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of Capitol Hill Church, 1950. The short history of the church was written by Mrs. J. Stanley Edwards.

Barnum (Bethany) Church

The section of west Denver now known as Barnum was once the property of P. T. Barnum of circus fame. He had hoped to develop that section of southwest Denver into a winter headquarters for his circus animals. However, the distance to eastern cities made this seem unwise so he sold the land. The name of Barnum has remained with it however.

Located between West Sixth Avenue and Alameda Avenue, and west of Federal Boulevard is a section of low-lying land centering on First Avenue. The area developed slowly, and did not become a wealthy residential area as was once planned. Instead it has been settled with more or less average homes in which, for the most part, day-laborers, unskilled and skilled laborers reside with their families.

The first mention in the Conference Journals of the Barnum Methodist work appears in 1903 when the Presiding Elder remarked in passing:

We are just taking up the work at Barnum. Barnum is the suburb once owned by the famous P. T. Barnum, and we expect to have a church building there.¹

In the Journals for 1905 and 1906 the Epworth League is mentioned in Barnum, with a membership in 1906 of 14.

The first step toward organizing a church in Barnum was recorded in the Conference Journal of 1907:

Last spring I visited Barnum, the extreme South-western corner of Denver. I found a Christian woman there, and requested her to organize a Sunday School, provided she could find ten children, according to the requirements of the Discipline. She found them that afternoon. The school was started the next Sunday – in her sitting room. The second Sunday the sitting-room was too small. I received a telephone message: “We have 30 in the Sunday School, and my house is too small. You must find some other place for this Sunday School. You must at least put a roof over our heads.” Something had to be done. But we had no members, no officers, no pastors, and no money. In other respects it is a good charge.

The next day I appointed Rev. R. L. Johnston [should be J. Freelan Johnson] pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Barnum. Then I visited the Burns Realty Company, and the next day after, the beautiful corner at First Avenue and King Street was deeded to said Methodist Episcopal Church. In two weeks’ time we had a small frame church built and had moved in. It was too small the first month. We had to enlarge it multiplying the floor space by five, and increasing the seating capacity to 200. It is finished, except plastering, and is painted two coats, including the roof. The whole bill was charged to the Presiding Elder. There is no other way.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1903), p. 372.

How glad I am today to say it is all paid for. The plant is worth \$1,000. It is well insured and quite well furnished. Some conversions have occurred and we have 20 members, a good Sunday School, an Epworth League, and we have a growing part of the city to work in. Barnum is now a charge by itself, and the Bishop is asked to appoint a pastor. The site for this church was the donation of a daughter of P. T. Barnum, now the wife of Dr. W. H. Buchtel, a physician in Denver.¹

However, the actual history of religious work in Barnum goes back before these records in the Conference Journals. The woman in whose home the Barnum Church was organized was Mrs. Charles Leopold, now (1956) living in San Diego, California.² From her memories we have pieced together some of the work preceding their contact with the Presiding Elder. In correspondence with her, she has indicated some of the beginnings in the Tuffield's store, the same building that is located now directly across the street north of the Barnum School, on West First Avenue between Hooker and Julian. This location is half a mile east of the present Barnum (Bethany) Church.

After meeting in the store building for a time late in the fall of 1905, through most of 1906, the building was sold and the small Sunday School was invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Leopold. This house is still standing at 148 Osceola Street. For a few months in 1907 the group met in her home until Dr. Phifer, the Presiding Elder talked with Mrs. Leopold, in the conversation he reported earlier.

Thus the small church was organized in 1907 with 11 members, and the first minister was the Rev. Mr. J. Freelan Johnson, then a student at the University of Denver, but now retired and living in Ceres, California. At the end of Mr. Johnson's second year he reported the membership (in 1909) at 26 with the Sunday School at 75. The salary at this time was \$300 per year.

Money was collected, and lots were soon bought on the corner of West First Avenue at King Street, although a portion of this may have been presented as a gift from Mrs. Buchtel. Soon however, there was erected a small frame building which served the people many years. It was later converted into Sunday School space as the "annex" and was made the center for dinners and social activities.

The minister appointed in 1909 was T. C. Iliff who served only a portion of the year. The remainder of the year was finished by D. C. Winship, the minister from Edgewater. He reported the membership at 31 and the Sunday School attendance at 100.

In 1910 there was no appointment given, although the statistics are reported at the end of the year. In 1911 the minister was O. C. King and in 1912 Thomas J. Trammel served the church. The membership in 1912 stood at 41 with 48 in Sunday School.

The Manchester Mills closed its operations soon after 1912 and by 1914 the Methodist Mission Church here was for sale. The Barnum people bargained for the building and finally

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1907), p. 525.

² 125 West Brooks Avenue.

moved it to their lots.¹ The church was placed along the alley to the west of the former building, and became the main sanctuary until they rebuilt in 1953. (see Fig. 35). Thus the mission built in Manchester approximately 1905 remained in Methodist hands although moved several miles across Denver.

The intervening history of Barnum Church is both pessimistic and optimistic, but very colorful. They had constructed a third building on their lots, used as a temporary parsonage. Before the depression of 1929 the people had begun to buy a parsonage and lost it. They had dug the basement of the new church building and had to fill it in after constructing only the foundation. Disappointment reigned in the minds of the people of Barnum. In 1945 the official name of the church was changed from Barnum to Bethany symbolizing their determination to begin anew with hopes for a better future.

Berkeley Heights Church (later called Fiftieth Avenue, and later Sloat Memorial Church)

A small church was begun in 1906-1907 near Fiftieth Avenue and Osceola. Many of the details are lacking, but some of the Presiding Elder's reports add information. The beginnings are summarized by the Presiding Elder:

In the month of June a man offered us a four-lot corner and \$1,000 cash if we would establish Methodism on Berkeley Heights, the extreme northwest corner of Denver. Of course, Methodism is established there. Rev. G. E. Brock was appointed pastor, and meetings began in a store near the Jesuit college. A revival was held; several were converted, and we had 20 members. I had held a quarterly meeting and the complete officiation was made out. Then the man backed out. The people wanted to go ahead anyway, so we bought the corner of 50th and Osceola Streets, \$750 was the price, we paid \$550. Pastor Brock got busy and made floor, walls, and roof, and would plan permanent new church after conference.²

The minister for this first full year was T. W. Winkler, and at the end of his first year, 1908, he reported the membership at 24 and a Sunday School of 40. The situation of the church in 1908 is stated thus:

[Fiftieth Avenue is] a new church under the shadow of the Jesuit college, undertaken without a dollar and without a member. Good four-lot corner was bought, and plans are now being made for the new church. We have 24 members and they worship in a tent-house.³

In 1908 the minister was C. B. Larrabee who remained for three years. There was a great increase in the membership, from 24 to 114 the first year, then 127 the second year, but dropping to 99 the third year. In 1911 the Sunday School registered 148.

¹ Much of this section is indebted to a history of Bethany (Barnum) Church written by the historian, Mrs. May Kruger. This was written on the occasion of the moving into the new modern church built in 1953.

² Colorado Conference Journal, (1907), p. 526.

³ Ibid., (1908), p. 48.

Early in 1909 the church outgrew the tent and rented a store building. Later they held their services in a school house. These locations proved unsatisfactory and they then decided they had to build for themselves.¹ Four lots were purchased on the corner of West 50th and Osceola which was a center of population in that section of Denver. The Presiding Elder rejoiced that no debts remained against the church lots.² Plans were being made for a permanent building.

