

NAVIGATING A SEA OF RESOURCES

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SILENTLY THEY STAND

By Jennie H. Conlon

5/24/12 - 4/29/85 burial in Asbury Cametary

1966

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DeWitt Historical Society
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DEDICATED

to the memory

of

My Dad, Edward Ozmun

and to

Mrs. Mary Mackereth

PREFACE

This pamphlet is a collection of stories of the churches that now stand empty and silent after years of a passing parade of families and pastors who worshipped there from the very beginning of the settlement of our town. Only six families were in the area when the first Asbury Chapel was built.

It is also a story of Asbury Cemetery where many of the original families of the town and descendants of these families now lie under the shade of the pine trees.

These stories have been compiled from collections authored by Evelyn Field, Susan Haring, Alice Bristol, Isabel Parish and Katherine Payne. Also from newspaper clippings, minutes of meetings and from my own collection. The North Lansing history was written by Mrs. Kenneth Tarbell, and the Myers story was told me by Laura Darling and Veda Holden.

Jennie H. Conlon.

South Lansing, New York July 2, 1966.

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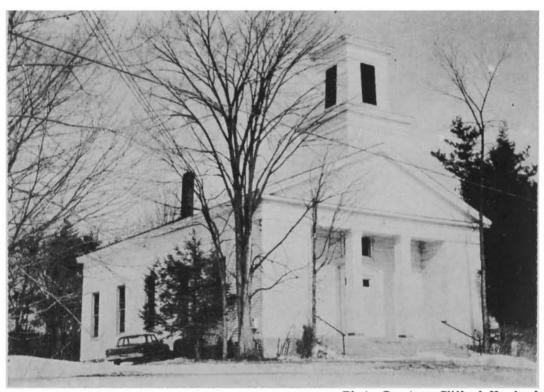


Photo Courtesy Clifford Howland

ASBURY METHODIST CHURCH

Was erected in 1844 near site of the original red church which burned January 1, 1844, after a 33-year existence. It was during October 1962 that the last regular service was held in Asbury Church, and four years later the structure was sold for conversion into living quarters. It was 93 years old before a wedding ceremony was conducted in it. Although a striking example of rural churches built during the early 19th century, efforts to finance its preservation as a historic shrine were unavailing.

ASBURY CHURCH

In 1797 a Methodist class was formed at Asbury. The names of the members were Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Brown, Mr. and Mrs. James Egbert, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Egbert, Mr. and Mrs. Abram Minier, and Mrs. William Gibbs.

Reuben Brown was appointed class leader by the pastor, Anning Owen. Brown lived one mile east of West Dryden and often on foot and accompanied by his wife and babe in arms, traveled over six miles of corduroy roads to lead his class at the Asbury Church.

The same year a log meeting house was built at Asbury. It stood at the east end of the present Asbury Cemetery and was used for school purposes through the week and Divine services were held on Sunday.

The same year Asbury became a part of the Seneca Circuit. Anning Owen was the first regularly appointed pastor of Lansing Methodism. His remains now lie with his wife in Pleasant Grove Cemetery, under a monument erected by the Wyoming Conference.

The first quarterly conference was held in a barn near whose site was approximately that of the abandoned Asbury Church.

During 1811 a red church was built near where the present church stands. The lumber was donated by William Goodwin, as told to me by Cora Mount of Etna. He was her great-grand-father. Shortly after completion of the red meetinghouse, Bishop Asbury passed through Lansing and preached in the new edifice. On Jannary 1, 1844, the church burned. When the ashes were cooled a copy of the scriptures was taken from the cornerstone where it had lain for thirty-three years. The smell of fire was not upon it.

On March 4, 1844, three-fourths of an acre of land was pur-

chased from John T. Collins and wife Cynthia; \$100 was paid for it by the trustees. The following summer the present building was erected, west of where the red church stood. At the dedication of the church, a large choir, led by Gen. Daniel Minier, furnished music for the occasion.

The building was one of the largest in the section and could seat 300 persons. It was used during the Civil War for war meetings. Judge Francis Miles Finch of Ithaca, author of the famed poem, "The Blue and the Grey," once addressed an enthusiastic meeting there.

The women of the church made a large flag for the occasion and raised it on the green in front of the church.

Feeling ran high during the Civil War and Pastor Reuben Brown prayed for the poor, the oppressed and the slaves. The chorister, an ardent Democrat, got up and left the room.

A large delegation from the Varna church, not liking their pastor's sympathy for the South, came and joined Asbury where a more militant pastor was in charge. After the war, they rejoined their former congregation.

The church was built by its members and friends, among them Ogden Drake and Elisha Field. It was said that Henry Field built the steeple. The pulpit was originally between the two front doors, and the whole interior was one large room with two little rooms at each side of the porch for wood. The pulpit was panelled like the pews and rested on two columns. The top part had a red velvet cushion on which rested the Bible and hymnbook. The pulpit stood on a dias and was reached by two steps on each side.

The altar was about the pulpit with the same railing that is there now. On the altar was a dropleaf table of cherry wood, flanked by two flat-bottom chairs, painted black with gilt figures. Some years later this table was replaced by a Mid-Victorian marble-topped one, and a black haircloth sofa and two chairs added.

