

Francis Asbury
IN
North Carolina

with
Introductory Notes
by

GRADY L. E. CARROLL

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FRANCIS ASBURY
in
NORTH CAROLINA

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Introductory Notes
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GRADY L. E. CARROLL

Francis Asbury
IN
North Carolina

The North Carolina Portions
of
The Journal of Francis Asbury

(VOLUMES I AND II OF CLARK EDITION)

with
Introductory Notes
by

GRADY L. E. CARROLL

“I am willing to travel and preach as long as I live; and I hope
I shall not live long after I am unable to travel.”

Journal—March 17, 1782

“Live or die, I must ride.”

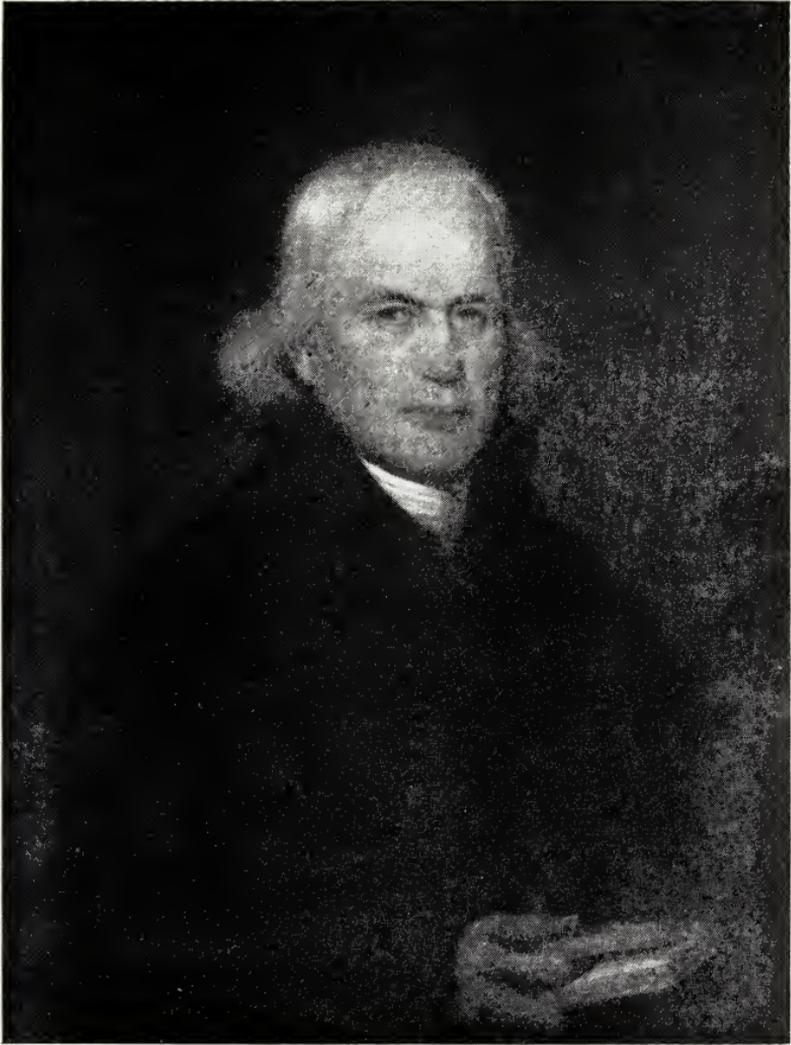
Journal—March 29, 1797

“. . . it is hard to civilize, methodize, and spiritualize; sin, Satan,
flesh, and hell are against us.”

Journal—March 18, 1792

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FRANCIS ASBURY

[.Etat. circa 63]

From the Portrait Painted by Bruff in 1808



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This book is dedicated to
All North Carolina Methodists,
Spiritual Sons and Daughters of
Bishop Francis Asbury

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Introduction

FRANCIS ASBURY, first and greatest bishop of American Methodism, was born on August 20/21, 1745, in Handsworth, near Birmingham, England. He came to the New World for missionary endeavor in 1771. For the next nearly half century, Dr. John O. Gross summarizes, he traveled "270,000 miles," preached "16,425 sermons," "presided over 224 conferences," "ordained 4,000 preachers"¹ and helped Methodism outstrip the growth of the population five to one. Francis Asbury, "The Prophet of the Long Road"—to use Dr. E. S. Tipple's phrase—traveled some 6,000 miles annually, ever extending boundaries of his labors, until they reached from the province of Maine to Georgia and westward to Ohio. He was one of the best known men of his day and one of the most often seen. His almost ceaseless, though not haphazard, activity earned him the epithet of "Bishop of North America" by one church historian. He kept a chronicle of his lengthy American ministry in a remarkable *Journal* which was published in installments during his lifetime. After generations of neglect, the *Journal* has been fully edited and made available.

Brief examination of the *Journal* (E. T. Clark edition)² reveals that Francis Asbury first came to the then colony of North Carolina in 1780 and last passed through the state in his final year, 1816. The eminent ecclesiastical statesman visited the state seventy-two times, but left no account of his final visit. Tipple in his biography, *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road* (162)³ could count only sixty-three such visits.

The primary purpose has been to present the story of Francis Asbury's missionary endeavor in North Carolina in one volume, in the belief that his distinctive contribu-

¹ *The Beginnings of Methodism*, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1961, 58.

² Epworth Press, London, and Abingdon Press, Nashville, Vols. I and II, 1958.

³ Methodist Book Concern, Cincinnati and New York, 1916.

tion to the growth and spread of the Methodist movement at first, and then the newly organized "Methodist Episcopal Church in America" (original name) in the state, has not received its rightful share of attention.

The seventy-one North Carolina portions of the *Journal* have been assembled, with their accompanying footnotes. I have retained the Clark annotations with as few changes as possible. Alterations have been renumbering footnotes, by necessity; taking footnotes indicating counties in which Asbury was traveling and inserting this information in Asbury's accounts, in parentheses, which he used sparingly; and rearrangement of some bibliographical items.

Through my introductory notes, I have attempted to provide some semblance of a framework on the accounts of visits, seeking thereby to provide unity, clarity and perspective. The notes include: dates of Asbury's entry and departure, with exception of several conjectured dates; his age on each visit; general direction of itineraries, although no effort has been made to indicate length or starting point of itineraries to and through the state (notes indicate only border states from which he came and to which he went); traveling companion(s); lengthiest and briefest visits of various decades, plus frequency of multiple visits in one-year periods and milestones and unusual events in his career. Some notes on North Carolina history have been provided, with some on Asbury's outstanding contemporaries.

As to bibliographical items used in my introductory notes, I have kept the citations independent of those used in the Clark edition of the *Journal*, in the interest of simplicity and clarity.

A better understanding of Asbury's missionary endeavors may be gained from a brief backward glance at geographical, political, religious and educational aspects of the state.

North Carolina is a South Atlantic state, with a total land and water area of 52,712 square miles. Consisting of one hundred counties, its extreme length from east to west is 503 miles; its greatest breadth from north to south is 187 miles; its average breadth from north to south is 100

miles. It is divided into three geographical regions: mountain, Piedmont and coastal. The Great Smoky Mountains and Blue Ridge are part of the Appalachian system reaching into the state. Mt. Mitchell, 6,684 feet above sea level, is the highest mountain in the eastern United States. The state has six major rivers: Roanoke, Tar, Neuse, Cape Fear, Yadkin and Catawba. It has two major sounds, Pamlico and Albemarle, and several smaller sounds, Currituck, Core, Bogue and Roanoke. The average wind direction in the state is from the southwest; moderate to warm temperatures prevail over the state most of the time. No place in the state has extreme temperatures, high or low, for very long.⁴

When Francis Asbury arrived in 1780 for his initial visit, North Carolina, with her sister colonies, was in the midst of political and military struggles. North Carolinians had drawn up the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence on May 20, 1775 and the Halifax Resolves, "first official state action for independence," on April 12, 1776—dates of such significance in its history that they have been placed on the state flag. The Battle of Moore's Creek Bridge had occurred on February 27, 1776; the first State Constitution had been adopted in 1776; Richard Caswell (1729-1789) had been elected the first governor of the independent state of North Carolina in 1776. With signing of the Treaty of Ghent in 1783, which made North Carolina an independent state, settlers were free to continue westward movement. By 1800, every section of North Carolina had white settlers except the Indian country in the southwest corner.⁵

The achievement of political independence and continued growth of population were followed by the formation of still other counties. At the time of Asbury's arrival, the colony consisted of some forty-seven counties, fewer

⁴ Lemert, B. F. and Harrelson, M. L., *North Carolina Geography*, Harlow Publishing Company, Oklahoma City, 1958 (2, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16).

⁵ Newsome, Albert Ray, and Lefler, Hugh T., *The Growth of North Carolina*, Yonkers-On-Hudson, New York, World Book Company, 1947, 138-142; 157-158.

than half its present number.⁶ Some fifteen new counties were formed between 1780 and 1816, the thirty-six years of his association with the state.⁷

The estimated population of the colony and early years of statehood, prior to the first official United States Census in 1790, provided in the *North Carolina Manual, 1955*, (35) was 4,000 in 1675; 5,000 in 1701; 7,000 in 1707; 11,000 in 1715; 35,000 in 1729; 100,000 in 1752; 200,000 in 1765; 250,000 in 1771 and 350,000 in 1786.⁸

As to religion, several denominations had already been established in the state prior to Asbury's arrival. The Anglican Church had been established by law in the early eighteenth century.⁹ The "dissenting sects" already established included: Baptists (several branches), Lutherans, Moravians, Presbyterians, German Reformed, and Quakers. Asbury had been preceded by George Whitefield (pronounced Whitfield), foremost evangelist of the English-speaking world of his day, and Joseph Pilmoor (pronounced Pilmore), official Wesley itinerant to the New World, as himself, in 1772. The story of their coming has been related in Louise Stahl's *Lest We Forget: Sketches of Some Makers of Early Methodism in North Carolina* and elsewhere. The Methodists were the last Protestant sect to appear in the colony, in the royal colony period (1729-1775).¹⁰

In Asbury's lifetime, educational opportunities in the state were limited. Travelers to the state were aware of the

⁶ Anson, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Burke, Camden, Carteret, Caswell, Chatham, Chowan, Craven, Cumberland, Currituck, Duplin, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gates, Granville, Guilford, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Johnston, Jones, Lincoln, Martin, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nash, New Hanover, Northampton, Onslow, Orange, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Randolph, Richmond, Rowan, Rutherford, Surry, Tyrrell, Wake, Warren, Wayne and Wilkes. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 451, 452.)