In 1910 the report states that the building was progressing, but that it would be a few years before they could realize their ambitions:

C. B. Larrabee has poured out his strength unsparingly to get a building at Fiftieth Avenue. The concrete foundation is completed, upon which sometime during the next year or two, will rise a building costing from \$8,000 to \$10,000.³

By 1911 the report revealed that the enthusiasm of the church was spent and that discouragement had set in. The plans they had for their church seemed to be less bright:

This work from its very inception has been attended with great difficulties. Last year the foundation for the new church was finished, but the building of the foundation seemed to have sapped the entire strength of the community. This fact, and the hard times of this year, have made it impossible to finish the structure.⁴

The minister in 1911 was P. V. West who stayed two years and at the end of this time reported a membership of 67 with a Sunday School enrollment of 134. Seemingly the peak of enthusiasm for the small church had passed.

Details are lacking as to the arrangements and the reasons, but in 1912, the name of this small church was changed to the Sloat Memorial Church. Further history or mention of the church has not been located. A further study in Denver Methodist history will be required to give some answers to this particular problem along with many others.

The Japanese Methodist Church

The Japanese Church was founded in Denver in the year 1907 by a lay preacher engaged, chiefly, in the restaurant business.⁵ The Rev. Mr. Hamanosuke Shigeta gathered several of his Japanese friends

¹ *Ibid.*, (1909), p. 50.

² *Ibid.*, (1909), p. 50.

³ *Ibid.*, (1910), p. 282.

⁴ *Ibid.*, (1911), p. 428.

⁵ For much of the information on the Japanese Church the writer is indebted to the Reverend Mr. George Uyemura, minister of the California Street (Japanese) Methodist Church of Denver. The records which were available in the church office, and the interviews with some of his members were all in the Japanese language. However, he spent a large portion of an afternoon translating and explaining the information for the purposes of this work.

The writer is also indebted to Bishop Donald H. Tippet of San Francisco, and Dr. Frank Herron Smith of Pasadena, California for their information regarding other Japanese materials.

together in a building at 2143 Arapahoe Street and began his preaching services. At first there was no attempt to form a Methodist Church, only to have a protestant non-denominational service for Japanese people. This arrangement lasted for a year or longer until the lay preacher moved to Canon City to further his restaurant business. The evaluation of this work appears in the Conference Journal for the year 1907:

Through lack of adequate assistance and supervision, undenominational missions have been established in Ogden, Chicago and Denver, in the latter quite recently by H. Shigeta, a local preacher, formerly connected with our work on this Coast, but more frequently from Japan. His is a disappointment to me, as I had for months corresponded and planned in reference to opening work there. Brother Shigeta's prospectus provides for a home for Japanese strangers which shall be thoroughly Christian and yet undenominational. Non-Christians are admitted as associate members. The basis of the work is a Christian boarding house in rented quarters. Christian services are held on Sunday and at other times. A Social Department is a prominent feature. The work is supported from the income of the Boarding House, from the monthly fees of the members, and from free will offerings of sympathizers, the names of many of whom are given, both Japanese and Americans. The enterprise is commendable, but in my opinion would be more satisfactory, in every way, if under the care of some Christian denomination. In view of Christian work among the Japanese of this coast being started under the auspices of our church, of the universality and strong influence of our missionary work in the West, of the peculiar relation of Bishop Harris and the present superintendent to the Japanese public, and of the fact that we have several active Christians in Denver, including the organizer of the new Mission, it would seem that this ought to be a Methodist Mission. But under the circumstances, this appeared to brother Shigeta the only solution of the problem.¹

As Japanese work was organized in Denver, it is to be noted that this was an integral part of the Methodist Church but not of the Colorado Conference. These Japanese churches were a part of the Pacific Japanese Mission Conference with most of their churches on the Pacific Coast.

It was in the year 1908 that official action was taken to organize a specifically Methodist Church for the Japanese in Denver. Some of the interested Methodists called on the minister of the Japanese church in Pueblo, the Rev. Mr. Hachiro Shirato, and invited him to come to Denver, which he did in 1909. Soon after he came, several building proposals were thought of, but the first action was to sell the property on Arapahoe Street and to rent a building which is still standing on Park Avenue between Emerson and Ogden (1827 Park Avenue). It is now (1956) used as a cleaning establishment.

For a detailed report of the year's activities, we are fortunate to have a complete report of the Presiding Elder, Herbert B. Johnson:

Through the courtesy of the Rev. Mr. Lloyd Wake of the Pine Methodist Church, San Francisco, copies of most of the Journals of the Japanese Conference were obtained. The Japanese Methodist Churches maintain a historical society archives and library in this church in San Francisco.

¹ Official Minutes of the Pacific Japanese Mission Conference (1907).

It is needless, Bishop Warren, for me to advise you as to conditions in Denver. From every standpoint it is a great center. While there, a gentleman deeply interested in the Japanese came especially from Cheyenne, Wyoming, to see me. Two hundred and fifty Japanese in the city met to welcome me and to hear me speak. There is a great opportunity for the right kind of man.

A little more than a year ago, Brother H. Shigeta, a former local preacher in our church and who has had much experience in our work on the coast, opened a self-supporting mission there, making it undenominational. Being busy with his work in his restaurant business he could not give but a limited amount of time to the mission. But he has been active and devoted, and has been ably seconded by several Christians, particularly some of our own young men who have gone there from Portland or some of our California missions. Brother Shirato has also made occasional visits from Pueblo.

Both before going East and at the time of my visit, a desire was expressed for us to take over the work and establish in Denver a regular Methodist mission. This in my judgment is the best thing to be done. It will give stability and standing to the work there. I found the mission rather badly located on account of the necessity for cheap rent, which reacted in the matter of securing American lady teachers.

It was my privilege to address the Denver Methodist Preachers' Meeting concerning opportunities for Japanese work, and at my request they kindly appointed a committee to cooperate with us in this new enterprise. There are in and about Denver about one thousand Japanese, many of them representing a very desirable class. The conversion of a few hundred or even tens, will mean much to the uplifting of Japanese society there. I trust that we shall find a way, at this Annual Meeting, to put this work on its feet, and that we shall have the hearty cooperation of Denver Methodism.¹

The Japanese church had a slow start, but soon gained some membership to help it along. At the end of his first year, at the Conference of 1909, the minister reported a membership of three persons with an enrollment in Sunday School of ten. However, this was only the beginning. Other activities seem to have been accomplished, as they were building a solid foundation for their later growth:

The few Christians at Denver and their friends have raised over four hundred dollars, not including dormitory income, thus liquidating the debt for furnishing. Brother Shigeta has been very faithful, and is thoroughly respected as an earnest Christian. He desires to be relieved by a man better able to push the work among the thousands of Japanese in central Colorado, and I trust that some arrangement can be made to accomplish this. Several have been baptized in Pueblo and Denver. Four recently in the latter city by Dr. Warner, the District Superintendent.²

Further progress, and the threat of Buddhism is reflected the next year when the Presiding Elder reported:

¹ *Ibid.*, (1908).

² *Ibid.*, (1909).