The chandelier, containing eight or ten kerosene lamps with chimneys, still hangs suspended from the center of the ceiling on a pencil-thin chain which runs over an iron pulley. The chandelier is balanced by a kettle of stones on the other end of the chain to allow it to be pulled down for filling the lamps.

The broad aisles led to the back part of the church where the singers' seats were. These seats were raised a foot from the floor and finally panelled and divided into three sections. Walls and ceilings were white or light gray. The building was heated by two box stoves, whose pipes reached the entire length of the church and across the north end where they entered a large drum directly over the center and from this drum to the singers' area.

This was the appearance of the church until 1866 or '67 when a minister by the name of Warner was sent to Asbury. He was a revivalist and a widespread revival was the result of his preaching; many new members joined the church and the question of changing the interior of the church came up. He showed how ridiculous it was to place the preacher between two hot stoves while the congregation shivered under the two long pipes. Many of the older members did not approve of the change; they argued the church had been good enough for them and their fathers.

But the younger ones won out and the changes were made. The pulpit was put in the north end and the singers' seats in the south end and, instead of one seat extending clear across, the two seats were put in front of the center, one on each side. The east side was for the men singers and the pew was close to the wall. Hair oil was the fashion and as a result a row of grease ornamented the light wall.

In 1890 the church was changed again. A large room was taken off the south end for a prayer room. One chorister who attended church was Lambert Bishop. He was very old fashioned in his ways. At church he always wore a tall beaver hat, a swallow-tailed coat and a black satin stock wound tightly around his neck. He bitterly opposed the first change and said he never would come to church if it was made. He stayed home one Sunday, then came to church, shook hands all around and said, "Brethren, I made up my mind I would come to church if the devil stood in the door."

Another character was Miss Louisa Collins; she was very devout and used to pray devoutly at revival meetings. Very plain in her attire, she wore a bonnet of the coal-scuttle type which her brother Smith dubbed "the skycraper." When teased about the embroidey around the wrists of her gloves, she laboriously picked it out with a pin. She lived on the Atwater place; and born in a log cabin nearby, she lived to be more than 90 years old.

The Asbury Missionary Society existed for 50 years.

When the log-cabin school was erected at the east end of the the cemetery, it was used for Sunday services. An early member of this Asbury class was a "shouting Methodist." One day when attending a meeting in the log house, she became enthusiastically happy, bringing down her foot and through the worn floor. That must have been a type of Christianity in earnest!

At least two of the pastors lie buried in the old section of Asbury Cemetery. The Rev. Sylvester Minier and the Rev. John Kimberlain who, at his own request, was buried where the pulpit stood and where he had so often preached.

Evelyn Field wrote: "In the many years that have elapsed since the founding of the church, many changes have taken place. Roads have been laid out and farms have good buildings. The dead are buried about the old Red Church in the English manner. A grove of hickory trees on the present site and stumps of those cut down to make way for the church can still be seen under the building. I have a dim recollection of a grove of trees north of the church, a platform built high up and steps leading to it. Also some seats in front of this platform,

'[The outside of the church is much as it was when built, except for the windows, which were many-paned and had green shutters. There were two front doors, one on the men's side and one on the women's side. People went to church those days, saint and sinner alike.

"The William Goodwins, who gave a piece of land for Asbury Cemetery, were religiously inclined. One day a circuit rider passed their way and was invited by Mrs. Goodwin to stop and hold services at their home. For this she was excommunicated by the Presbyterians. Mr. Goodwin stood up at their service and said 'a church too good for my wife is not good enough for me,' and withdrew. They joined the Methodists at Asbury and sometime later, at one of the conferences, Mr. Goodwin was ordained a Methodist preacher by Bishop Asbury.

"Rev. Anning Owen, first preacher at the Asbury Methodist Church, had twenty-six preaching places each month: two church buildings in Lansing, three schoolhouses, the others in homes. He traveled 176 miles to serve 408 members, making his way over the rough roads and through pathless forests on horseback.

"In 1826 a camp meeting was held near Asbury Church and an Ithaca brother came over to show the Lansing Methodists how to conduct themselves at a religious camp meeting. Mr. Ayers, the leading man from the Ithaca church, was asked what course he would recommend.

"If I break up the meeting and prevent its being held, I would, but that is out of the question. The camp meeting will be held, and my advice is that as a church we will go in a body: all camp together and all attend one prayer meeting. That we build a prayer-meeting tent and request our colored brethren to stay at our prayer meeting, and let the other prayer meetings be held as they may; we will have all things done decently and in order. Then if the Methodists from the country (Lansing) become disorderly, we will not suffer, as the public can see the difference between the Ithaca Methodists and the ranting Methodists from the country."

"But to their mortification this very man and his brethren before the meeting closed, lay helplessly on the floor, under the power of God. By his side lay a colored brother from Ithaca in the same condition and scores of his 'ranting country Methodist brethren' calmly looking on; and behold, Saul is among the prophets too.'