⁷ Ashe (1799), Buncombe (1797), Cabarrus (1792), Columbus (1808), Greene (1799), Haywood (1808), Iredell (1788), Lenoir (1791), Moore (1784), Person (1792), Robeson (1786), Rockingham (1785), Sampson (1784), Stokes (1789), and Washington (1799). (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 451, 452.)

⁸ Winston Printing Company, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, n.d.

⁹ See Hugh T. Lefler, *North Carolina: History, Geography, Government*, p. 90 for discussion of the Grand Model for North Carolina and the Society of Friends' opposition to it in the first and second decades of the 18th century. The growth and spread of the work of Presbyterians, Baptists, Moravians, Lutherans and others in the state is discussed in the same volume on page 90.

¹⁰ Blackwell P. Robinson, ed. *The North Carolina Guide*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1955, 66, 67.

illiteracy of the people. There were few academies before 1776. Many academies were set up after 1776—more than forty before 1800. These were chartered by the General Assembly and governed by a local board of trustees. By 1825, the legislature had given permission for 127 academies. But not all were built. Counties having the largest number were Edgecombe, Robeson, Wake, Anson, Cumberland, Franklin, Orange and Granville. There were some old field or subscription schools. Some families hired tutors; wealthy men sent their sons to Northern colleges and universities. Not until 1839 was the state's first public school law passed.¹¹

The University of North Carolina was chartered in 1789 and opened to students in 1795. This, the only college or university in the state until 1830, enrolled only men.¹² As late as 1840, one of every four white men and women and practically all Negroes, could not read and write. The state had one of the highest rates of illiteracy of any in the Union.¹³ Asbury was not long in commenting on the ignorance of the people, particularly ignorance of and opposition to religion. The stories of the leadership of Archibald D. Murphey (1777-1832) "the father of public education"; David L. Swain (1801-1868) president of the University of North Carolina; Calvin H. Wiley (1819-1887) first Superintendent of Common Schools; Mrs. Cornelia Phillips Spencer (1825-1908) civic leader; Leonidas L. Polk (1837-1892) editor and educational leader; Walter Hines Page (1855-1918) editor and diplomat; James B. Duke (1856-1925) businessman; Charles B. Aycock (1859-1912) "educational governor" and Charles Duncan McIver (1860-1906) educator, belong to later chapters of North Carolina history. The substantial development of education as a

¹¹ Lefler, Hugh T., *North Carolina: History, Geography, Government*, 190, 191, 220, 221.

¹² As to North Carolina's first college, Gordon P. Robinson in *The North Carolina Guide*, (68) says: "The only college in North Carolina prior to the founding of the State University was Queen's College at Charlotte, which operated for a few years between 1771 and 1780. This "college" was authorized to grant degrees, and it was to be financed by a "duty of six pence per gallon on all rum brought into and disposed of in Mecklenburg County for ten years following the passage of the Act."

¹³ Lefler, Hugh T., *op. cit.*, 220.

powerful force came after Asbury passed from the scene.

Francis Asbury's missionary task in North Carolina was a combination of several activities. Throughout his forty-five years in America, he thought of himself as a missionary, stated Dr. John O. Gross in *The Beginnings of American Methodism* (p. 99). The "greatest of the circuit riders," termed thus by Elmer T. Clark, preached the Gospel; convened the Conferences, after election to the episcopacy at the famed Christmas Conference in Baltimore in December, 1784; met Societies and Classes and held Quarterly Conferences; recruited and ordained men to offices of deacon and elder; baptized converts to Christianity; observed Love Feasts; Sacraments and Night Watches; procured funds for church buildings and education institutions; assisted in launching the Arminian Magazine; corresponded with subordinates, continued his self-education, and collected funds for "the suffering ministry" (Mite Subscription). It seems safe to assert that this foremost religious leader was easily one of the busiest men of his day. The order of enumeration of his various tasks above, following preaching, does not necessarily indicate the order of descending value to Asbury.

Tipple in *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road* (211) stated that the most frequently found entry in the *Journal* was "I preached." This fact led him to assert that preaching was Asbury's "master passion." The evangelist made specific references to preaching once or several times on every visit, with exceptions of the third and fifty-second visits. As has been written of John Wesley, preaching was Asbury's "supreme instrument."

Congregations ranged from very small numbers of persons to fifteen hundred once in Wilmington. At the conference in Raleigh in 1811, some two thousand were present. Very frequently, congregations consisted of whites and Negroes. ("Africans," "poor Africans," "blacks," "people of colour" and "coloured people" were terms referring to Negroes he used most commonly.) Often he noted members of other denominations in the congregations.

Usually, sufficient advance notice of his schedule was given, permitting congregations to assemble. More than

once, however, he noted this was not done, with ensuing poor attendance. On the thirty-fourth visit, when he missed his appointments, two Presbyterians, Hall and Bowman, assisted in filling them for him. Warming up to his subject slowly, the evangelist customarily spoke for one hour, occasionally two. He preached all hours of the day, from eight o'clock onward, often by candlelight at night. Near the close of his career, with health failing, he had to be carried into church to preach (sixty-sixth visit). He preached while seated in his "little Jersey wagon, screened by the drawn curtain" on the sixty-ninth visit. The limited number of Sabbaths during which he did not preach he termed "dumb Sabbaths." (*Journal*, I, 397.)

Apparently no complete Asbury sermon exists, but we have been provided with outlines of sermons for several occasions. Portions of Scripture from which Asbury preached were given in other instances. On the sixty-eighth visit, he wrote: "I am divinely impressed with a charge to preach sanctification in every sermon." It is noteworthy that he preached more often from Hebrews than from any other book while in the state. A sermon index has been prepared at the close of the volume. Consideration of his theology and stature as a preacher is beyond our scope here.

Asbury "lifted up the trumpet of the Lord" in a great variety of places: "at Jones's barn," "in a tavern," "by the way," "at a barren place," "at the Tabernacle," "at the Globe," "at the widow Hardy's," "at brother Watts'," "at Sullivans'," "at brother Clayton's," "in the academy," "at the meeting house," "in our enlarged house," "at Jackson's meeting house," "at Riggin's chapel," "in the new neat chapel," "at Toole's meeting house," "at Williams's chapel," "at Connell's new church," "underneath the courthouse," "at New-begun church," "in sister Tenkard's elegant school-room," "at Edward Hall's large dining room," "at Killian's," "in William Ruffin's large tavern room," "in the academy," "the Presbyterian meeting house" and "at the house of the widow Merideth." In latter years, he was able to note somewhat more regular preaching in chapels and churches.

He quickly took up the practice of preaching in county courthouses. He specifically indicated that he spoke in these, some several times: Anson, Beaufort, Buncombe, Camden, Chowan, Edgecombe, Gates, Hertford, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Sampson and Winfield (no longer a county). More than once a court session prevented his preaching or reduced his congregations. He visited still other county seats, without preaching in the courthouses.

As an adjunct to his preaching the Gospel, Asbury presided at Quarterly Meetings, met the Societies and Classes and encouraged Bible reading and study. As late as 1814, he indicated lecturing to a class at night. He showed strong interest in prayer meetings on the sixty-fourth visit.

Asbury noted convening some thirteen Conferences in the state from 1785 onward. The first of these, held at Green Hill's home near Louisburg, was the historic First Annual Conference of the newly-organized Methodist Episcopal Church in America.¹⁴ At the onset, there were four circuits in North Carolina. Others were subsequently carved out of the frontiers as demands grew. He constantly and boldly updated the organization of the church, and indicated needs for certain localities to acquire stationed preachers. During his lifetime, the state was divided into the Virginia and South Carolina Conferences, with the present North Carolina and Western North Carolina Conferences coming into existence afterwards.

On January 7, 1814, on learning of the sailing of Bishop Coke and other missionaries to Ceylon, Asbury wrote in his *Journal*, sounding an ecumenical note of the growth and spread of Methodism, thus: "The British Society is poor as ourselves, it would appear: this is a good sign. In less than one hundred years, Methodism has spread over

¹⁴ Green Hill's (April, 1785); Salisbury (February, 1786); Forsythe County (April, 1789); Forsythe County (June, 1790); near Salisbury (April, 1791); Green Hill's (January, 1792); Green Hill's (December, 1792); Green Hill's (December, 1793); Dromgoole's (March, 1803); Granville County (March, 1805); Tarboro (February, 1809); Raleigh (February, 1811); and in "sister Tenkard's elegant schoolroom in (February, 1813). (*Journal*) The Green Hill house still stands and is a private residence. In recent years, it has been officially designated as one of ten Methodist shrines.

three quarters of the globe; and it is now about to carry the Gospel of salvation into Asia. Amen.”

Asbury was always alert for recruits to the ministry. He himself had begun his work as a local preacher under John Wesley in England.¹⁵ The numbers of men who joined the ranks during his career attest to his efforts in this area. When he arrived in the colonies, there were some dozen lay preachers; when he died, there were some 700 preachers. However, not until 1790, five years following the formation of the new church, did he record his first ordination of an elder in the state. He recorded some thirty specific names of candidates he ordained in the state; others were ordained in groups, with no specific names given. In some instances, the order of ordination, as deacon or elder, was not designated. He stated on the forty-first visit that John Perry, formerly a Baptist, became a preacher and deacon. A roster of these ordinations has been provided at the end of the volume.

He noted frequent baptisms of adult and children converts to the faith, some in winter months. In early years of visits, the mode of baptism was controversial in the state and in Virginia.