When our borders were extended in 1908, we found an independent mission in Denver in charge of a Japanese local preacher of our church, Brother H. Shigeta who provided for his own support by outside employment. We were invited to take it over and an appropriation was made the following year. Brother Shirato, soon after his transfer to Denver, did two things which meant much for success; he moved the Mission to its present location on Park Avenue and he sent to Japan for a help-meet. He started the year with three members, and now reports sixteen and two probationers. Six adults and two children have received baptism. It is feared that some outside people who have contributed generously to his work may be affected by the plans to establish a Buddhist Mission there. Rather than discourage us, it should spur us to greater effort. Hundreds if not thousands are at work in the country on the railroads and in the sugar beet fields.¹

The arrangement at the Park Avenue location was not satisfactory, for approximately 1910 or 1911 the congregation purchased three old houses on 23rd Street between Glenarm and Tremont with the plan to build a church on the lots later. The plans did not materialize, and the land is the present (1956) site of the Ebert School.

Of the hard work of Mr. Shirato, the Journal of the Japanese Mission for 1912 gives the following summary:

The only missionary among the thousands of Japanese in Colorado and surrounding states is Shirato, a member of the Colorado Conference. There are 3,000 Japanese in Colorado; 500 in Denver. About 500 are farmers, 1,500 farm laborers, 500 in coal mines and steel mills, 250 domestic workers, 250 merchants, 100 students. About 200 housewives and 200 children. Most are young men and women. Shirato does his best to meet the needs in Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska and New Mexico where about 2,000 more are scattered. He has traveled over 2,500 miles and visited 26 places besides Denver and Pueblo, 10 places in Colorado, 3 in New Mexico, 1 in Nebraska and 4 in Wyoming. His expenses are paid by special offerings.²

More specifically about the work, the Japanese Mission Conference Journal reports:

Starting with nothing but an appropriation for salary, and developing a church with 25 members, four probationers, and Sunday School scholars, with ability to raise several hundred dollars annually for pastoral support, local expenses and benevolences, is the brief record of Brother Shirato in Denver, not to speak of Pueblo and other places. He has secured several thousand dollars on subscription for mission property, and desires the endorsement of this Annual Meeting for a Church Extension Grant. This has the hearty endorsement of his official members. The plan includes, in one building, a chapel, a dormitory and parsonage, and a home for children. He has the sympathy and endorsement of the Bishop, District Superintendent, and other leading Methodists of Denver. This is the natural center for Japanese work east of the mountains, and the building is needed not only for the 500 who reside there but for hundreds who make it a

¹Ibid., (1910).

²Ibid., (1912), pp. 31ff.

center. This is especially true of the proposed children's department. The pastor's wife, an experienced Bible woman in Japan, is a great help to him in all his work. In this respect, our pastors are nearly all most fortunate. Four adults and three children baptized.¹

The Japanese in Pueblo contributed to the Denver building fund.²

It is interesting to note that the membership of the church in Denver in 1912 stood at 25, and the Sunday School enrollment also at 25. The minister was indeed engaged in a "work of love," as there was no salary paid that year, and only \$288 on his house rent. The congregation had promised to pay a salary of \$540.00 with \$300 on the house rent.

In 1913 the Japanese made a real step forward, as they began to worship in the old St. James Church, which was for sale. They had made a special arrangement with the Church Extension Society, the details of which are not recorded in these Journals. However, within a few years following, three things happened which again brought disappointment to the people. The location which had seemed ideal had proven unsatisfactory to most of the Japanese people, for their worship center was in a different part of town from that in which most of them lived. Next, in the year 1917, the Rev. Mr. Shirato left the church to return to Japan to continue his ministry. He is still living there (1956) according to the Rev. Mr. George Uyemura, and keeps in touch with several of his friends remaining in Denver. The last frustration which the people had to face was a fire which partially destroyed their church (the old St. James Methodist building at 9th and West Colfax) in 1919. Rather than repair the damage, the building was turned back to the Denver Church Extension Society, and the Japanese bought a house at 2801 Curtis where the church was revived and where new interest was developed.

Much of the other intervening history would be going too far afield for the limits of this dissertation, but the changes which came during the years are interesting to note. The church seems to be active, progressive and eager to be of service to its community. The use of the Japanese language is less noticeable than in previous generations, and the minister reports that many of the younger generation do not read Japanese at all, and speak it but little. Thus we see the pattern in the Japanese Church is similar to the other foreign language groups that have been organized in and around Denver.³ They use their language for a time, but the second generation, or at least by the third generation, all use English. They then mix readily into other churches, at least into Caucasian Conferences, with few if any language characteristics.

Elyria Mission

In the section known as Elyria, in extreme northeast Denver, between 46th and 54th Avenues and between Downing and Colorado Boulevard, a small Methodist mission was founded. The first time this appears in the Journal with statistics is toward the end of the year 1907-1908, when the organizing minister had been R. L. Johnston. At the end of the first

¹ Ibid., (1912), p. 32.

² Ibid., (1912), p. 33.

³ Such groups are the German and Swedish Methodist groups especially. This happened to an extent with the Italian, and is now happening with the Spanish people.

Conference year he reported a membership of 22 with a Sunday School enrollment of 45. The total salary had been \$18.00.

Summarising the work the Presiding Elder states:

The Society has opened one new City Mission Church. It is located on East 47th in the vicinity of the Stock yards, it being designed to care for our people residing in Elyria and Swansea, two suburban communities in the extreme northeast corner of the city. R. L. Johnston, who has had pastoral care of this work from its inception, has proved himself well adapted to the field, reporting in a few weeks a membership of nearly 40 with a flourishing Sunday School and Epworth League.¹

R. L. Johnston was appointed another year, but had to give up the work midway in the second year. R. M. Crane, a local preacher from Grace Church, completed the year.

During the last part of this Conference year (1908-1909), the Mission project purchased some property for \$1,450, and paid for most of it. They felt that the future of the mission was secure, and that it would become a promising city mission.²

R. M. Crane from Grace Church was appointed another year, but the last few months preceding the Conference of 1910 were filled by William Pepper. Other ministers were: 1910-1911, E. E. Tuck; 1911-1912, W. Hendrickson and the Rev. Mr. Morgan. At the Conference of 1912 the membership was reported at 35 and the Sunday School attendance at 45. This was slightly lower than the highest number of members recorded three years earlier at 67 and the Sunday School enrollment at 90 in 1909.

The portion of the city known as Elyria did not prove successful for the mission, and it dwindled away and disbanded shortly after 1912. There is today no Methodist Church within several miles of this particular section of the city. However, flour mills, large warehouses and light industries have taken over much of this section of Denver.

Italian Mission Church (Holy Trinity Methodist Church)

An interesting project in the Methodist Church of Denver was the Italian Methodist Church located in the north part of the city where the concentration of this nationality was high. Of the founding of this mission we note the Presiding Elder's report:

At the close of the last Conference, we began work among the Italians of North Denver. Such helpers as could be secured from among our people, visited the Italian neighborhood and found a desire among them for Protestant Christian work.

In November came a grant of \$500 from the Board of Home Missions. The American Bible Society, through offices of Dr. Kirkbride, agreed to do a thorough colporteur work among the Italians in this locality, thus seconding our work, while our

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1908), p. 48.