"Class meeting used to follow the sermon, and I think I used to feel like Henry Ward Beecher when he called it the 'Methodist Confessional.' I remember one man who always commenced his talk in class with either one or the other of these quotations and with the levity of youth, I bet with myself which one it would be: One was 'God is love and they that dwell with Him, dwell in love.' The other, 'Your are my witness, saith the lord.' Another good brother always ended with this, 'I hope to see the inside of bright glory.' I liked the prayer meetings better and I still wonder how some of these unlettered men and women could pray so fervently."

In 1891, Asbury, which for 97 years had been associated with West Dryden, became attached to Ludlowville, with the Rev. W. O. Shephard as pastor. Asbury was associated with Ludlowville until 1909 when it was attached to North Lansing. In 1931 all the Lansing Methodist Churches were united as the Lansing Larger Parish with the Rev. Chester C. Beebe as pastor.

From Asbury Heritage prepared in 1930:

What little was painstakingly witten out in the steward's record book indicated that the severe winters took their toll in lack of church attendance and consequent lack of income from collections.

In 1873, Bro. J. R. Pendell, preacher, reported: "Have not had many children to preach to as the children have not been together to be catechized. There has not been sufficiently clement weather for the people to get to church.

In 1886, the laboriously written fourth quarterly conference report gives a list of parsonage furnishings. Among them: copper kettles, rockers, bedsteads, etc.; innocently appears "three barroom chairs." At this time the minister's salary was \$600 a year.

In 1882, Pastor J. E. Rhodes reported: "I have done my work in pulpit and community to the best of my ability, the mud through the winter, sickness in spring and vacation in summer. Conference studies in the fall have hindered my pastoral work. Still I have no complaints and think I deserve none." He once

wrote, "I have excluded no church members this year but am afraid some should be."

Edward Ozmun used to tell of hearing that serious consideration was being given to excluding a couple from the church because of a Sunday afternoon stroll during their courtship. Even visiting back and forth between relatives was banned on Sunday. He used to drowse through two-hour sermons, and he remembered counting the clear glass panes, trying to stay awake. Card playing and dancing were devices of the devil.

In 1905, the wooden moulding around the many-paned windows became shaky. Against desires of certain members who wished to retain them in order to keep an eye on their teams hitched in the shade to the north and west of the church, the present windows were purchased for \$25 each

To honor her husband, Barney Hagin, supervisor of the town and sheriff in the late 1800's, Aunt Kate Hagin chose the crown and cross, symbolizing victory over difficulties and final attainment of the "crown of glory."

The Wyckoff family, pioneers in development of the Cayuga Heights area, chose the anchor, symbol of unmovable firmness, hope and patience.

In honor of the Willis family, who later faced loss of wealth and prominence, the head of the family chose the dove, emblem of the Holy Ghost.

The Terpenings, descendants of Aretrum Collins, an oldtime prominent farmer, chose the open Bible, not as a symbol but as a reminder.

The widow of Freeman Ozmun (mother of Edward Ozmun) chose the harp to honor the man who supervised the singing at Asbury Church for many years, both congregational and choir. He used a tuning fork, as there was no organ.

Jonathan Norton, a prosperous farmer who sold local grain to the canalboat operators, was remembered by his family with the sheaf of wheat, emblem of saved souls,

Almond Ives was honored by his daughter with a simple cross that signifies both our redemption and the trinity since each

hand of the cross ends in three circles instead of the blunt ending

The Drake family had many ancestors to remember, most especially Ogden Drake who was said to have designed the church. This window contains the crown alone, symbolizing the final victory.

At the turn of the century, Mrs. Jane Teeter, organist, undertook to persuade the congregation that a new organ was needed. A committee was formed to study the catalogs, and the Ladies Aid pledged the major part of the amount needed. When the new organ arrived, the Rev. Mr. Soper and Mrs. Soper took Mrs. Teeter in their buckboard to the freight station in Ithaca, where they inspected the pedals and stops, and Mrs. Teeter played a hymn. This organ served for exactly fifty years, and then was used in the prayer room. The old organ was rebuilt and refinished, then used as the altar base.

It was during this time that an all-wool carpet was purchased to replace the extremely worn red plush one. It was used for more than fifty years. The last improvement of the century was brought about by necessity rather than by beauty.

It all started when Bill Robinson, a hired man at the girlhood home of Cecil Tarbell, wore an extremely threadbare pair of blue-serge trousers, "shining but still serving." The pews had recently been varnished but plenty of time had elapsed so it was felt they were usable. Mr. Robinson found it necessary to withdraw from the church, holding his hat over that area once covered with a good deal of material, now stuck to the pew. The whole congregation, except those with their own cushions, suffered from this condition of stickiness; the ripping, crackling noise of the worshippers severing themselves from the pews was terrible to hear, according to Mrs. Tarbell. On the following Sunday parishioners brought newspapers for their protection, and the ladies found it necessary to scrub the pews to remove the newsprint.

In 1934, a controversy developed over the very church building itself. The Rev. Mr. Beebe, then serving the newly formed Lansing Parish, offered a challenging idea: Since there were

many persons in North Lansing and Ludlowville, and few attending from the Asbury area, why not move Asbury Church some four miles across country to Uher's Corners for use as a central church for all five churches in the Lansing Larger Parish with some 1,400 members in East Genoa, North Lansing, Ludlowville, Lansingville and Myers churches. Mr. Beebe proposed to combine the five churches into one church. Through this combination the parish would be eligible to receive \$1,500 from the Methodist Conference with which it proposed to move Asbury Church at a cost of \$1,000, settle it on the new site, and equip it with electric lights and a furnace.