Asbury observed the Love Feast in the state several times in early years especially. Some were held in conjunction with conferences. He observed it regularly elsewhere as well, generally less frequently in later years. The decline of its observance in the last decade of visits seemingly foreshadowed its decline in the church at large as a distinctive aspect of early Methodist worship. His references contained minimum elaboration as to elements used, or distinctive features of observances. A Watch-Night service was observed on the initial visit.

Asbury devoted attention to raising funds for schools and church buildings in the state. On the initial visit, he indicated contributions taken for a school. He indicated interest in building a school for children of the “Africans,” but this ambition seems to have gone unfulfilled. His efforts to col-

¹⁵ John O. Gross, *The Beginnings of American Methodism*, 136.

lect funds for churches were apparently limited at first, but increased later. (He indicated that several collections were made for him in congregations.)

In the present Forsythe County, he helped launch the *Arminian Magazine* in 1789, which ran for two years and then went out of existence, revived in 1818 and continues with changes to the present. In February, 1813, he worked on a three-hundred page reprint of Richard Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*. For these and a number of other pioneering efforts in publications, E. T. Clark asserted that he almost deserved the title of "American Publisher Number One." (Intro., *Journal*.)

Asbury never ceased pressing forward his self-education from the saddlebag. Unlike St. Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesley, and other prominent leaders in Church history, Francis Asbury was not a highly educated man at the onset of his career. He had had limited formal education in England. He sought cultural and spiritual enrichment at every hand. The Bible was always foremost, typified by a comment in 1790: "I am making close application of my Bible." The reader will come upon Asbury taking up a great variety of literary works: from the beginning, characteristically: "began reading Watt's first volume of Sermons . . ." (1780); "I have read two volumes of Sermons written by Mr. Knox . . ." (1783); "Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*" (1784); ". . . I was wonderfully entertained with a late publication by Silas Mercer, a Baptist preacher, in which he anathematized the whole race of kings from Saul to George III." (1784); "I have read D's *Study of Divinity* (1788)"; "an account of the wonderful revolution in France" (1790); "Two volumes of Gordon's *American Revolution*, containing about one thousand pages" (1792); Ostervald's *Christian Theology* (1801); *Jewish Antiquities* (1806); Mungo Park's *Travels in Africa* (1806); Wesley's *Sermons*, First volume (1807). In 1786, he "Read our Form of Discipline, in manuscript, which brother (John) Dickins has been preparing for the press." Often he read without specifying the literary work.

As with evangelist George Whitefield, he established and adhered to the Wesleyan habit of rising early, usually at four, often five, for study, meditation and prayers. A distinct devotional quality prevades early portions of his *Journal*, somewhat less marked in later years.

Asbury constantly corresponded with colleagues in his jurisdiction. Virtually a one-man Committee of Correspondence for the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, he commented on this responsibility on January 21, 1796 in the *Journal*: "I may say of letters, as it was said of silver in the days of Solomon, 'I make no account of that:' I suppose I must write nearly a thousand in a year." Some twenty letters penned on these visits have been preserved in Dr. J. Manning Potts' collection. *Methodist History*, Vol. II, No. 3, April, 1964 contained an unpublished letter written by the bishop at New River, North Carolina and dated January 25, 1814. (Asbury left no account of his being in the state at that time. There is a gap in the *Journal* from January 23 to February 20, 1814.) The October, 1962 issue of the same periodical contained two other unpublished letters by Asbury, written in November, 1808 and February, 1813. The earliest in the Potts' collection was to John Wesley in 1784; the last one was written in 1814. On his initial visit, he received a letter from John Wesley in which he was requested to act as general assistant in America.

Let us turn from consideration of Asbury's missionary endeavors to Asbury the man, his health, his traveling companions, his mode of travel and his friendships in the state.

For posterity, Asbury left only scant writings about himself as a man. Fortunately, his contemporaries have given us thumb-nail descriptions of his appearance. Henry Boehm, a traveling companion and Joshua Marsden, a member of the British Conference, both left material in the bishop's later years for a portrait. The bishop was five feet, nine inches tall, weighed one hundred and fifty-one pounds, had rugged features, intelligent countenance, a prominent nose, large mouth, a native dignity and commanding hearing born to lead. He came to have a venerable appearance, with

long locks, a cast of severity and seriousness. For years, he wore gray clothes, but in latter years wore dark or drab frock coat buttoned up to the neck and a straight collar. He wore breeches, or small clothing, with leggings and sometimes shoe buckles. He also wore a broad brimmed hat with an uncommon low crown. He was a picture of plainness and simplicity.¹⁶ . . . In recent years, it has been discovered that he liked light blue.

Augustus Lukeman's statue of him erected some forty years ago in the nation's capital adheres rather closely to this description.

A fuller description of his character must await another's hand.

Interestingly, Asbury referred to himself in 1798 as a "poor, feeble man." Four years later, he used the phrase "these dry bones." Still later he spoke of himself as a "poor, benighted traveller," "the strange-looking old man," "an old man of seventy, deeply wounded in the limbs, breast, and lungs," "the old clay house," "a sick man," "a sick cripple," "poor me," and "poor stranger." He referred to himself as bishop several times in later years. Dr. Bushnell during the twenty-sixth visit spoke of him as "a gentleman and Christian"; conversely, on the same visit, he was referred to as "a despot."

Asbury was the possessor of a strong constitution, to have endured with Spartan-like spirit all that confronted him on the Long Road. He, nevertheless, knew and suffered numerous infirmities. His labors were rendered more difficult thereby. Phrases taken from his accounts of visits to North Carolina indicate the state of his health at various times: "influenza," "a slow fever," "a high fever," "swelled feet," "suffered in my bowels," "toothache," "sores," "pleuritic pains in the breast," "a violent headache," "violent pain in my right foot," "throat was very sore," "asthma," "ran a splinter into my leg," "a deep cold," "a touch of pleurisy," "a severe pain," "a bilious affection," "a mixed internal complaint," "affliction upon my breast," "inflammation," "inflammation in my mouth and throat,"

¹⁶ Tipple, *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 302-305.

“feverish and feeble,” “severe bodily affliction,” “strongly inflicted with pain,” “inflammation of a toe,” “rheumatic and nervous complaints,” “expectorate blood,” “discharge blood,” “severe pain in my foot,” “a sick cripple in flight,” “suffered from cold and hunger,” “my leg was inflamed by riding” and “in much pain.” On several occasions he was “in great weakness” or “unwell.” On the sixty-ninth visit, he noted that “limbs, lungs, strength, and teeth fail.” His final *Journal* entry regarding health was about his “constant dysentery and cough.”

The epitome of adversities appeared to have been reached as he recorded this on the eleventh visit, in February, 1787: “At night we were poorly provided against the weather; the house was unfinished; and, to make matters worse, a horse kicked the door open, and I took a cold, and had the toothache, with a high fever.”

Often having no physician for assistance, he acted as his own physician. It is known that he sustained a strong interest in medicine, as did Wesley. He read Brooks' *Practice of Physic* in West Virginia in 1786, although no allusions to it occur in these accounts. He was bled in the arm and tongue. He made references to Hiera Picra (tenth visit), mountain bark (thirty-fourth visit), Stoughton's bitters (thirty-eighth visit), emetic (fifty-eighth visit) and a bread poultice (sixty-sixth visit). He noted that “Brandy in a cold is like laudunum” on the seventieth visit. He noted a high fever being broken and followed by profuse perspiration. Occasionally he prescribed remedies for others, as “a cold bath, or electricity” (first visit) and “a grain of tartar and a few composing drops” for Mr. Barnard (sixtieth visit), for Adonijah Perry (sixty-fourth visit) and for the widow Bryan's son (sixty-sixth visit).

Asbury seldom traveled alone on the Long Road. Records show he came to have certain men appointed to accompany him. He had as traveling companions in the state for varying periods of time, Henry Boehm, John Wesley Bond, John Crawford, Tobias Gibson, Henry Hill, Hope Hull, Jesse Lee, Stith Mead, Thomas Morrell, Joel Smith, Nicholas Sneath and Humphrey Wood. Bishops Thomas Coke,

Richard Whatcoat and William McKendree each made several visits with him. Lee, Snethen and Whatcoat accompanied him most frequently on these visits. Occasionally three men traveled in a party. Often assistance was given by several unnamed short-term guides. In relay manner, one preacher took the trail with him as another departed to remain in his own circuit, or district, Asbury noted on the second visit.

Conspicuous by their absence from the roll call of his traveling companions are the names of several notables—Freeborn Garrettson, “The Paul Revere of American Methodism,” members of the prominent Watters family of ministers, and Harry Hosier, “Black Harry,” a Negro preacher who often accompanied him on other itineraries in early years. The late Church historian Albert W. Cliffe in *The Glory of Our Methodist Heritage* (112) ¹⁷ stated that Hosier was born in Fayetteville, North Carolina and was a “powerful preacher.” Black Harry’s presence in order to preach was desired by Asbury on the initial visit.

In references to these men and others, Asbury seldom used the term “circuit rider” in the accounts. Instead, he used “circuit preacher” on the first, fourth and forty-fourth visits; “travelling preacher” on the thirty-sixth visit and “a Methodist travelling preacher” on the fifty-ninth visit. On the twenty-third visit, he referred to Thomas Morrell as “my fellow traveller”; he wrote of Henry Hill as “my new aid” and “my aid, Moses Lawrence” on the forty-fourth visit. Humphrey Wood was his “companion in travel” on the forty-eighth visit. Similarly, in a letter written in the state in 1813, he used “travelling laborers.” He referred to the Methodist system of itineracy as “our connexion” (second visit); “the itinerant connexion” (twenty-sixth visit); “the traveling plan” (fortieth visit) and “the Connexion” (fifty-seventh visit). Interestingly, he used the term “parsonage” on the sixty-first visit and “steward” on the sixty-ninth visit. He made reference to “a local

¹⁷ Tidings Department, The General Board of Evangelism of The Methodist Church, Nashville, Tennessee, 1957.

preacher" on the forty-sixth visit. He did use "circuit" rather frequently.