² Ibid., (1909), p. 48.

work seconded theirs. This help, together with other funds at command will carry this new enterprise along till January 1, 1910. Last December an Italian minister was secured, who lives on the grant, and has a flourishing Sunday School. Much personal work has been done, and a great deal of necessary preparatory instruction has been given. As was expected, our workers have been persecuted by the Catholic priests, who instructed their people to keep away from our Mission, and told them that our Bible was a bad book. We are succeeding however, and the Italians are coming to believe in our work. Some are claiming the right to read the Word of God for themselves. Rev. Paulo Sabilio, our minister, is a hard worker. We need a mission building, and cannot go on with it. There are some 10,000 Italians in the community, hence it would be hard to find a more needy field.¹

The arrangement with the Board of Missions did not materialize, and the Presiding Elder made the Italian work an appointment along with his other appointments. He secured a man for the job:

The launching of the Italian Methodist Church in North Denver is probably the most signal event of the year. In April the American Bible Society found it necessary to dissolve the arrangement with the Board of Home Missions through which a colporteur missionary was supported by the Italians. This left the District Superintendent free to discover an experienced Italian minister. Providence guided in finding the right man in the person of F. P. Sulmonetti of Boston. Through combined efforts of Miss Manning, Brother Sulmonetti and the Superintendent, \$603 in cash and donated materials have been placed on the building, leaving a debt of about \$175 to be provided for yet. There are now thirty full members and ten probationers. The outlook is promising.²

At the end of his first, Mr. Sulmonetti reported a membership of 50 with a Sunday School of 180. Surely the mission seemed to have been functioning effectively.

Under his leadership the Mission branched out into some of the most needy areas among the Italian people:

In the Italian work we have had Sulmonetti, . . . At the beginning of the year we had 30 members at the Italian Church. Now we have 50. In the fall a free medical dispensary was opened in our meagre quarters, and Dr. Burton, at the head of a staff of 13 physicians has treated from 400 to 500 sick people every month. Ground has been purchased, and money is being raised, to erect a new \$10,000 Italian Church. H. E. Warner, Superintendent of City Missions, has given himself tirelessly to these great enterprises.³

At the Conference of 1912 the Rev. Mr. Sulmonetti reported a membership which had increased to 94 and a Sunday School of 225. This surely is an indication that the work among

¹ *Ibid.*, (1909), p. 52.

² *Ibid.*, (1910), p. 282.

³ *Ibid.*, (1911), p. 430.

the Italians was necessary and that the Methodists could be commended for their willingness to experiment in this area of work.

One further mention is made of this mission, only because it reflects the building of the church edifice called Holy Trinity Church. Unfortunately the exact location of the building is not given, but perhaps it is still standing today:

On the third of August the new Italian Church was dedicated. The completed building cost a trifle more than \$14,000. We would not have this beautiful church today, which is a credit to the denomination, had it not been for the skill and perseverance of Brother Sulmonetti. In spite of the hardest times Denver ever saw, Mr. Sulmonetti has gone right out into the streets of the city and raised a large share of this money. No Italian Church in America is as prosperous as this.¹

The membership in 1913 had increased to 112 and the Sunday School to 230. Within a very few years the Italian work progressed beyond the hopes of many of its founders and was fulfilling a vital part in the lives of many Italians in a densely populated portion of Denver. However, this church had a significant although a relatively short ministry. In 1918 the Italian leader, F. P. Sulmonetti went East to be followed by several ministers in the next few years. In 1927 the strength of the church had weakened because of Roman Catholic reaction, and the Italian Mission was placed on a circuit with Grandview Church (formerly Harkness Heights). In 1933 the Italian Church disappeared from the records.

Park Hill Methodist Church

The newest Methodist Church in Denver, as of 1912, was a mission started in the area known as Park Hill. This was the part of the city east of City Park and north of Colfax Avenue. At about the turn of the century the population had grown out past the City Park and the need of another Methodist Church became evident. The original center of the Park Hill development was along 23rd Avenue, and at the corner of Dexter and 23rd Avenue the Park Hill Church had its origin. On January 10, 1910, a group of people, including the Rev. Mr. Horace E. Warner the Presiding Elder, and the Rev. Mr. E. E. Bean, appointed to the Park Hill Mission, met in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher W. Birney, Sr., at 2072 Ash Street, to decide whether or not a church in this new area of the city was feasible.² Incidentally, Mr. Birney is still an active member of Park Hill Church, is their historian, and has written a very accurate history of the church to 1949. The writer is deeply indebted to this history written by Mr. Birney for much of the early information of Park Hill Church.³

However, the Methodists had been at work in Park Hill for seven years previous to this meeting. In 1903 the Presiding Elder reported that Dr. R. M. Barns had been doing survey work in Park Hill in respect to a proposed new mission, and the work had been so successful that the

¹ Ibid., (1913), p. 185.

² Fletcher W. Birney, "A Short History of Park Hill Church," on the occasion of the Twenty-Fifty Anniversary, 1949.

³ Ibid.

Presiding Elder thought a mission should be started in Park Hill immediately.¹ The next year (1904) the Presiding Elder reported that “we have paid for fine lots in Park Hill this year, and a mission should be established there at once.”² These lots were on the southeast corner of East Twenty-third and Dexter Streets.

According to the Conference appointments for 1909, E. E. Bean was appointed to Park Hill as a mission appointment. It was during this year that the previously mentioned meeting in January 1910 was held. On March 10, 1910, the first Board of Trustees was elected as follows: F. a. Burton, George F. Gish, H. M. Bring, Woodson Jerauld, and Fletcher W. Birney. Mr. Birney was Secretary of the Board at that time.³

At the end of his first year, E. E. Bean had organized the church, although there is no membership record given. The Presiding Elder reported the organization of the church at the Conference of 1910, and told also that the land they were using had been held by the Denver Church Extension Society for some time. Evidently this was the land bought in 1904, which the Church Extension Society had donated to the new church organization.⁴

E. E. Bean was appointed for another year in 1910 during which time more progress was noted. It was soon decided that a building should be constructed on the corner, but the size or cost of the building were not estimated. It was first thought that a small chapel for \$1,000 would suffice, but later it was seen that the future would demand more than a chapel. The Committee had begun to think in terms of \$3,000 for the building and began their campaign on that basis. However, they received \$5,000 so easily that they revised their plans and decided to build larger.⁵ Ground was broken on April 28, 1911, which was the beginning of the building on the corner of 23rd and Dexter.

Before the church was near completion however, it was seen that a temporary meeting place was necessary, hence, in May, 1911, they set up a tent diagonally across the intersection which served until the church was completed. It was in this tent that the Sunday School and the Woman’s Society were organized in that same year. The first worship services were conducted in the tent on June 11, 1911.⁶

Before the Conference of 1911, E. E. Bean’s health failed and the year was completed by the Rev. Mr. Eckhardt of The Iliff School of Theology. At the end of that year the membership of the Park Hill Church stood at 47. The Presiding Elder reported good progress on the building, estimated to cost \$12,000 and hoped that it would be open by the middle of September.⁷

Evidently it was on schedule since the church was consecrated in special services September 17, 1911, by Dr. Harris Franklin Rall, President of The Iliff School of Theology. The cost was listed at \$9,000 in pledges and cash, \$2,000 in lots and \$1,500 in labor donations.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1903), p. 373.

² Ibid., (1904), p. 64.

³ Fletcher W. Birney, “A Short History of Park Hill Church . . . “

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Colorado Conference Journal, (1911), p. 428.