This plan failed when a committee of three trustees of Asbury Church, meeting with similar committees from the other four churches of the parish, flatly refused to have the old church moved from its present site, where the first church was built in 1797, only six years after the first settlers moved into the Town of Lansing. When the Asbury committee of trustees, Andrew Tarbell, Charles Terpenning and Peace Justice Edward Ozmun, continued adamant in its stand, it was suggested at a parish meeting that the central congregational plan be tried out for six months, with meetings held at the Ludlowville school. This, likewise, failed when the Asbury delegation threatened to withdraw from the parish and devote its share of parish expense to improvement of its own church through installation of electric lights and a furnace.

That the congregation of thirty-five active members had the support of hundreds of former members and friends was proven on a Saturday when many of the oldtimers returned for the Asbury Old Home Day celebration in the church. The pages of history were turned back 137 years to the organization of the first Methodist class here, and the history of the church was followed down to that day. The result was that these churches were kept open.

The first Old Home Day was held in 1926 and was sponsored by the Ladies Aid. It was the idea of Cecil Tarbell, who planned the program for the afternoon and evening sessions. Old Home Day continued to be one of the most looked-forward to occasions of the church year for residents, members and former members.

The first wedding at Asbury Church was performed in 1936. It was the wedding of Irene Bardo, daughter of George Bardo, a Lansing merchant, and Karl Dates of Groton, its mayor today.

After Easter in 1939 Asbury Church was closed Sunday mornings. Except for a few times, winter weather forced only a short service in the prayer room. This was the first time the records show the church was closed owing to a lack of support. Edward Ozmun and Mary Mackereth canvassed the neighborhood to try to obtain \$400 necessary to insure continued service. Their efforts were in vain.

The pastor's report of the Rev. Clayton Birch in 1942 states joyfully, "We are happy to report that we have had services in every church in the charge the past eight weeks." He reported that more than 200 children were reached by classes in religious education; classes were conducted in all schools in the parish, and that Sunday school was operating in every church.

Several years later, in 1943, the bell from the old Presbyterian Church was given the Methodists. The Cayuga Rock Salt Company donated the labor, and the bell was installed in the belfry of the Asbury Church.

An electric organ was purchased for \$950 and dedicated to Dorothy Blancher, organist, choir director and "halo adjuster."

In 1948, the town roadmen drew many loads of gravel to fill in the northwest corner of the church lot to make possible a drive around the church. Cayuga Rock Salt sent employees for many days' work, during which they painted the dining room and kitchen upstairs, and repaired the ceiling. It was at this time the bell was hung in the belfry. A new floor was put in so that the belfry louvers could be removed to let the bell ring out over a wider area. Mr. Nielsen of Cayuga Rock Salt worked many days raising the northwest corner of the church, which was down several inches, The furnace was installed by Howland's Red and White. The Town Community Chest purchased a lawn-mower to be used on the church lawn and in the cemetery. Mr.

and Mrs. Henry Terpenning gave a piano for the sanctuary, making possible a piano for the children's room. The Volbtecht Lumber Company made a substantial reduction on lumber which was used from time to time.

The last Old Home Day was held July 22, 1956.

In 1959 a special quarterly conference was called to order by the Rev. Mr. Torrance, Elmira District superintendent. He and the Rev. Mr. Matthews described the present condition of the three churches and discussed their possibilities. Members of the Asbury Church who were present wanted a new church but felt they needed help in shouldering the necessary burden such a project would involve. North Lansing members indicated that many of their church members would join Asbury in such an event. The Ludlowville members asked for more time to make their decision.

This meeting was held to discuss the possibility of a new church on Water Wagon Road. At this meeting the Rev. Mr. Torrance assured the members that Asbury would be maintained as a shrine by the conference and interested people. He said there are people all over the country who are interested in the origin of the churches who contribute to these things. He said, also, the churches not maintained as shrines should be dismantled for lumber.

The last service held at Asbury Church was in October 1962.

There are those who are sad at the eventual fate of Asbury Church. It has been sold to Gordon Thayer of Genoa, and bids will be taken on the stained-glass windows, the pews and cushions, altar furniture and altar rail.

ASBURY CEMETERY

One of the first settlers in Lansing was William Goodwin. He owned lot 88 and gave a piece of land for Asbury Cemetery.

The first burial was Catharine Goodwin Bloom in 1794. She was the wife of Lt. Col. Henry Bloom. Colonel Bloom was nursed back to health by an Indian called Zuba, who also is buried in Asbury under a stone marked "Zuba's Grave." In 1957 vandals broke Zuba's stone in two.

In 1856 a plot of ground was bought for \$65 from Jefferson Teeter and his wife. This brought the cemetery fence to the intersection of north and south and east and west roads. In 1905 another acre was added.