Francis Asbury's travel in North Carolina was on horseback and by "wheeled contrivances"—"carriages," "a light-four-wheeled carriage," "a little Jersey wagon," "chaise" and "gig." Missing are references to travel by stagecoach. There are several references, almost in affection, to "my mare," "my roan mare," "my little mare," "my poor, lame mare," and in tribute, "My horse had hard work," and "Our horses are always well fed, and never fail." He provided names of two horses—"Jane" (sometimes "little Jane") and "little Fox." Although he must have become a skilled horseman, he was involved in accidents, and suffered injuries, by being thrown or his carriage overturning. Sometimes he walked his horse at four miles an hour; sometimes he was compelled to borrow horse and saddle.

Space forbids full cataloging of all dangers and rigors of travels Asbury experienced. Suffice it to say he was in the state in all seasons, confronted all types of weather and conditions of roads and routes. He encountered heavy rains, a hailstorm, snows, sleet, fierce winds, spring freshets, "severe, constant hot weather as I ever knew" (first visit); icy roads, steep trails, marshes, savannahs, bays and broad swamps. He crossed the North Carolina-Tennessee line in the mountains many times; he crossed practically all major rivers numerous times, sometimes on horseback—sometimes by canoe ("a tottering canoe" on the fiftieth visit). He used numerous ferries, scarcely avoiding being plunged into waters several times. He indicated crossing a stream once by "our crazy skiff" and by a "floating bridge." His attitude toward ferries came to be one of resignation. On the sixty-fourth visit, he wrote: "Ah! the ferries! we shall have them, sink or swim." He missed the way here as elsewhere, often riding into the night in search of refuge. He even noted the sure irritation of ticks and "chiegoes" (chiggers). In 1811, he wrote: "I had a rude fall today, and it was a mercy that my back was not broken." He gladly acknowledged the kind protection of Providence.

Asbury, "the Man without a Home," soon formed enduring friendships with several North Carolina families, some of whom were prominent, including Daniel Asburys, Lot Ballards, Birds (Benjamin, Jonathan, Richard and Thomas), Samuel Edneys, Green Hills, Hardy Joneses, Daniel Killians, John Randalls, Edmund Taylors (Senior and Junior), Colonel Hallowell Williams, Colonel Hamilton and others. He visited Green Hill after his removal to Tennessee about 1800. He was often in the homes of widows, for which he was sometime sharply criticized.

To these—small, crowded mountain cabins, modest homes, or spacious plantation homes and mansions in eastern counties—he and his companions turned repeatedly for "havens of rest" and hospitality in much journeying. In 1795, he wrote: "The people are kind and free with what they have." In 1815, he was so delighted to be at the home of Edward Hall near Tarboro, that he wrote: ". . . it is paradise regained for a few days." It should not be assumed, however, that his receptions were universally friendly. His friendships with the families mentioned above merit a separate article.

Asbury took notice of friends he had known elsewhere who had taken up residence in the state. In 1793, he wrote: "I met with some old disciples from Maryland, Delaware and Virginia who have known me these twenty-three years. In 1794, he met with Philip Sands, from Old Lynn. In 1798, he noted: "My aged brethren and sisters from Maryland and Delaware rejoiced to see me. . . ." In 1799, he visited the John Harrises from Dorset, Maryland. In 1801, he visited William Fulwood who had sheltered him in Delaware in the days of the American Revolution. In 1804, he lodged with Edward Bunnell, from New Jersey. He also met Shadrach Dial from Delaware and "sister Bruce" from Portsmouth, Virginia and some "early Methodists from Maryland." He found great difficulty in trying to bypass homes of friends and acquaintances, he once commented.

On the initial visit, he met John Dickins, like himself, from England, and Edward Bailey from Ireland. In 1801, he met Ralph Potts, "a Northumbrian (Old England), but

American-made Methodist. . . ." In 1804, he dined with Mr. Mitchell, "a lone Methodist from Cornwall, Great Britain:"

Asbury sought to be on good terms with those of other denominations. He interviewed, visited or associated with ministers of other denominations, as Thomas Brown ("... separate Baptist. . ."), Martin Ross (Baptist), Mr. Austin ("English Baptist"), "friend Freeman . . . an honest Baptist"; George Newton ("my very dear brother in Christ"), John McKamie Wilson, Rev. Mr. Turner, Mr. Flinn, Mr. McRee, John Brown and M'Nare (Presbyterians); and Samuel Kenmish (Moravian). (He associated with others without providing specific names in the *Journal*.) He stopped at "one Newby's, one of the Society of Friends," and was kindly entertained. On the initial visit, he met some Quakers formerly located in Pennsylvania. In Halifax, he "called upon the widow Jones, mother of the Shaker of that name." On the initial visit he met Beverly Allen, "a little of a dissenter." There are no references to his associations with Lutheran pastors, German Reformed pastors, Roman Catholic priests or Jewish rabbis.

Asbury must have possessed an adventurous nature and great faith, to have given himself to the work of the Master unreservedly in North Carolina; yes, the whole American scene for nearly a half-century. President Calvin Coolidge, in an address at the unveiling of the Asbury Monument in Washington, D.C., declared: "What a wonderful experience he must have had, this prophet of the wilderness! Who shall say where his influence, written upon the immortal souls of men, shall end?"

The late Professor William Warren Sweet appraised Francis Asbury's service to the new nation in *The American Churches: An Interpretation* (44, 45) thus: "Certain it is there was no other American religious leadership in the early years of the new nation's life which was so conspicuous for its adequacy in meeting the major needs of a society in motion as was that of Francis Asbury."¹⁸

¹⁸ Abingdon-Cokesbury Press: New York and Nashville, 1948.

Two houses still in existence, definitely known to be associated with the work of Francis Asbury in the state, are the Green Hill house, near Louisburg, mentioned earlier, and the Jacob Shook house near the Lake Junaluska Assembly Grounds. (The Daniel Killian home in Asheville stood until 1901).¹⁹

Six official North Carolina Historical Highway Markers designating Bishop Asbury's travels and work in the state have been erected since the inception of the state's highway marker program in 1935. Methodist Historical Society markers designate the Shook house, Killian homesite and the Samuel Edney homesite, in Edneyville.²⁰

Here, then, in his own words from his "imperfect *Journal*," is the story of Francis Asbury's "gentle ecclesiastical invasion" of North Carolina for thirty-six years, who, for his dedicated pioneering spirit and dynamic leadership, deserves the title "The Morning Star of North Carolina Methodism."

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¹⁹ Correspondence, Myra Champion, Librarian, Pack Memorial Public Library, Asheville, North Carolina, August 16, 1963.

²⁰ Elmer T. Clark, *An Album of Methodist History*. Nashville, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952, 200.

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GRADY L. E. CARROLL

Raleigh, North Carolina
July 20, 1964

CHAPTER ONE

Francis Asbury's First through Seventeenth Visits: 1780-1789

Some Principal Events in North Carolina History: 1780-1789

- 1780 June 14; The Battle of Ramsour's Mill
October 7; Battle of King's Mountain*
- 1781 Cornwallis crossed North Carolina into Virginia
March 15; Battle of Guilford Courthouse
August 29; Battle of Elizabethtown
Sept. 13; Battle of Cane Creek
- 1783 Close of American Revolution by Treaty of Paris
North Carolina became an independent state
- 1784 Formation of Moore and Sampson counties
- 1785 Formation of Rockingham County
- 1786 Formation of Robeson County
- 1787 Bicentennial of John White's "Lost Colony" at Roanoke Island and birth of Virginia Dare at Roanoke Island
Charter granted to Franklin Academy, subsequently becoming Louisburg College
Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia
- 1788 Hillsboro Convention refused to accept United States Constitution
Formation of Iredell County
Washington elected to presidency
- 1789 Fayetteville Convention accepted United States Constitution
University of North Carolina, first state university, chartered
North Carolina ceded its "western lands" to the national government
Formation of Stokes County
Washington assumed presidency

* The city of King's Mountain is in North Carolina, while the actual battlesite is in South Carolina.

FIRST VISIT

(June 16-August 9, 1780; age 34)

FRANCIS ASBURY came to the American colonies for missionary duty in 1771. He began almost immediately to revive the practice of circuit riding among the preachers; he served as lay preacher at Old St. George's Church, Philadelphia (1771, 1772, 1774); he had spent part of the American Revolution in brief exile in Delaware; he had attended early American Conferences; he had decided to remain in the New World despite war conditions—the only official Wesley itinerant to do so (1777). He had evangelized in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and the present West Virginia almost annually. He rapidly came to the forefront as a leader. (Clark, *Francis Asbury*; Cliffe, *The Glory of Our Methodist Heritage*, 37-45.)

Regarding initial plans for a visit to North Carolina, Asbury wrote on August 16, 1775: "Preaching at Mr. Harding's, about sixteen miles from town, I met with Mr. Pinner . . . from North Carolina, who invited me to go and form a circuit in Currituck County, where they have very little preaching but what they pay for at the rate of three pounds per sermon. I accepted the invitation, and appointed the 10th of September for the time to visit them." (*Journal*, I, 162.) These plans, however, were not executed until 1780. His initial visits to neighboring states were Virginia, May 29, 1775-February 29, 1776; South Carolina, February 17, 1785-c. March 13, 1785; Georgia, April 1, 1788-April 12, 1788, and Tennessee, c. April 29, 1788-c. May 2, 1788. (*Journal*, I, 156-179; 482-486, 565-567, 569-570.)

The initial visit had several distinguishing features. These included first sermon preached in a barn; first funds raised anywhere in America for higher education; first observance of a love feast by him in the colony; first visit to the home of the Reverend Major Green Hill, site of several conferences; first quarterly meeting held; first meeting of a class; first stationing of a preacher, recruitment of Edward Bailey to travel North with him (he died soon thereafter); fasting three times during the visit; attempted to recruit

preachers and his first observance of a watch night service in the colony.