Hence the total would be \$12,500; a much larger structure than the original planned for \$1,000 and later for \$3,000.¹ (see Fig. 58).

At the Conference of 1911 the minister appointed was Fred J. Clark who remained almost two years. At the Conference of 1913 the membership of Park Hill Church was 153. Thus the church stood at the end of the Bishopric of Henry White Warren in 1912.

Some further notes of the remarkable development at Park Hill are of interest. It was in 1919 that the Rev. Mr. William Spence became the minister of the church and under whose direction the present building at Montview Boulevard and Forest was planned and begun. Incidentally this is the minister whose son, Hartzel, later wrote the book, One Foot in Heaven with his father as the main character.

On September 12, 1921, the church property on 23rd Avenue was sold for \$15,000, and twenty lots were bought on Montview between Forest and Glencoe, three blocks south and five east of the previous location. On the Glencoe corner a tabernacle was built as a temporary frame structure, while the present church was being constructed.²

It was during the ministry of Dr. Leslie B. Logan that the present Park Hill Church was completed and occupied in November, 1927. The total cost was approximately \$200,000 and was reputedly the most modern church west of Chicago.³ The Spanish Mission architecture was attractive and the full-size gymnasium and the religious education wing were great additions in the growing section of Denver. However, this great project carried with it the burden of a debt which was not completely eradicated until December, 1945.

In April, 1955, another step was taken by the church as a new project of a \$600,000 addition to the church was launched. The new structure was to be a larger sanctuary, kitchen, social hall, and youth department.⁴

The development of this particular church has been remarkable, since it is now (1956) the second largest of the denomination in Denver with a membership of over 2,300, and probably the most active Sunday School and youth program. Truly it was great wisdom that was embodied in the organization of the church in Park Hill.

Deaconess Work

Much of the good work that was done in Denver Methodism during the decade preceding 1900 was to the credit of the Deaconesses who were maintaining their home in Denver. This was a project of the Woman's Home Missionary Society, and was organized in 1891. For a few years they were able to use the former home of Bishop and Mrs. Warren located at Eighteenth and Curtis Streets. However, in 1894 the work was temporarily suspended until February, 1898,

¹ Ibid.

² Fletcher W. Birney, "A Short History of Park Hill Church...."

³ The Rocky Mountain News, November 30, 1927.

⁴ The Denver Post, April 25, 1955.

when financial difficulties were alleviated and it could be supported by the Women's group again.

At work in 1900 were fourteen deaconesses who were working in approximately fifty different places.¹ Little information has been found pertaining to the work of the Deaconesses. The only records available are the yearly reports made by the Deaconess Board to the Colorado Annual Conference. A hospital was maintained by their group in 1903,² although probably it had been maintained previous to this time also.

Several reports mention the Deaconess work in every Conference Journal. Typical of this tribute is the report of 1905:

Denver is a Deaconess center. The Home is necessarily in closer relations with this district than with the others. The territory lying in and around our city affords endless opportunity for our deaconess sisters to do fruitful work. I hear from them almost everywhere, on the plains and in the city. They are out as evangelists; they are busy as pastoral visitors. Our pastors in several instances, during the year, have found their aid inestimable in its value. As the report of the Conference Deaconess Board will doubtless show, the receipts of this Home run up well toward 3,000. But this is all too meager to meet the needs of this important arm of our work.³

Following a gift in 1906, the Deaconess Home was officially named the Margaret Evans Deaconess Home, in honor of a donor of some land for their new building. Details of the gift are recorded thus:

The Colorado Conference Deaconess Home in Denver has had a good year, the Deaconesses have been abundant in labors and their work has been highly appreciated by the churches served and by the people to whom they have ministered. The expenses of the home have been fully met, with a small balance in the treasury. The long cherished desire for a new and properly equipped Deaconess Home has in part been realized by the generous gift of Mrs. Margaret Evans of a suitable piece of ground in a beautiful part of the city. Plans were immediately entered upon for securing the funds for the erection of the new building, and \$3,500 has been raised in cash and pledges, and the prospects are good for obtaining in the near future the entire \$8,000 required. The Home at Denver is, as its names declares, a Conference Deaconess Home . . . The Deaconesses go all over the state, not just in Denver.⁴

However, the plan to build was not carried out, for the next year we note that they bought a "palatial home" at "a great bargain":

The Colorado Conference Deaconess Home in Denver has had a year of notable achievement. Instead of erecting a new building on the lots donated by Mrs. Margaret

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, (1900), p. 58.

² Ibid., "The Deaconess Report" (1903).

³ Ibid., "The Deaconess Report" (1905).

⁴ Ibid., (1906).

Evans, as was proposed last year, a beautiful and commodious residence situated at 1620 Ogden was purchased at a bargain, and after some slight repairs and changes was formally opened and dedicated in April as the Margaret Evans Deaconess Home. The building is admirably adapted for the work to which it is consecrated, and for the first time in the history of the Deaconess work in Denver these devoted servants of the church have an adequate, convenient and well-furnished home. The property is valued at \$16,000 upon which there is an incumbrance of \$6,500.¹

Regular reports have appeared in all Journals pertaining to the good work the deaconesses have done. The debt on the house was reduced to only \$5,500 by 1911 and soon thereafter a deeply appreciated gift freed them from the entire debt.

The Margaret Evans Deaconess Home in Denver, with property worth \$16,000 and a debt of \$5,500, with ten deaconesses, at an expense of \$3,642.39, and with \$158.47 in the treasury, has accomplished an enormous year's work among the churches and the missions of the city. From the heirs of the estate of the late greatly-beloved and deeply mourned Rev. George Richardson, property has been given this year for this home of such value that, when it is converted into money, the debt will not only be wiped out, but from \$5,000 to \$10,000 will remain for endowment.²

That this debt was wiped out as suggested is confirmed by the Deaconess Report of the following year (1912).

Although there were seven Deaconesses in addition to the Superintendent herself, it seems that this was not enough to fill the needs of the city. The women worked not only in the mission projects, but also in the larger churches as parish visitors and Sunday School helpers. They could have used ten times as many, so it is reported.³

One further work of the Deaconesses was the organization of a settlement project at 1921 New Haven Street "in the bottom lands near the river." see Fig. 50):

No other section in Denver is so squalid, neglected and needy. This settlement work has been surprisingly successful from the beginning, and many friends have generously supplied the money and equipment needed. No other uplifting agency touches this neighborhood.⁴

Thus we see that a part of the story of developing Methodism in Denver and the surrounding area was the work of the Deaconesses. Though the depression caused them to suspend their work for almost four years, from 1894 to 1898, they began again, and contributed much to the strength of all churches in Denver, and especially to the small missions which depended upon the Deaconess work so much.

¹ Ibid., (1907).

² Ibid., (1911).

³ Ibid., (1909).

⁴ Ibid., (1913).

The deaconess work was maintained in Denver until approximately 1943 when their property was sold with the plan to buy another location. However, they have as yet (1956) not been reorganized.

Summary: -- Hence we see that in Denver between 1900 and 1912 there had been much progress. From a total of thirty-five churches, the number had grown to fifty-two, while the total membership had grown from 4,317 to 7,166. While Denver itself made much progress, it is only right that the Methodist Church should progress along with it, and should take undisputed place as the strongest single Protestant denomination in the city.