There are more than thirty soldiers buried in Asbury, some from all the wars. Among them are Lt. Col. Henry Bloom, hero of Lundy's Lane, and Gen. Daniel Minier who was in the militia. A Civil War soldier, Charles Shurger, who was a preacher, lies there. He was a sergeant in the famous 9th New York Artillery, enlisting in 1862 and serving until 1865. He later became converted and was chaplain of his post for many years. He was of the Collins-Shurger families who came to Lansing to take up land grants.

The first winter after Henry Bloom came Lansing was a bitter one which he spent living in the wigwam of an Indian, Zuba, near Cayuga Lake. When rhe pioneer was taken very ill, Zuba went into the woods and gathered herbs and medicinal roots, and then nursed him back to health. Later, when Zuba became ill and died, Bloom buried him in the first grave on the plot, built a fence around the grave, and put up as a marker a fieldstone with the words "Zuba's Grave" upon it. The fence was made of wooden pegs. It stood for many years. Later a snowball bush was planted on the grave and it grew to the size of a large tree. This grave is

very near the Bloom graves but the stone has been replaced with a marble marker, the fence taken down and the tree mostly cut off, it was reported in 1944.

As this account closes, the last burial in Asbury Cemetery was that of my beloved Dad, Edward Ozmun, on May 6, 1966. He died on May 3.

He was president of the cemetery for many years and was a member of Asbury Church most of his life. He was a firm supporter and gave generously of his talents, time and money to the church he loved and to the cemetery where he now lies. He was a descendant of early Tompkins County settlers, his great-great-grandparents, of the Ozmun and the Minier families, settling in this area in 1790.

The secretary's notes throughout the years record significant facts concerning the business aspects of the cemetery enterprise. A few sample entries suffice.

April 10, 1900—Annual meeting; two people present.

Feb. 22, 1901—James Tichenor bought a lot for \$8; nothing has been paid on it.

Sept. 1, 1902—Today the treasurer reports a balance of 9 cents; office declared vacant.

May 22, 1937—No business done; no report has been made since 1924 and no meeting held. A very poor showing for people of this community. No one seems to know the assets of the association. In the meantime, the fence is badly in need of repair, and the cemetery as a whole has grown up to weeds and grass, except as the owners of lots attend to them.

Present secretary's report:

The last few years we have met to discuss cemetery work and elect officers. For the most part these meetings are attended by five or six persons. We have to pay more per hour for work in the cemetery but the income remains about the same as it did when we could hire a man for \$1 an hour. There are very few burials. We put one half of the sale of a lot into the perpetual care fund, but we can use only the interest from that.

We hope to have the north end cleared and the tree-stump

holes filled this year. The fence had to be taken down about three years ago. Vandals have toppled several monuments. In a few years Asbury Cemetery may be an abandoned cemetery; yet because it is an incorporated cemetery, our annual report has to be made to the State. The State demands also the following: Treasurer's bond, social security, unemployment insurance, workmens compensation, disability insurance and income tax. Permission must be obtained from the State to raise rates of lots, and the State inspects the treasurer's books.

Incorporation of Asbury Cemetery Association

We, the undersignd, all being persons of full age, at least twothirds of whom are citizens of the United States and one of whom is a resident of New York State, desiring to form a cemetery corporation pursuant to article three of the membership corporation law, do hereby make, sign, acknowledge and file this certificate for such purposes as follows:

1st. The name of the proposed corporation is the Asbury Cemetery Corporation.

2nd. The cemetery of such corporation is to be located in the County af Tompkins, Town of Lansing, State of New York.

3rd. The number of directors of the corparation shall be six.

4th. The names of persons to be its directors until the first annual meeting are Andrew Tarbell and Bernard M. Hagin. The names of the persons to be directors until the second annual meeting are Harry Azure and William Field, and the names of the persons to be directors until the third annual meeting are Charles Terpenning and Arthur Collins.

The date for holding the annual meeting for such corporation shall be the first Tuesday in the month of April in each and every year at two o'clock in the afternoon.

In witness we have made, signed and acknowledged and filed this certificate in duplicate.

B. M. Hagin, Andrew Tarbell, Wm, Fields, Chas. B. Drake, Charles Terpenning, Arthur Collins, Jonathan Norton, Freeman Ozmun.

Dated this second day of January, eighteen hundred and ninety seven (1897.)

Rules and Regulations of the Asbury Cemetery Association

- 1. Annual meeting of lot owners and officers of the association to be held at the convenience of the President, Secretary and Treasurer unless otherwise specified.
- 2. Notice of such meeting shall be published in the daily paper at least four days before such meeting; annual meeting in writing or by telephone shall be given all trustees.
- 3. The officers consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- 4. The board of trustees shall be elected by lot owners and and shall number six: Two for one year, two for two years, and two for three years.
 - 5. All monies shall pass through the hands of the Treasurer.
- 6. Rules and regulations, maps and card index of all lots should be kept by the President and shall by open for inspections at all reasonable hours.
- 7. Treasurer's report shall be available for inspection by lot owners or interested persons.
- 8. The President shall hire caretaker of cemetery, the grave digger or anyone else needed to work in the cemetery.
- 6. Opening of graves shall be what the grave digger usually charges.
 - 10. No deed shall be given until a lot is fully paid for.
 - 11. Three feet is required for a grave.
 - 12. No monument is to be erected until lot is paid for.
 - 13. The grave digger to be paid by the lot owner.
- 14. The price of lots 10' x 12' will be \$50, using one half for perpetusl care.
 - 15. Burials to be limited to lot owners and Lansing residents.

LUDLOWVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

In 1822 a number of Methodists living in or near Ludlowville became unwilling to go the four miles to Lansingville to church, and decided to form a society and build a church in Ludlow-ville. There is a record of a divine service held in a log school-house in this place.

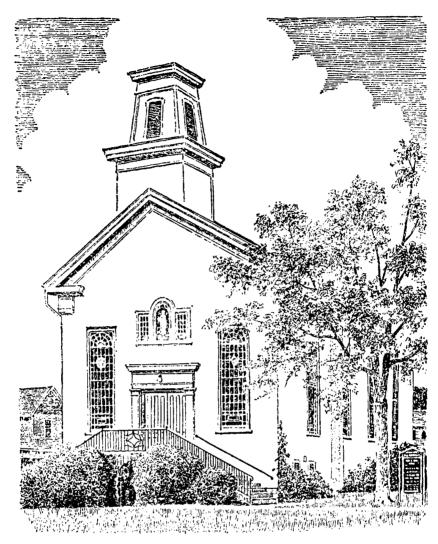
It was related that the Presbyterians held their services first in that schoolhouse and the Methodists gathered for worship after the former group had finished its services. But church members then were not as tolerant of differing beliefs as they now are and the followers of John Calvin delighted in prolonging their services while the disciples of John Wesley cooled their heels, if not their tempers, outside.

The greater part of the wealth and influence in and around Ludlowville was held by members of the Presbyterian Society while the Methodists were fewer in number and had to sacrifice to maintain their church.

They finally were able to purchase a plot of ground north of the cemetery. Among those early Methodists were Alva J. Sperry, great-great-grandfather of George Beckwith; Silas K. Newton, Richard Burgess and Rachel Alexander Tooker.

A large part of Jonah Tooker's property went into the building of this church. When the frame was raised there was no money to enclose and finish the building, and in 1824 it was sold to pay debts already incurred, to the great joy of the Presbyterians who built their new church that year.

The landlord, John Griswold, firmly an Episcopalian, became so disgusted with their demonstrations that he bid the church off for a noimnal sum, then others with him contributed funds and materials, the church was finally finished and presented to the Methodists. Among those who helped in the good work



LUDLOWVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

During 1822 Methodists living in the vicinity of Ludlowville decided to form a society and erect a church. A lot was purchased north of the cemetery and a building started; when funds ran out it was sold to John Griswold, an Episcopalian, who assembled a group that completed the church and gave it to the society. With the last service held in October 1962, church and parsonage have since been sold for private occupancy.

were Daniel Clark, Obijah Miller, Esq., and Calvin and Nathan Barr. The church was dedicated February 9, 1825, by the presiding elder, John Dempster. It was called Zion's Chapel from the 16th verse of the 102nd Psalm, "For the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in all his glory."

John Dempster was a peddler in his early days. While attending a camp meeting, he was the only man converted. He was the founder of theological schools at Boston and Evaston, Ill.

In 1829 Oneida Conference was formed from Genesee Conference and Ludlowville Methodist Society was organized next year.

In July 1859, during a severe thunderstorm that passed over the village, lightning struck the steeple and spread throughout the entire chapel. It split the belfry, passed the rafter plates and continued down the posts to the floor. On its way the bolt demolished the desk, tore off wainscoating broke out all the glass, tore off plaster on the ceiling, split the sills of the chapel, tore up the platform in front, but did not set the church on fire. It was immediately repaired by Stephen A. Baker, who owned a carriage shop.

During 1867-68 the Rev. Hiram Gee was appointed to Ludlowville charge.

An elderly lady, Mrs. Harriett Terry Mead, who was born in the village in 1837, told an amusing story of the church. She said all the young people sat in the back seats, as they always have. The Rev. Mr. Gee had a habit of drawing in his breath at the end of a sentence with a long drawn-out errrrr. This particular evening, during worship, he prayed: "O Lord, have mercy on us poor sinerrrrrs with one foot errrrr in the grave rrrrr." The young folks in the back seats spoiled the solemnity of the occasion with their irreverent, if smothered laughter.

It was during Hiram Gee's pastorate that Zion's Chapel was moved to the present church site, the trustees having succeeded in purchasing for \$600 a plot of ground from a Mr. Corman, upon which was located a large, old house. This house was used as a parsonage until 1900 when the present house was built and the old one moved to the lower street. It was later occupied by Ray

Lewis. There was just enough space to set the church between the parsonage and the next lot on which were located three houses. Alva Sperry obtained the lot and moved the houses to other locations.

Mortimer Bristol, cabinetmaker and undertaker, and his sonin-law, Solomon Hewitt, did the work of moving the church and afterward enlarged and repaired the building. At the close of the year it was finished, then dedicated by the Rev. Beneni Ives, son of Almon Ives, who kept a store in South Lansing.