This was the lengthiest visit of all in point of time. He traveled alone by carriage most of the time, preaching some forty times, probably a record for one visit. Significantly, his first sermon in the colony was based on a passage from Hebrews, the book used most often for sermon texts in the visits. For most succeeding visits, he had a traveling companion, sometimes two. He preached to a congregation of five hundred on two occasions and planned a return visit before this one ended. He formed a good opinion of the colony, in contrast to information he had had. He predicted the Methodists would grow in the colony. All visits to 1784 began in Virginia, to which he returned. He tried to avoid traveling on the Sabbath, a fact which he mentioned on subsequent visits.

Friday, 16. I crossed Roanoke,¹ felt a little better, though weak. We rode near thirty miles, was like to faint in the carriage; but at brother Edward's² felt refreshed, and ease from pain; slept well; blessed to God!

Saturday, 17. I am in peace, and much blest always when traveling. Preached at Jones's barn³ to about one hundred people; spoke on Heb. iv, 11-15; was weak, but spoke long. A few felt and understood. The unawakened appeared unmoved; my discourse was not

¹ Asbury entered Halifax County near present Roanoke Rapids. His leading purpose on the visit was to heal the split caused by the action of the Virginians on the sacraments. Pilmoor had been in the state in 1773 and preached the first Methodist sermon at Currituck Court House, being entertained by Colonel Hallowell Williams, an active Methodist. There were Methodists in North Carolina much earlier, having come down from Virginia or converted by George Whitefield who toured the state in 1739-40. No Society was formed, however, until Robert Williams extended his Petersburg Circuit across the state line to Bute and Halifax counties in 1773 and 1774. When Asbury arrived, there were four circuits in North Carolina, and Asbury covered three of them. He traveled in twelve counties, and his movements can be traced only approximately and with great difficulty. (Grissom: *History of Methodism in North Carolina*, 29, 35; Woodmason: *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution*, 20.)

² Edwards probably lived in Northhampton County near the Halifax line.

³ Jones's barn seems to have been in Halifax County. Jesse Lee preached his first sermon "at a place called the Old Barn" on this circuit while assisting John Dickins, who lived in the county. (Lee: *Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee*, 64.) There was a Jones Chapel in Sussex County, Virginia; and in a "barn near Brother Jones' house" Methodist meetings were held. (Sweet: *Virginia Methodism*, 121, 122, 160.)

for them. I think my immediate call is to the people of God: others seem in a hardened state; they have heard much, obeyed little. Went to Mrs. Yancy's,⁴ an afflicted, distressed woman, sunk into rigid mortification, thinking she ought to fast excessively.

Sunday, 18. I rode fifteen miles to brother Bustion's,⁵ and preached to about five hundred people; was much led out on Isaiah iv, 6, 7. The people were solemnly attentive: I was tempted to think I had done well, but I opposed the devil and overcame him. Brother Dickins⁶ spoke on charity very sensibly, but his voice is gone; he reasons too much; is a man of great piety, great skill in learning, drinks in Greek and Latin swiftly; yet prays much, and walks close with God. He is a gloomy countryman of mine, and very diffident of himself. My health is recovered; thank the Lord. Thus he makes my strength sufficient for my day; glory to God!

Monday, 19. Rose about five o'clock, was a little disturbed in my rest with company. Brother Dickins drew the subscription for the Kingswood school in America; this was what came out a college in the subscription

⁴ "Mrs. Yancy was one of the most self-denying, holy women that ever was; the Rev. John Dickins married a Miss Yancy." (Lednum, *A History of the Rise of Methodism in America*, 173.)

⁵ Mr. Bustion lived in Halifax County, not far from the home of John Dickins near the present town of Halifax, Martha Bustion is listed in *Heads of Families, Census, 1790, N.C.*, as having three sons, three daughters, and sixteen slaves.

⁶ John Dickins (1746-98), preacher on Roanoke Circuit and one of Methodism's outstanding leaders, was born in London and educated at Eton. He came to America in 1774 and entered the traveling ministry in Virginia in 1778. He had served North Carolina, Brunswick and Roanoke circuits. In 1781 he located, presumably because of ill health, and lived in his own house near Halifax, North Carolina. He was readmitted in 1783 and appointed to New York; in his church there Thomas Coke preached his first sermon in America on the night of November 3, 1784; and it was to Dickins that Coke first communicated Wesley's plan for the consecration of Asbury and the organization of the Methodists into a church. Dickins was a leading member of the Christmas Conference, where he was ordained a deacon and suggested the name of Methodist Episcopal Church for the new body. In 1786 while on the Bertie Circuit in North Carolina he prepared the *Discipline* of 1786, the first in its present form. When the Methodist Book Concern was organized in 1789, he became book agent, and continued in that post until his death of yellow fever in 1798. (*Dictionary of American Biography*, V, 292, 293; Sweet: *op. cit.*, 101, 155; and various histories of Methodism; see *Journal* entries and notes for March 25, September 16, 1786.)

printed by Dr. Coke.⁷ Gabriel Long and brother Bustion were the first subscribers,⁸ which I hope will be for the glory of God and good of thousands. We set off in the rain, rode over Fishing Creek to Davis's, ten miles; I spoke on 1 Thess. i, 8, 9, had some light, but the people were very little moved; rode twelve miles to Gabriel Long's, through the woods. I hope John Dickins will ever after this be a friend to me and Methodism. My health is greatly restored; am blest among my friends.

Tuesday, 20. After an hour spent in prayer, private and in the family, I read a few chapters in the Bible; began reading Watt's first volume of Sermons; was pleased and profited. Preached at noon to fifty people, on Titus ii, 11-14, had some liberty among the people; they were very little affected—but the faithful, for whom I principally spoke, were tender; then rode over to Joseph John Williams's, a rich man of this world, and I hope sincere, I am kept through mercy.

Wednesday, 21. I had to ride alone better than twelve miles to Mr. Duke's; when I came there, found about thirty people, and they quite ignorant. After preaching I took dinner, and in talking found three or four of them tenderly serious; gave them advice; the man and his wife have had conviction, and have sinned it away. They say it was the disputes of the Baptists

⁷ The plan for the first Methodist school in America was prepared at John Dickins' house on Fishing Creek near the Halifax and Edgecomb County line. Asbury had discussed such a project on November 30, 1779. The phrase about "the subscription printed by Dr. Coke" indicates a later entry, since Coke was not to appear on the scene for more than four years. It seems that the school was to be in North Carolina, though the funds were later used for Cokesbury College in Maryland. The North Carolina school was established some time before 1793 and was called Cokesbury. It was the first conference school in America. (See note under April 2, 1794. Cummings: *Early Schools of Methodism*, 71, 72; Grissom: *op. cit.*, 134, 135; Turner and Bridgers: *History of Edgecomb County*, 468.)

⁸ Messrs. Bustion and Long of North Carolina thus have the distinction of being the first contributors to a Methodist school in America. The former lived in Halifax County, and the latter doubtless lived in Edgecomb, since Asbury rode twenty-two miles from the chapel to his residence. (Turner and Bridgers, *op. cit.*, 468.) Jesse Lee lived in the home of Gabriel Long before he became a traveling preacher. Lednum describes Long as "a great Christian" and calls Bustion "another good man." (*Op. cit.*, 173; Lee, *op. cit.*, 63, 64.)

that turned them aside. I then rode home with a Mr. Green, a Presbyterian; and was much blest in reading Watt's first volume of Sermons.

Thursday, 22. I rode to Jenkins's ⁹ and spoke plainly to about eighty people, and found the word was fitted to their cases; met class; it was a day of peace to me; the Lord was with me at this poor, but good man's house. I was kept by the power of God; my soul is breathing after the Lord at all times. There is a hardness over the people here; they have had the Gospel preached by Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists; the two former appear to be too much in the spirit of the world; there is life amongst some of the Methodists, and they will grow because they preach growing doctrines. I heard of Mr. Hart,¹⁰ from Charleston, passing north, and one of the Countess of Huntingdon's ¹¹ men turning Baptist. They have soon turned about; but they may follow Mr. Whitefield in Calvinism.

Friday, 23. I have peace, the Lord is my portion; this was a day of fasting; I rode fifteen miles, preached, prayed, and sung near two hours; ate a little about four o'clock, and preached at Nutbush Creek Chapel ¹² (a little log-house, about twenty-five feet long and twenty wide,) to about one hundred and fifty people; here I found a broken society. Rode home with Dr. King; his wife was in society. I slept in peace, and rose about five o'clock; my heart is with God! Glory be to thee, O,

⁹ Jenkins seems to have lived in Franklin County.

¹⁰ The Rev. Oliver Hart had resigned from the Particular Baptist Church (now First Church) in Charleston and was on his way to Hopewell, New Jersey, where he spent the rest of his life. Pilmoor preached in his church in January, 1778.

¹¹ The Countess of Huntingdon was the leader of the Calvinistic Methodists, to which group George Whitefield also belonged. The person mentioned was probably one of the preachers brought to Bethesda Orphanage by Whitefield, who perhaps planned to organize a Calvinistic Methodist group in America. (Lee and Luccock; *Illustrated History of Methodism*, 134.)

¹² Nutbush Creek Chapel was in Vance County about a mile north of Williamsboro and near the Roanoke River. It was built in 1757 by the Lewis family, and in 1772 was moved to its present site in Williamsboro, where it is now St. John's Episcopal Church. (S. T. Peace, Vance County, North Carolina, historian.)

Lord! I had too mean an opinion of Carolina; it is a much better country, and the people live much better than I expected from the information given me.

Saturday, 24. Though the weather was extremely hot, I, yet weak in body, rode to Col. Edmund Taylor's;¹³ and at the school house spoke to about seventy people, on 1 Peter iv, 18. Afterward was kindly entertained at Col. Taylor's: they were for ordinances here, though not heated.

Sunday, 25. Rode six miles to the Tabernacle;¹⁴ about four hundred people, rich and poor, attended; had very little liberty in speaking—the people very insensible. I think these people must be awakened by judgments, for it appears the Gospel will not do it. I spoke near two hours to little purpose; held a love feast; all the friends were stirred up. Then rode eight miles, lodged over Nutbush Creek at brother Reeve's. I am kept in peace, but felt much ashamed for my unfaithfulness.