CHAPTER XIII

THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER AND THE ILIFF SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The University of Denver (Colorado Seminary)

Henry Augustus Buchtel assumed his duties as Chancellor of the University of Denver on January 1, 1900, which office he held until his retirement on December 1, 1920. Thus he lacked one month of having served for twenty-one years. Before Dr. Buchtel came to the University, it was decided that no financial agent should be appointed, but that the new Chancellor should himself be the financial agent, and should do the fund-raising for payment of the debts.¹ This was indeed quite a burden for any person to carry, as the school was still heavily in debt.

Although the student body was about 500 just before he came, the indebtedness was \$175,000, which was a large amount for that day. The school as a whole had approximately ninety professors and instructors at the time. In the face of the large debt, including delinquent professors' salaries, which had remained on the school for eight years, foreclosure was near at hand.² The Chancellor who was to be chosen should have several qualifications, including financial ability, a knowledge of Colorado Methodism, the confidence of the people as a whole, and a fit person for a scholarly enterprise. The trustees thought they saw these in the former minister of the city, Dr. Buchtel. The years proved that their judgment had been sound.

Reflecting the spirit with which the Colorado Conference accepted the new educational leader, we read in the Journal of 1900:

Resolved, that as a Conference we most heartily welcome to our midst and the superintendence of our great educational interests, Chancellor Henry Augustus Buchtel, and with pleasure we hereby record our appreciation of his labors since being appointed.³

In 1900 the University boasted "about" 600 students.⁴ Garth's evaluation for the year 1900, the first year for the new Chancellor is summarized:

As the year approached an end, his first year as Chancellor of the University of Denver, Henry had these facts before him as some of the net results: Henry had raised over \$55,418, some in large subscriptions of \$1000 or more, but more of small denominations of \$100, \$50, \$25, or even \$10. He had visited forty-five communities of the state.⁵

The good work of the new Chancellor continued, as he increased the good-will of the Colorado people, and turned their interests to his school. He went from small town to small town in true "whistle-stop" fashion, and achieved what had seemed to many an impossibility.

¹ Colorado Conference Journal (1899), p. 314.

² Thomas R. Garth, The Life of Henry Augustus Buchtel (Denver: Peerless Printing Company, 1937), p. 138.

³ Colorado Conference Journal, 1900, p. 62.

⁴ Smiley, History of Denver, p. 760.

⁵ Garth, The Life of Henry Augustus Buchtel, p. 155.

The last mortgage for the huge indebtedness was burned on September 9, 1903.¹ During the eight months of the year 1903 the total funds received in cash stood at \$243,000, perhaps the largest amount to be received in a single year up to that time.² Meeting in late August, when this successful achievement seemed imminent, the Education Committee of the Colorado Conference reported:

Your Committee comes before you for the first time in many years with a report that contains not a single note of discouragement. That marvelous achievement, the liquidation of all our bonded indebtedness, now happily consummated, is not only cause for general rejoicing, but is a distinct contribution to the courage and faith of all people, who must see in this another proof that what ought to be can be. All the facts relative to the management and work of the University, for the past year, which have come before your committee, are of this stimulating character.³

Evidently the next year showed continued improvement, and the same committee again gave a very favorable report. It is interesting to note that in addition to financial improvement, the size of the student body was growing rapidly:

Your Committee on Education is especially glad to be able to bring you a report with many notes of good cheer. It is still a cause for rejoicing that the bonded debt was all paid during the last session of our Conference. There has been a good gain in the contributions to current expenses, and hence there is a smaller deficit for the past year. The fine growth of the student body continues – only the School of Music shows a smaller enrollment, owing to the higher requirements of that school

The number of students has almost doubled in five years, so that we had last year, 1,116 students in actual attendance upon the several schools.⁴

Of the characteristics of the Chancellor and Mrs. Buchtel was their readiness to be friends with anyone in the University, or anywhere else in the state. His wide friendships throughout all communities he visited no doubt helped him to win his seat as Governor of Colorado in 1906. Students considered him their friend, and in his own home he entertained them often. This residence was constructed in 1905 and still stands as the Buchtel Club of the University, at 2100 South Columbine.

The University seemed to be progressing very well when in 1906 the Chancellor announced that Andrew Carnegie had offered \$30,000 for the purpose of building a library on the growing campus, though Carnegie stipulated that an equal amount had to be raised by the friends of the University.⁵ In approximately one year the Chancellor could announce that the matching sum of \$30,000 was pledged, and he went ahead with plans for the Carnegie Library.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Colorado Conference Journal*, 1903, p. 428.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Education Committee Report, 1904.

⁵ Garth, *The Life of Henry Augustus Buchtel*, p. 181.

In the midst of raising the current expenses of the University, and the additional funds for the library, Chancellor Buchtel was elected Governor of Colorado on the Republican ticket in the fall of 1906. During his two years in this office, his influence and his popularity spread even wider in the state. He pledged himself wholeheartedly as Governor, and to continue his work at the University during these two years he appointed the Rev. Charles F. Senter as Field Secretary during this time.¹

The Governor's chair did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Chancellor. He was still dreaming big dreams as he made his report to the Colorado Conference in 1907:

The pressing need of the University is for new buildings and equipment.

Regarding this the Chancellor reports as follows:

"We shall have the Library at once. Mr. Carnegie will pay for the building, \$30,000, and the endowment of a like amount is now pledged.

We shall have the Gymnasium and the Athletic Field at once. The alumni have secured pledges for this.

We ought to have the Science building at once. I believe we shall have it at once. That will be my job. I shall not ask the brethren of the Conference to help on that.

We need a chapel right away. The men of the Conference ought to take that as their job. It should cost \$30,000 or more.

We very much need a power plant, an artesian well and a water tower. We believe these needs will be provided for soon. We need one or two buildings for engineering. We ought to have them under way by next commencement. My faith does not waver.

Then we need a men's Building and a Women's Building for the comfort of the students when not in recitation or in chapel.²

The library was completed as the Chancellor outlined, as was the small gymnasium. Carnegie later contributed a large sum to the science hall, and the Conference itself contributed most of the chapel funds. Although it took another ten years to complete this dream, it did come to fruition during the administration of Henry Augustus Buchtel.

Some of the details of the financing of the new chapel and the library building are given by Buchtel's biographer:

September 7 [1907] saw subscriptions for the new chapel increased by an additional pledge of \$10,000 by the Methodist Conference, and two days later the consecration of the ground for the new Carnegie library. [October 5] the Chancellor-Governor signed the Carnegie certificate for the library money. On Tuesday's slate there was the beginning of excavation for the new chapel.³

In 1908 Buchtel did not seek re-election, and his choice as the Republican candidate lost to Mr. Shafroth, the Democrat. He could now devote himself to the cause of the University with

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Colorado Conference Journal* "Education Report", 1907.

³ Garth, *The Life of Henry Augustus Buchtel*, p. 217f.

his whole heart as he had done in the past, but in addition, could give it all his time, since the financial pressure was less. Almost a year after he left the Governor's office he had further developed the University that the Colorado Conference Education Committee reported in 1909:

Within the decade the tuition receipts of \$4,993 have waxed to \$20,331; a student body from 614 to 1324; better yet the Liberal Arts from 148 to 619

The Library is ready for dedication tomorrow; the chapel will be completed next year . . . [actually not completed until 1917].