The Rev. Mr. Ives was a great speaker, and whenever a Methodist Church wanted to raise money for any purpose, they called on him. He dedicated 2,500 churches and raised \$12,000,000 for church enterprises He was converted in 1842 and spent two-thirds of a century in the Central New York Conference. He was one of the delegates who organized the Republican Party in this state. Aged 90, he died in 1912, in Auburn Hospital after an operation.

In 1894 DeWitt Myers was pastor, and it was during the next two years that the church was remodeled. The old plaster ceiling was covered with a tongue-and-grove ceiling. The gallery was enclosed with wooden panels and the back of the church under the gallery was closed off with three sets of double doors to make a prayer room. At this time the small-paned glass windows were replaced by colored-glass windows. They were inscribed, on the right side: Alva J. Sperry and Polly Sperry, William and Margaret Clark, Samuel and Sylvia Morey, Lend a Hand Society. On the left side: Dr. D. T. and Jane Barr, Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Pierson, Adelia O. Moe, Phil and Nellie Mead. Two of the windows were given by D. F. Humphreys.

From October 1896 to January 1900, A. J. Funnell was pastor in charge of Asbury and Ludlowville. He resigned before he finished his last year.

On February 26, 1901, the Thursday evening class meetings at Ludlowville were discontinued. During the Rev. Mr. Thomas' stay, the parsonage was completed. Charles Adams and his family were the first to occupy it. They stayed a year.

From October 1904 to October 1909, Martin Soper was pastor and it was he who organized a Sunday School in the basement of a house in Myers and later helped build Myers Chapel.

In 1909 the charge was changed from Ludlowville and Asbury to Ludlowville and Lansingville, Asbury with North Lansing.

The Rev. Kenneth Stewart served this charge from 1926 to October 1, 1930. In October 1930 Chester C. Beebe was appointed to the Ludlowville and Lansigville charge. In 1931 he organized the Lansing Larger Parish consisting of six churches: Ludlowville, Lansingville, North Lansing, Myers, Asbury and East Genoa. Mrs. Mamie Whatley was assistant pastor until 1933 and then Edward Howe took her place.

In 1934 Messrs. Beebe and Howe modernized the parsonage by installing an electric pump and bathroom. They took out the the partition between the two front rooms on the first floor and laid a hardwood floor.

In 1936 Howard S. Bacon was assigned to the parish, with his daughter, Miss Katherine Bacon, as his assistant. The church building was raised and a basement made under it for a kitchen and diningroom. An oil-burning furnace and an air-conditioning system were installed. The church proper was given a new floor, the overhead and sidewalls were finished with celotex; the gallery was enclosed for a Sunday School room, and the wood trim painted white. Two large windows on either side of the entrance still contained the original small-paned glass windows with green blinds, but these were replaced with beautiful cross-and crown design windows. The one on the left was given by the family of Charles D. and Claribel Howell. The one at the right was given by Minnie L. Clark in memory of Paulina Drake.

The reading desk was made and presented to the church by Oliver Holden. Dr. Philip Rossiter and Mrs. Rossiter presented the runner in the central aisle. The altar rug and the American flag were given by the late Helen Rasbeck; the altar lights, by Mr. and Mrs. H. S. Bacon; the window in the gallery, by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph McGill, and the communion table and cross, by Miss Alice Bristol.

During the time the church was closed, services were held in the other churches in turn, at Myers, Asbury, Lansingville and the old Presbyterian Church in Ludlowville.

The last service was held in the old church March 20, 1938, and the first in the remodeled church on August 21, 1938. District Superintendent Dr. Samuel Houghton preached the sermon on August 24; a victory banquet was held in the Assembly Hall, as the basement was christened. On August 28 the first Old Home Day was held with games for the children, a parade and an exhibit of antiques in the old Presbyterian Church.

The cost of remodeling, repairing and beautifying the church was \$5,200. The money was raised by subscription except \$2,500, for which a mortgage was placed on the church property to become due in seven years. However, it was paid off in six years and the mortgage was burned April 16, 1944, in the presence of the congregation and the Rev. Howard Bacon.

The Rev. Clayton Birch was in charge of the parish during the years between 1939 and 1944.

The last service was held during October 1962.

Church and parsonage were sold to Carlton Kintz.

NORTH LANSING CHURCH

The North Lansing Society was founded under the Rev. Sylvester Minier.

About 1850 the people of North Lansing community met for worship in the homes, then organized to build a church. Elijah Smith and his wife Esther provided the land from their property for \$25 for a place to worship, but when it ceased to be used for that purpose for a period of one year the land was to revert to the property from which it came.

The church was completed and dedicated as a Methodist Episcopal Church in 1851. This was very displeasing to the Baptist members, so they withdrew and built a church of their own, the old Alcona in North Lansing.

About 1900 the small-paned glass windows were changed to colored-glass ones donated by the families in the neighborhood. There were eight windows remaining, after two were broken. These were donated by Roswell Beardsley, Egbert Williams, Calvin DeCamp, Sam and Dana Singer, the Rev. Mr. Thomas, Mary Small, Daniel DeCamp and Abram Tarbell.