Monday, 26. Rose early; my legs are so inflamed I cannot tell what to do; but we must bear all things; I read Watt's first volume of Sermons, last week, and transcribed a little of it. I preached at Turner's; he has lost the use of his limbs. I advised him to use the cold bath, or electricity; either might help him. I had liberty in the word; the hearers were stirred up; many came to hear who do not, will not, attend the other preachers. Now the end of this may be good; for if they get their hearts affected, they will come to hear others, and by constant travelling I may do good. I had in both meetings eighty or ninety people; the circuit preachers have but about twenty. The Baptists appear to be very dead; their own people will not attend

¹³ Colonel Taylor's family lived on Tar River, probably in Vance County, and "was a chief family in the beginning." (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 173.)

¹⁴ The Tabernacle was in Vance County north of Colonel Taylor's according to the probable route being followed by Asbury.

only on *Sabbath days*. The people are taken away, and times are so difficult that they appear to be under a judicial hardness, having heard so much and felt so little.

Tuesday, 27. Preached at William Price's, many came to hear. Lord, set home thy word to their hearts! Rode to Haw Tree,¹⁵ many came to hear; my text was, 1 Peter i, 5-13. I had great freedom, and held a love feast, the people were affected. There is the most religion here of any place in the circuit, and yet nothing great; I was much refreshed, rode through the woods, a blind path, to a friend's. I am always upon the run, though kept in peace; was grieved to see the distress of the people—some taken out to war, others expecting it every day. Lord, help thy people! There are many things that are painful to me, but cannot yet be removed, especially slave-keeping and its attendant circumstances. The Lord will certainly hear the cries of the oppressed, naked, starving creatures. O, my God! think on this land. Amen. I am in peace, but have hard labour; I hope it will be for good. I expect to meet trouble, but the Lord can keep me in the greatest danger as in apparent safety.

Wednesday, 28. Rode to Todd's, six miles: I am dejected to see so little religion. I am comforted when I pray much, and find deliverances. I am badly situated: and cannot go out into the woods; have no place of retirement at some houses. I preached at Todd's, to about seventy people, but very insensible; met class, talked a little, and then gave the people liberty to speak of the goodness of God. I laboured in public; and hope some will take it home; spoke from Luke vi, 46, many came

¹⁵ The 1808 map of North Carolina shows Haw Tree in upper Warren County. Both Haw Tree and Nutbush creeks flow into Roanoke River. Asbury was traveling in the northern counties near the Virginia line, and the persons mentioned lived there.

to hear. I have read John Claget against Chubb:¹⁶ he writes well for a layman; but I suspect he would write as much against us whom he deems Arminians. Chubb is quite wrong. Clagett is no ways smooth and entertaining, though he has truth and argument on his side. I found here two old English folks—an old man near sixty, in society; an old woman eighty-nine years old, Nodder by name, and can walk, read, sing, and pray, who was converted to God about a year ago. O, my God! when shall I be established in purity?

Thursday, 29. Read several chapters in Isaiah. I have thought if I had two horses, and Harry (a coloured man)¹⁷ to go with, and drive one, and meet the black people, and to spend about six months in Virginia and the Carolinas, it would be attended with a blessing. I rode to widow Pegram's, had about sixty people, it being a muster-day; but these were happy souls. As soon as we began to sing, the power of God came over us; I spoke from 1 Peter v, 6-8, then rode to Capt. Burrows's: the people in many places are but children in understanding; we have many things to say, but they cannot bear them now. I am blessed in my own soul. I began to form a plan for myself and all the preachers for next year, if we live. I am still seeking full and final salvation. I preached at Burrows's; but fear there is very little religion in this place: I was uncomfortable. The congregation of about sixty people, but they were very dead; their minds and mouths full of the world. I

¹⁶ Thomas Chubb (1679-1747) was an English Deist who wrote several works in which he controverted orthodox opinion on inspiration, miracles, and other articles of belief. William Clagett (1646-88) was a controversialist who published around two dozen works, but he was not a layman and the titles of none of his works were directed against Chubb (*Dictionary of National Biography*, IV, 297, 298, 367, 368).

¹⁷ Harry Hosier, or Black Harry, was a Negro preacher of considerable eloquence who sometimes traveled with Asbury. He accompanied Thomas Coke on Coke's preaching tour in 1784, and went with Freeborn Garrettson to New England in 1790. It is said that the first mention of Methodism in a New York newspaper related to Black Harry. The Negro servant and preacher later "fell from grace" and became addicted to drink. (Hurst: *History of Methodism*, IV, 290, 339, 437.)

came off to the widow Ellis's¹⁸ and found the Lord was here. There has been a heavy rain these two nights past; if it continues, it will destroy the full, ripe crops of wheat.

Friday, 30. Slept in peace last night; rose with a deep sense of God; met with Henry Jones, a serious young man, and believe he is called to the work of the ministry; I advised him to go with me.

Saturday, July 1, 1780. My soul pants after God more and more. O, that I were filled with strong, constant, humble, suffering love! I preached at the widow Ellis's, on Heb. x, 21-24. I was fervent, and had liberty, and spoke as searchingly as I could to saints and sinners. Here Edward Dromgoole¹⁹ met me; and I appointed James Mallory²⁰ for Norfolk circuit, as there have been a few people kept together, notwithstanding the absence of the preachers.

Sunday, 2. I rode to Lindsey's, a rough road; had about seventy people; and spoke on 2 Cor. iv, 4-6. Now I have done in this circuit; the Lord has blessed me in body and soul. Tomorrow I am going to Tar River. Edward Dromgoole is hearty in good old Methodism; we have had great union; I hope he will check the spirit of some of the divisive men. I wrote to Reuben Ellis;²¹ read my select Scriptures. God is with us, it may be trials are coming, but no matter; why should I fear?—the Lord liveth, and he is my rock.

Monday, 3. Very rainy night, with thunder and lightning. I am grieved to see slavery, and the manner of

¹⁸ The Ellis family was prominent in North Carolina Methodism. Reuben Ellis was one of the first preachers. (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 173. Lednum identifies most of the persons with whom Asbury stayed on this trip.)

¹⁹ See note under January 30, 1774. Edward Dromgoole was living with his family in Brunswick County, Virginia. He had no regular appointment between 1778 and 1783.

²⁰ Mallory was a local preacher. The following year, in the conference held at Choptank, Delaware, he was admitted on trial and appointed to the Pittsylvania Circuit; he was admitted into full connection the year following and sent to the South Branch Circuit.

²¹ Reuben Ellis had been on the Mecklenburg Circuit the previous year. (See *Minutes*.)

keeping these poor people. I set out for Tar River; after riding about five miles I was told I could not cross Bear Swamp; but by the guidance of a Baptist friend, came through that and two very deep creeks.²² Afterward I left my guide; we had travelled a few miles together, and talked in a friendly manner. Rode three miles farther, and was stopped by what was called Bens Creek; the bridge was gone, and a man said it was ten feet deep: I then made for Falcon's bridge, on little Fishing Creek; but the low ground was covered, and no bridge to be seen: lodged at Mr. John Falcon's, was known, and kindly entertained. I laboured to make Mrs. Falcon sensible of her danger, and hope not in vain; prayed evening and morning in the family.

Tuesday, 4. I rode by Miller's cross roads to Great Fishing Creek, a rough way—but got safe along, and was comforted in mind; crossed Great Fishing Creek; stopped at Sandy Creek, where I found a kind old man, brother Howell; lodged with him and spent my time peaceably.

Wednesday, 5. Set out to Green Hill's; but with difficulty I got along; but this was not all, for in going the distance of four miles I rode eight; and was tried to purpose; on account of the waters. I have ridden about thirty miles out of my way; and am now twenty-six miles from the place of preaching tomorrow. Have been happy till today; but when lost, I began to feel like fretting against persons and things. O, my God! pardon me in this. I was very finely entertained, and blessed with fellowship at Green Hill's;²³ but never met

²² The two creeks were probably Swift and Fishing creeks in Edgecomb County, North Carolina. (Turner and Bridgers, *op. cit.*, 467.)

²³ The Rev. Major Green Hill was a local preacher, prosperous farmer, and prominent political figure who lived in Franklin County, one mile from Louisburg. His home still stands, and after Hill's removal to Tennessee in 1799, it was occupied by his brother-in-law, Joel King, the son of Dr. John King. Green Hill entertained four annual conferences in his home. (See *Journal* entries and notes under April 19, 1785, and October 1, 1808.) (Davis, *Historical Sketches of Franklin County, North Carolina*, 63, 279.)

with so many difficulties as I have met with in this circuit: I hope for the greater blessings; am kept by grace, and enjoy health in this hot weather, though so far to the south; have peace of mind, bless the Lord.

Thursday, 6. Rode twenty-six miles; exceeding hot, and my horse suffered greatly. When I came to the place about seventy people were met, singing and praying. I spoke on Heb. iv, 13-16, had not much strength of soul or body. The people appeared inattentive and their minds full of the present troubles.

Friday, 7. A day of fasting, till near three o'clock; I was weak, and lodging on the floor was uncomfortable.

Saturday, 8. Rode to Cypress chapel,²⁴ had liberty in speaking on 1 John i, 8, 9, to about one hundred people. Here James O'Kelly²⁵ met me; he spoke, and appeared to be a warm-hearted, good man; but he was troubled with the people about these times. At Ross's I spoke on Rev. xxii, 10-19. I had an opening; and one Lindsay, an exhorter, spoke; an honest, zealous man: he has lost his little property by these times. I have ridden near one hundred miles this week; and as severe, constant hot weather as I ever knew.

Sunday, 9. Preached at Green Hill's to about four hundred souls, on 1 Thess. ii, 4. The subject was new, the people dead. I had not much liberty. James O'Kelly

²⁴ Cypress Chapel was in Franklin County on Cypress Creek, or in nearby Halifax County.