The Herculean task of debt-raising accomplished, the Chancellor faces the yet greater task of meeting the demands for enlarged facilities in buildings and faculty and endowment. We believe we can pledge every member of the Conference and church to a larger allegiance and more hearty cooperation therein.¹

As a type of summary of Buchtel's work for his first ten years we read of the major campus additions during this time. Actually there were no other major changes until 1928 when the Margery Reed building was completed:

New buildings sprang up here and there to share the adulation given once to Old Main and Iliff. First the Carnegie Library – there was a building! It was started in 1908, finished in 1909, and ready for occupancy in 1910. Next the “gym” on the side of University Boulevard, the gift of the alumni. It was a godsend because the little “old chapel” had become too crowded. Next the student body was simply “thrilled to death” when “they started breaking ground for the science hall”, the building made possible by the beneficence of Andrew Carnegie. The laying of the cornerstone of the last Buchtel building, the memorial Chapel, a sacred edifice, took place Wednesday, October, 26, 1910, with an impressive ceremony . . . December 30 of that year, 1917 was the “glorious” day. “We dedicated the chapel”. (quoted in part from Buchtel's diary.)²

The education report to the proud Colorado Conference of 1910 included much of the same information, although a few other details are of interest:

A little more than half of the fifty thousand dollars for the endowment of a Science Hall, upon which Mr. Carnegie's gift for the Science building is conditioned, has been secured, but unless the full amount is raised within the next three months Mr. Carnegie's offer will likely be withdrawn. It is therefore highly important that the ministers make every effort to send to the Chancellor's office

The new buildings have added greatly to the equipment of the University and to the general appearance of the campus.

The new library, classic in style and beautiful in proportions, was dedicated shortly after Conference last year.

The gymnasium, commodious, attractive and thoroughly up to date, has recently been completed and will be ready for occupancy at the opening of the coming session.

¹ The Colorado Conference Journal, 1909.

² Garth, The Life of Henry Augustus Buchtel, p. 248.

The contract for the building of the chapel has been let and construction is proceeding. The building will probably be enclosed during the present Conference year.¹

Although Buchtel was Chancellor of the University until his retirement late in 1920, we shall not summarize the story further. This brings the sketch of the University history to our date of 1912, and it is sufficient to see its relationships with the church development as a whole. However, in closing this discussion of the University, it would be well to quote Bishop Lewis as he spoke of the importance of this particular school to the Methodist churches of Colorado:

The Colorado Conference had better have twenty of her leading churches destroyed and the congregations permanently scattered than for the Denver University not to come to her own.²

We have seen the small Seminary wax and wane and finally to begin its development as the University of Denver. Much of its success is due to its first three Chancellors – after it was reorganized as the University of Denver, David H. Moore, William F. McDowell and Henry Augustus Buchtel. These three served the University a period of forty-one years, and made the school what it is today in a large part. The men were significant in their own right however, as the first two became Bishops of the church, and Buchtel became Governor of the State for two years. The history of Denver University is thus closely woven into the whole pattern of the development of Colorado Methodism and especially that of Denver.

The Iliff School of Theology

At the laying of the cornerstone for the Iliff Building, Bishop Warren made a significant statement which has characterized the school ever since:

The Iliff School of Theology has been established to promote progress in doctrine and experience. In doctrine it fears no criticism, courts always an advance, God's thoughts are yet as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth. Faculty, students, all patrons and all friends sing: 'Give me the wings of faith to rise within the veil and see.' Their perpetual prayer is that of Moses: 'I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory'.³

Thus its career has been – progressing and advancing.

The Iliff School of Theology was founded as a part of the University of Denver in response to a gift by Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren of \$100,000 for the establishment of a school for the training of ministers west of the Mississippi:

In May 1884, Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren offered the sum of one hundred thousand dollars as an endowment fund 'for the establishment, under the auspices of the Methodist

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, 1910.

² Colorado Conference Journal, 1911.

³ This statement appears as the introductory word in all Iliff School of Theology catalogs.

Episcopal Church, of a school of theology for the better preparation and education of persons called to the high and holy office of the Christian ministry'.¹

It is to be remembered that at this time the University of Denver was located at Fourteenth and Arapahoe Streets in downtown Denver, and was a small struggling school. Consequently, as two stipulations of Mrs. Warren's gift she requested that a permanent site for the University be found, where expansion was possible; and the second stipulation that an additional subscription of \$50,000 be secured for endowment.² By the year 1889 both these requirements had been met, and the funds were applied to the establishment of the school. The first stipulation had been fulfilled in that the University officials had decided on their permanent location in University Park, to the southeast of the city of Denver.

In 1889 Mr. William Seward Iliff offered another \$50,000 for a building to house the new school to be built on the University Park campus near the other building planned at that time – Old Main. The cornerstone of the building was laid on June 8, 1892.³ The School was organized and first began its work in 1892, though their building was not completed until the next year.

After a short life of only eight years it was decided that the endowment was not large enough, so the school was forced to close temporarily in 1900. It was not known at the time, but “temporarily” in this case meant ten years.

Following the temporary closing of the school, it was incorporated, in 1903, as a separate institution, although still cooperative with the University of Denver. It is to be remembered that when Henry Augustus Buchtel came to the University in 1900, there was a heavy debt. Evidently it was the fear of the Iliff family that their endowment might be used to alleviate the debt. Hence, they felt their interests would be honored best if they should incorporate separately.

Little appears about the Iliff School for this ten-year period, although the Conference Minutes each year make some mention of its increasing endowment fund:

We rejoice in the growing endowment fund of the Iliff School of Theology, now amounting to \$131,000, and congratulate the trustees on their wise management of these funds.⁴

We hear with joy that nearly \$150,000 has accumulated in the endowment fund of the Iliff School of Theology. We sincerely hope that the school may be opened for students in the near future.⁵

With profound gratitude we mention the hope expressed by Bishop Warren that the long-closed Iliff School of Theology will be re-opened one year from this fall, such opening,

¹ The Iliff School of Theology Bulletin, XV, No. 1, March, 1929, p. 11. A historical issue.

² McMechen, The Life of Governor Evans, p. 205.

³ The Iliff School of Theology Bulletin, XV, No. 1, (March, 1929), p. 11.

⁴ Colorado Conference Journal, 1905.

⁵ Ibid., 1907.

however, being contingent upon the prior securement of the desired endowment funds. With the contemplated building on the campus, with University Hall increasingly thronged, and with the Iliff School of Theology open, the University Park center of the University life will in the near future expand yet more than during the year now closing.¹

The School of Theology did open on September 14, 1910, and in the growing endowment fund was an additional gift by Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren for the sum of \$50,000 which endowed a lectureship in memory of her husband, John Wesley Iliff.² The Colorado Conference Minutes of 1910 reflect the enthusiasm of the Conference at the opening of the school of Theology.