The 100th Anniversary was celebrated in 1951 with a dinner, speakers and an enormous crowd.

The problems of the church in modern times was lack of water and lavatory facilities. Many were driving to other churches to worship.

The parsonage was purchased from Sally Ann Grees in 1851; it is where the presiding minister lived. He preached from 1891 through 1909 in East Genoa, Lansingville and then Asbury was added to his charge. This continued until Genoa withdrew. The Rev. Mr. Beebee was pastor from 1932 to 1936. He founded the Lansing Larger Parish which included Ludlowville; he lived in the parsonage there.

which included Ludlowville. At that time the minister lived in the Ludlowville parsonage.

Services were held in the North Lansing Church until the second year of the Rev. Robert Matthews' pastorate.

The parsonage was sold and today belongs to Mr and Mrs. William S. Browning.

MYERS METHODIST CHURCH

The Myers Church was built in 1907 by Edwin Howland and others who helped him. The Rev. Merritt Soper was the first pastor.

The structure seated eighty worshippers and had a large basement where the ladies were noted for their church suppers. Some of whom were the Mesdames Burling, Warner, Bower and Worsell. People came to these suppers from miles around, many being turned away on occasion. These suppers helped pay church expenses.

The land was given by Dr. Will Barr; if not used for church purposes for two years it was to revert to the owner of the original land. It was purchased by Clayton Bradley, but the church remains unsold.

recent years.

Services were held in houses on Myers Hill until the church was built. Regular, well-attended services were held until 1933 and occasionally after that. The last record of a service there is that of June 26, 1946, with the Rev. Mr. Holmes preaching. No repairs have been made on the building for some years.

LANSING METHODISM

From the journal of the circuit rider William Colbert, who introduced the Methodist Movement in Lansing, comes the following dated November 21, 1793:

Very muddy ride to Wm. Winters, met a class.

Very wet and dirty ride to Samuel Weyburns' where I preached.

Very disagreeable ride through the bushes to Dyer Smiths. Our friend Smith, his wife, a brother and three children live in a little log pen, covered with split pieces of wood. I found two people who came to the meeting, a man and his wife by the name of Buck. In this place I enjoyed myself very well. I would rather be in a pen, clean and decent, than in a palace with the filthy. I rode to Richard Goodmans on Cayuga Lake—these are clean people.

In 1794 Miss Rachael Alexander moved here from Pennsylvania. Prior to this she had joined a Methodist Society, been baptised and received by the Rev. Anning Owen. Thus she was the first lay member of the Methodist Church in Lansing of whom there is a record.

Miss Alexander lived a few miles west of Lansingville. At the time there were no roads but an Indian path had been blazed on the east shore of Cayuga Lake. Between this and the Alexander home was a dense forest. One evening the family was startled by a cry of alarm, evidently coming from the woods. The call for help was answered by her father and by constant calling the lost traveler was guided to the cabin door. The daughter was filled with astonishment and delight when she beheld Brother Anning Owen. In this first round of his circuit he had lost the trail and a heavenly providence directed him to old friends. He

held regular services in their homes and thus became the first appointed pastor of Lansing Methodism.

Rachel Alexander married Jonah Tooker and became the mother of the Rev. Manley Tooker, the famous Lansing itinerant. Later her house was located high on a hill above Ludlow-ville, known as Fiddler's Green, and was another regular meeting place for the Methodist. In their home was a room called "The Preacher's Room." It was set aside for use of these traveling ministers and the house door was left unlocked so that they might enter anytime of night. A stable was reserved for their horses. This house is now owned by George Beckwith.

Rachel Alexander's loyalty as a Methodist is shown by the following incident:

Having heard that on a certain Sunday there was to be a Methodist preaching in the little settlement of Ithaca, she persuaded eighteen of her friends to set out with her in a flatboat. When they finally reached the corner of the lake it was with great difficulty that they pushed their way through the thick bushes. The preacher, the Rev. Valentine Cook, had just finished his sermon but after a half-hour's rest he preached again for the benefit of the newcomers.

This goodly woman lived with her son for many years but died at the home of a daughter in Ithaca. At her home, one mile west of Lansingville, was organized a Methodist Church.

Before this, a class was organized in Asbury with Reuben Brown as leader. He lived one and one-fourth miles east of West Dryden Corners.

A third class was formed at White Settlement, a clearing one-half mile east of Lansingville, then known as Teetertown. These three classes were united and in 1797 the first quarterly conference was held in a barn which stood where now the old part of Asbury Cemetery is located. At White Settlement a log church was built in 1797 but burned to the ground four years later. A frame church 34'x36' was erected on this site the following year. In 1833 the old building was bought by J. W. Hamilton and used for a barn. A brick church was built in Lansingville in 1833,

the first one west of Albany, but it, too, was destroyed by fire. It was at the red meeting house at Asbury that Bishop Asbury preached while passing through Lansing.

From these beginnings the religious movement in Lansing spread until it was one of the most spiritually prosperous of all Methodist communities in the state. It was one Methodist parish comprised of five churches: Lansingville, Ludlowville, Myers, Asbury, North Lansing and reaching into Cayuga County to include East Genoa. Today all are combined as one in the new Lansing Methodist Church.