²⁵ James O'Kelly (1775-1826) was on the Tar River Circuit, one of the circuits through which Asbury was traveling. He was admitted to the conference in 1778 and was one of those ordained elders at the Christmas Conference in 1784. Asbury had been with him in the meeting at Manakintown, Virginia, in May, 1780. He traveled widely in North Carolina and Virginia. He was a member of the short-lived Council, which was established in 1789. He became dissatisfied with Asbury's administration, and in the General Conference of 1792 he proposed a resolution providing that any preacher who was dissatisfied with an appointment given him by the bishop could appeal to the conference. When this resolution was defeated, O'Kelly withdrew and organized a rival denomination known as the Republican Methodist Church. Several preachers, including William McKendree for a brief period, and numerous members followed him, and the schism seriously affected the growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church for several years. (Grissom: *op. cit.*, V, 510, 513, 519-21, 886; Sweet: *op. cit.*, 123-34.) (James O'Kelly was born in 1737, not in 1775, according to the inscription on his tombstone near the Orange-Chatham County line, North Carolina) (Carroll).

spoke on, "Have ye understood all these things?" He raised high, and was very affecting, but to little purpose. There are evils here; the meeting not solemn; the women appeared to be full of dress, the men full of news. These people are Gospel slighters. I fear some heavy stroke will come on them. James O'Kelly and myself enjoyed and comforted each other; this dear man rose at midnight, and prayed very devoutly for me and himself. He cries, give me children or I die; but I believe no preaching or preacher will do much good at present. I was condemned for telling humorous anecdotes, and knew not whether it was guilt or fear, lest my friends should think I go beyond the bounds of prudent liberty. It is dreadful, when a preacher is put to it to vindicate himself.

Monday, 10. Through heat and for want of retirement, I suffer loss; but bless God for health and faith, I made my journey to Roger Jones's.²⁶ About sixty people; God was with us; the people spoke of the goodness of the Lord.

Tuesday, 11. Had a heavy night; rose up, and laid myself down on the floor upon my nightgown; slept in pain; rose at four o'clock; prayed in private and in the family; then set off at six o'clock; had hilly roads; and after riding five or six hours, came to my appointment; had very little freedom in speaking to about one hundred people: here I met with W. Partridge. The Lord keeps me in health: I cast all my care upon him.

Wednesday, 12. I rode to Cooper's²⁷ upon Tar River, had about one hundred and twenty people; I was under discouragement before I began, but the Lord helped me. These people have heard Baptists and Presby-

²⁶ Roger Jones lived near present Kittrell, North Carolina. From this meeting a society was formed and log chapel erected. This was later replaced by a building of planks which was called Plank Chapel. It is still in existence under the same name and in the same form.

²⁷ Cooper probably lived in Granville County. Note that Asbury seemed to go back and forth through the same areas.

terians, but I fear to little purpose. God assisted me to deliver my own soul. I rode to a friend's, and had great difficulty on the way; but I am kept from murmuring; while labouring for other souls, my own is blessed—have felt nothing contrary to love for some days past.

Thursday, 13. Rode to the chapel: had an insensible people, full of the spirit of the world. I laboured hard to preach on Luke xiii, 23-25. Then rode to Captain Pope's,²⁸ I am distressed with the troubles of the times; and hear there are great commotions. I went to the preaching house, and poured out my soul to God for some time in the evening—my heart found rest, and felt power to trust God with my life and my all. O! why doth my cowardly flesh complain?

Friday, 14. God was with me; I was comforted with brother Pope, a lame, wise, and pious man; he has built a preaching house almost himself. Who can tell what a man may do under divine assistance? He makes a few cards, teaches a few children, and says he lives as well as ever he did in his life. I was much comforted at the preaching house this morning. I suffered much for want of a place of retirement. I cannot go into the woods, there are so many ticks, chiegos (chiggers), and such insects at this season upon the ground; retired at six o'clock to the chapel; it has been a bethel to me; my day of fasting and humiliation has been blest to my soul.

Saturday, 15. After spending some time in the chapel alone, I set out to Paschal's about six o'clock; I came in before twelve, I spoke very close and plain on Acts xxvi, 18, to about thirty people, and had but little faith for them. Rode on to B. Hartfield's,²⁹ about twenty miles, much fatigued with the badness of the road.

²⁸ Pope lived in Wake County, and Pope's Chapel was located there.

²⁹ Paschal lived in lower Wake County, and B. Hartfield lived across the line in Harnett County.

Sunday, 16. I rose unwell, and somewhat dejected. Lord, keep me from the power of wicked men, devils, and sin. Sometimes I think, will that Infinite Being we call God, who commands kingdoms, continents, and worlds, take care of such a worm as I? Then I consider, he is INFINITE, and cannot be hurried so as to forget any person. He can keep me as securely as if there were none but myself in the world. Lord, give me faith to trust in thee every moment, even in my greatest dangers! I spoke on 2 Thess. i, 6-9. I had great light; but the people seemed hardened. I fear judgment will overtake them before they will be awakened; I never felt more engaged, and hardly a person moved! I read my select Scriptures, and had my soul much taken up with God; the few people in society seemed tender at brother Hartfield's.

Monday, 17. I set out about five o'clock, and rode to Crawford's upon Neuse River, about twenty miles, alone; was tried at times, but had some sense of God; was not so free from my temptations, but kept from sinning or yielding in heart; there were many people. I spoke with liberty on 1 Pet. iv, 18. There was a melting among the people; but they are rich and are not cured of the love of money.

Tuesday, 18. Rode to Kimborough's, sixteen miles, crossed Neuse River. Many Baptists to hear; they were serious, and I spoke feelingly, and aimed at their hearts, from Romans viii, 24-26. I met brother Poythress,³⁰ much cast down; the people are lifeless in religion; but, bless the Lord, I have had a good entrance, and a comfortable sense of the divine presence. After dinner, I was alone in the woods an hour, had sweet meltings, came back and wrote these lines for future consolation.

Wednesday, 19. I rode to Abraham Hill's, and had

³⁰ Francis Poythress was on the New Hope Circuit west of the Tar River Circuit, and one of the circuits through which Asbury was traveling.

great liberty in speaking on Heb. iv, 10 &c., then brother Poythress spoke; and we had a refreshing shower according to prayer: we afterward spent some time in reading out of what I had written and abridged, upon the art of speaking and preaching. I find the spirit of separation on account of the ordinances, is very high among preachers and people; but I hope it will be checked.

Thursday, 20. Rode twelve miles to Tignal Jones's;³¹ hilly, rocky roads, about eighty people to hear. While I was speaking, General Hugine came in, and heard part of my sermon; he is a polite, well-behaved, considerable gentleman; we dined together. After dinner, I set out on my journey; we came to a desperate creek called North-East, in Chatham County, where the bridge was carried away by the freshet; we had to go through among rocks, holes, logs; I was affrighted; yea, it was wonderful that the carriage did not upset: brother Poythress said the horse was down twice, and covered all but his head; however, the water kept up the carriage, and we came safe through all our difficulties, to brother Merritt's. Hitherto the Lord hath helped—body, soul, horse, and carriage; there is a providence attending animate and inanimate creation. Here I met brother Beverly Allen³²—a promising young man, but a little of a Dissenter.

³¹ Tignal Jones lived in Wake County near present Apex, ten miles west of Raleigh, North Carolina. There also were two Tignal Joneses in Virginia. (*Heads of Families*, 1790.)

³² Beverly Allen was a brilliant preacher and one of the original elders ordained at the Christmas Conference in 1784. He had preached on the New Hope Circuit with James O'Kelly in 1779, although his name does not appear in the *Minutes*. According to a letter from him to John Wesley he "was unable to travel at large" in 1780 and "spent most of the summer on New Hope and Bladen." He introduced Methodism in Salisbury, North Carolina, and formed a class there in 1783. He was the first preacher appointed to Georgia, in 1785, and in 1786 was among the first elders designated by appointment, being assigned to the Santee and Pee Dee circuits with three preachers under him. He later became an apostate and a criminal. (See notes under December 18, 1785; January 11, 1786; and March 13, 1791. For his life and experiences see Smith: *Georgia Methodism*, 27, 28; Bowen: *Wilkes County*, 118, 119; Gilmer: *Early Settlers of Upper Georgia*, 105, 106; Grissom: *op. cit.*, 99; Strickland: *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*, 28; McIntosh: *History of Elbert County*, 71-73.)

Saturday, 22. We set out for Crump's, over rocks, hills, creeks, and pathless woods and low land; and myself in the carriage. The young man with me was heartless before we had travelled a mile; but when he saw how I could bush it, and sometimes force my way through a thicket, and make the young saplings bend before me, and twist and turn out of the way, or path, for there was no proper road, he took courage; with great difficulty we came in about two o'clock, after travelling eight or nine hours; the people looking almost as wild as the deer in the woods; I preached on Titus ii, 10-12.

Sunday, 23. We passed Haw River, wide, but shallow, bad going down and coming up; they took the carriage over by hand; then we had to travel the pathless woods and rocks again: after much trouble, and fear, and dejection, we came to Taylor's preaching house,³³ where they were pressing horses, as we expected; but I came off safe, and spoke on 2 Peter i, 5-12. I had some liberty, but the people's minds were in confusion; poor souls, well they might, when there were such works carried on. The time to favour this people, I fear is past; and they seem hardened, and no preaching affects them, at least not mine; they are exceedingly ignorant withal. There are a few serious people but much distressed one way or another. I have travelled thirty miles, and could not avoid travelling on Sunday, for I had not where to stay; rode to brother Beck's, and was much fatigued: found brother Beck sick; he has a gracious wife.