Before it was opened, it had been redecorated, and the chapel organ had been given by Mr. W. S. Iliff.³ The building was thus completely equipped, and was formally dedicated by Bishop Warren on February 26, 1912.⁴

Of the school's future the Colorado Conference was optimistic, and especially because of the superior faculty which had been secured for the school:

Since the Iliff School of Theology has undergone extensive repairs, and has been newly furnished throughout, it is without doubt the most beautiful and complete plant in the denomination. With its new faculty, men chosen from the best schools and the best product of the schools, it is prepared to give training in the broadest and most thorough scholarship. The coming of such men as President Rall, and Professor Longacre, Eckhardt and Lowstuter among us, is of unspeakable value to the religious life of the whole Rocky Mountain Region, to say nothing of their work in the School of Theology.⁵

Still praising the good work of the faculty of the school, the Colorado Conference of 1911 gave three aims of the institution which have likewise guided it through the years:

The aim of the school is threefold: 1. scholarship; thorough, reverent, open-minded. 2. Men: strong, true, broad, real. 3. Efficiency; in the preacher, the pastor, and for the work of the church in the world today.⁶

To be sure, it was a great day for the Colorado Conference, and for Methodism as a whole, when the Iliff School of Theology again opened its doors in 1910. The liberal spirit of free inquiry has given a sense of independence, and yet a spirit of majesty and awe to the study of Christianity and religion in general. Those who are of like mind appreciate the dedication and the deep devotion of those intellectual forerunners who set the course for the Iliff School.

Speaking at the June Commencement in 1942, Professor Lindsay Longacre of Iliff paid tribute to some of these founders:

¹ Ibid., 1909.

² The Iliff School of Theology Bulletin, XV, No. 1, March, 1929, p. 11.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Colorado Conference Journal, 1911.

⁶ Ibid.

It is really to Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren that the existence of this school is due. Her initiative, her direction and her money laid the foundations upon which the school was erected. The school gets its name from John Wesley Iliff to whose memory it was erected. The building was the gift of Mrs. William Seward Iliff, to whose generosity is due also the fine pipe organ that graces this chapel. Loyally cooperating with her mother during her life-time and carrying on the work since her mother's death, Miss Louise Iliff has been unremitting in the service of the school, and in that service, as well as in generous gifts, she has exemplified the faithful devotion which she inherited.

Along with those whose names have been mentioned, and representing another aspect of the development of the school stands Bishop Henry White Warren. None who knew him well will ever forget that virile character, that far-flung imagination, that resonant voice and, above all, that impassioned earnestness for the establishment and advancement of the school that led to tiresome labors in its behalf. If Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff Warren is the one to whom the existence of the school is ultimately due, the school's dominant character religiously and scholastically is due to Bishop Henry White Warren. It is fitting that the front page of the catalog should carry one of his words about the school: 'The Iliff School of Theology has been established to promote progress in doctrine and experience'. This was his consistent attitude and it is this spirit that he bequeathed to the school. It has been faithfully maintained and still inspires the school's administrators and faculty.¹

Thus we have seen the founding, the closing, and the re-opening of the Iliff School of Theology. The courage and the far-sightedness of Colorado Methodism has been due in all generations, to the existence of the seminary in this state. We may only hope that as the influence of this school grows, that more and more persons in the Protestant Churches may be sincerely interested in the implications of "progress in doctrine and experience." This is the essence of the personality of Bishop Warren, the Iliff family, of the two schools of higher learning located in University Park, and the spirit of Colorado Methodism itself.

Truly the influence of the Bishop on the Methodist higher education in Colorado is immeasurable. His spirit is so interwoven, that his influence is still effective even where it is not realized nor understood. It is fitting that the street in Denver which leads from his former home to the campus is named Warren, as a tribute to this Bishop whose influence in Denver has overshadowed most other leaders of his day.

Summary: -- When Bishop Warren retired in 1912 his personality was so completely intertwined with the churches and the University of Denver that it would be difficult indeed to estimate the great influence which he had there. For twenty-eight years he had given himself devotedly to the tasks to be done, and had proved to be a great inspiration in all areas of work, new building, organization of missions, the educational work carried on through the University and the Iliff School of Theology, and the Deaconess work. All had grown and had been strengthened by the administration of Bishop Warren.

¹ This lecture was entitled "The First Fifty Years", and is filed in the archives of the Colorado Methodist Historical Society.

When the Episcopal Residence had been established in Denver in 1884, there were eleven churches related to the Colorado Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In addition there was one organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; one Swedish; and one German-speaking congregation related to the West Deutschen Konferenz der Bischoflichen Methodisten Kirche. When the Bishop retired in 1912 the population of Denver had grown from 35,629 to over 225,000 in 1910, and the area of Denver had grown from 13.27 to 58.75 square miles. In the year 1912 the Methodist churches of Denver represented a strong denomination as there were thirty-seven churches, nine missions, three German-speaking organizations, one Swedish-speaking, one Japanese and one Italian. In addition the one organization of the South Methodist Church was still thriving. Thus the total number in 1912 was 52, and most of the newer churches owed their existence to the Bishop and his far-sighted ideas.

Indeed, it could be said in 1912 that “Denver Methodism is strong in comparison with the Methodism of other cities. Denver is twenty-sixty in population but third in percentage of Methodist membership.”¹

One of the great strengths of Denver Methodism for many years was the Denver Church Extension Society which had maintained the City Mission appointment, and which helped to organize churches in needy areas. The Presiding Elder included an evaluation of some of their work in 1912:

In all our city Missions we maintain Sunday Schools with 1400 pupils in attendance and we have a church membership of 900. Aside from the regular work carried on by these Missions, a number of them are doing important Institutional work so that the influence of our mission work is far-reaching. Judge Lindsey has said that since Epworth has been located on the East side, juvenile delinquency in that section of the city has been reduced fifty per cent, and no one will ever be able to estimate the significance of the ministry of the People’s Mission to the population at West Larimer.²

Denver as a city was growing however, and with the expansion came some population shifts, enlarging business areas, and re-location of industrial establishments. In addition there were different nationalities or religious groups which caused modification in Methodist work. Some of the evaluations, and some of the problems of the future are suggested by the Presiding Elder, especially in respect to some of the Mission projects:

Recently a complete and scientific survey has been made of a number of our Missions. This survey reveals many interesting facts. In the case of St. James we are shown very clearly what forces are encroaching upon us, such as the Catholics, the Jews, the over-churching of the section by Protestant Churches and the growth of business, thus almost closing the field against further extension. The survey shows Epworth to be an open field so far as any encroaching influences are concerned, such as Catholics, color, the duplication of Protestant churches, or business. The survey makes it very clear along what lines and into what fields we should extend our work.³

¹ Colorado Conference Journal, 1912, p. 54-55.

² Colorado Conference Journal, 1912, p. 54-55.

³ Colorado Conference Journal, 1913, p. 188.

In some instances these missions are only weak churches which are being assisted by the Denver Church Extension Society. Overland, Manchester, Milleson were once mill sections, but the mills have been closed and these territories are now sparsely settled. While in some of our Missions we seem to be getting but little returns for our labor on investment, yet in others like Barnum, People's, the Italian and Epworth Mission, most remarkable results have been secured. After three and a half years at the Italian Mission we now have a strong membership of active, enthusiastic and reliable people. Every department of the work is being well-maintained.¹

As for the churches of Denver, the University, and the Iliff School of Theology, it is seen that the greatness of the development up to 1912 is dependent both on the progress of the city at that time, and also on the force, the depth, and the dynamic personality of Bishop Henry White Warren. By 1912 the Methodist organizations had far more strength and influence in Denver than any other Protestant denomination. It is then not surprising that this strength has been maintained to this day.

¹ Ibid., p. 187.