Monday, 24. Cool, like the fall; I am kept in peace; rose with a sense of God's presence; have only time to pray and write my journal; always upon the wing, as the rides are so long, and bad roads; it takes me many

³³ Taylor's preaching house was probably in Chatham County.

hours, as in general I walk my horse. I crossed Rocky River about ten miles from Haw River; it was rocky, sure enough; it is in Chatham county, North Carolina. I can see little else but cabins in these parts built with poles: and such a country as no man ever saw for a carriage. I narrowly escaped being overset; was much affrighted, but Providence keeps me, and I trust will. I crossed Deep River in a flat boat, and the poor ferryman sinner swore because I had not a silver shilling to give him. I rode to friend Hinton's,³⁴ borrowed a saddle, and rode near six miles to get three, as we were lost; when we came to the place there were about sixty people. I was at some loss whom to preach to, saints or sinners; but found sinners as unfeeling as those who are out of the reach of mercy. I spoke on 1 Peter, v, 9-12. I was glad to get away, for some were drunk, and had their guns in meeting. I expect to see some of these people again, and believe they will be humbled in time, but I fear not by the Gospel, which they have slighted, but by judgments. We came back and found a serious family: was blest in a family meeting; the Lord filled our hearts with his love. I had a fever in the night; rose refreshed in the morning.

Tuesday, 25. Was engaged in private and family prayer for divine protection; for I dwell as among briars, thorns, and scorpions; the people are poor, and cruel one to another: some families are ready to starve for want of bread, while others have corn and rye distilled into poisonous whiskey; and a Baptist preacher has been guilty of the same; but it is no wonder that those who have no compassion for the non-elect souls

³⁴ Dempsey and Sarah Hinton were among the earliest converts to Methodism in North Carolina. Their home was on Deep River in Randolph County, but they later moved to the town of Washington on the Pamlico River in Beaufort, where they were instrumental in establishing the Methodist Church. One of their sons, James Hinton, became a preacher and was admitted on trial in 1783 and appointed to Salisbury Circuit. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 150, 151. See articles on Asbury's travels on Deep River and in neighboring counties by S. S. Robins in *Chapel Hill News Leader* June 20 and July 4, 1955.)

of people should have none for their bodies. These people have had some religion; but if any seeth his brother's need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, so as neither to give nor sell, "how dwelleth the love of God in that man?" These are poor Christians. We left our worthy friend Hinton's, a kind family, who parted with us in tears: I hope to see this place again (I have seen it many times) with a change for the better. We forded Deep River rode to White's, within ten miles of the camp,³⁵ into a settlement of people from Pennsylvania, some were Quakers. I preached at White's to about twenty people; was very unwell by a disorder in my bowels; then rode sixteen miles to R. Kennon's;³⁶ it was rainy, and we rode two miles in the dark through the woods, but came safe about ten o'clock, fatigued, and under a temptation to stop; but reading Paul to Timothy, where he says, "I charge thee before God," &c., I resolved to go on; and though but little time and opportunity for retirement, not any for reading or gaining knowledge, yet saving souls is better. But people are so distracted with the times, they are afraid to leave their houses, or ride their horses. I acknowledge the providence and immediate hand of God in my journey; though it is not of general benefit, I shall gain a general knowledge of the preachers and people, and strengthen our union.

Wednesday, 26. I preached at Harris's to about one hundred people with some opening; it was well I did not give way and rest today.

Thursday, 27. Rose in some consolation, and read a few chapters in the Testament. I acknowledge the goodness of God in preserving my health, life and horse, from these people; they are very vile, and if there is

³⁵ There were several camp grounds in the area. The parenthesis above must have been inserted by another hand.

³⁶ White lived in Guilford County, and Kennon lived in Alamance.

any mischief done it is laid to the soldiers; people rob, steal, and murder one another with impunity. Rode twelve miles to West's, about one hundred people; some faithful Baptists. I spoke with Thomas Brown, a preacher, who, with twelve more, is separated from the separate Baptists on account of their slackness in discipline: I had fellowship with the man; we spent some time together. I told him the danger of being alone and advised them to meet in a class, one with another. My trials are great, riding twenty miles a day, or more; rocky roads, poor entertainment, uncomfortable lodging; little rest night or day; but thanks be to God, he keeps me the more I do and suffer, the greater the crown.

Friday, 28. Rode twelve miles to the chapel, and preached to one hundred people, on 1 Peter iv, 18, with some life; but the people were unfeeling. I had an exceeding rough road, through woods, over rocks, through creeks, &c. I expect fewer trials every day, and frequently find more; I will therefore expect greater. I rode seven miles to Mr. Trice's; was kindly entertained; had the pleasure of seeing and conversing with brother Bailey, from Ireland,³⁷ a good and sensible man: I slept well, and am better. I praise God for health.

Saturday, 29. Rode to Roades's, and preached to about two hundred people, on Titus iii, 2-8. I had some light: brother Bailey and Allen spoke; I hope it will revive the work. I then went on to Alston's.

Sunday, 30. Preached at Neuse preaching house³⁸ to about four hundred people—had not much liberty. These people have had an abundance of preaching from the Baptist and Methodists, till they are hardened. I

³⁷ Edward Bailey was from Ireland and had been appointed to the Fairfax Circuit at the Virginia section of the conference the previous year. He fell ill and died while on this journey with Asbury. (Larrabee: *Asbury and His Coadjutors*, I, 53, 54.)

³⁸ Neuse Meeting House was probably in the southeastern part of Durham County near the Wake County line. Asbury had turned eastward.

am kept in peace, power, and love of God, and from every moral evil. In the evening a heavy rain came on. I lodged at Mr. Allen's. There are many trials in my way, but the Lord hath brought me on—to him be all glory now and ever! I have lately passed through Cumberland, Chatham, Orange and Wake Counties, in North Carolina: brother Bailey has agreed to give up all business and travel with me, and to go labour in the north. Beverly Allen and Edward Bailey spoke at Neuse after me. I hope some good was done, and the work will revive. The people in these parts have been hurt with Calvinism; our first preachers moved their passions, and they hastily and improperly joined; and afterward they dropped off from society, and there was a great falling away. The ordinance places seem very barren.

Monday, 31. A very rainy day. I rested at Mr. Allen's, read in the New Testament, and prayed in the family four times.

Tuesday, August 1, 1780. We were discouraged by the rivers, but set out late to Clenny's, crossed Eno³⁹ with difficulty—the water ran over the foot-board of my carriage. After that, I rode a stony, hilly way about twelve miles, came in by the time Edward Bailey had preached an alarming sermon on "Seek the Lord while he may be found." Then I preached from Heb. ii, 1-3. After Beverly Allen spoke, and prayed mightily. This is a settlement of Irish Pennsylvanians. Through all my troubles I am kept in peace, faith, and love; we were blest in family prayer, speaking to them, and praying for them. I am this day to go towards Hillsboro with reluctance—but at God's command I go, and from no other motive; I feel no temper or desire but to do the will of God.

³⁹ Eno Creek was in Orange County; and Asbury crossed near Hillsboro, having turned northward.

Wednesday, 2. Rode seven miles to Hillsboro, and preached in the house of Mr. Cortney, a tavern,⁴⁰ to about two hundred people, on Hosea x, 12. "It is time to seek the Lord." They were decent, and behaved well; I was much animated, and spoke loud and long. Before I set off this morning, I felt dejected, but on the way it vanished. I felt faith to believe we should have a peaceable, profitable meeting, and trust it was so: they have had a warning. Edward Bailey and brother Allen gave exhortations. I came back to hold a watch night, without eating or drinking—though importuned to take refreshment; hitherto the Lord has helped me through continual fatigue and rough roads; little rest for man or horse, but souls are perishing—time is flying—and eternity comes nearer every hour.

Thursday, 3. We set off for Pittsylvania,⁴¹ and traveled twenty-five miles to John Lee's; came in about eight o'clock. God is at work, and I hope I shall be blessed here more than in the three circuits past. I felt a solemn melting sense of God upon my heart in family prayer. I had a sensible feeling for my northern friends, when I heard of the fighting in the Jerseys; I fear they will be distressed. I am kept in peace.

Friday, 4. I was never more devoted to God—it makes me think I am in my duty. I was tempted and tried in Delaware to prepare me for, and drive me to, this work; and believe if I had not started I should have suffered great loss in my soul. I admire the hand of God in disposing of me, and wonder and own his providence.

Saturday, 5. Our quarterly meeting began at Henley's preaching house. I preached on Coloss. i, 27-29, then

⁴⁰ There was no Methodist society at Hillsboro, Orange County, at this time. The Hillsboro Methodist Church was organized about 1807.

⁴¹ The Pittsylvania Circuit had been formed in 1776, embracing territory in Virginia and North Carolina, was formed from a part of the Pittsylvania. The Yadkin was west of the New Hope Circuit and extended to the Blue Ridge and southward to the South Carolina line. Asbury was probably in Caswell County.

brother Bailey, Ivey, and Morris⁴² spoke, there was some reviving among the people. We lodged at John Lee's—my mind was much drawn out; we retired to an old log shop, and prayed frequently, and found our hearts sweetly united together.

Sunday, 6. We had a great meeting, love feast at ten—very warm weather; a log house, covered with long shingles; the sun beating through. At one o'clock preaching began. I spoke on Eph. iii, 16-18, to about five hundred people; was blest, and the word went with power. Some were moved, some hardened, yet I hope good was done and the work will revive.

Monday, 7. Exceedingly hot weather; I rose with a comfortable sense of the Divine presence on my heart; we prayed alone in the woods; I pleased in private; great labours are before me; the Lord keeps me. At ten I preached in Lee's chapel, in Caswell county, to about sixty people, on Matt. vii, 21. "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, &c." I possessed clearness of ideas, liberty of speech, and the people serious: the preachers are under great difficulties here for want of places of study; most places but one room, or if a chamber, they cannot live there, it is so hot. I found the people much united to me, and appeared to think too highly of me. Lord, keep me from pride and all high thoughts of myself; but daily travelling and other labours will humble. There is a good work of God here; but some of the Baptists rage because we have what they lost; but while we keep close to God, and preach the power of religion, they can do us no harm. (True!)⁴³

⁴² Richard Ivey was on the Pittsylvania Circuit. In 1779 he served the Brunswick Circuit in Virginia with Thomas and James Morris. The Morrises do not appear in the appointments for 1780. Because the conference was split in two sections over the row in Virginia about the sacraments, the appointments for all the preachers do not appear. In 1779 there were forty-nine preachers, in 1780, there were forty-two, and in 1781 when the breach had been healed there were fifty-four.

⁴³ This interjection, True! was doubtless added by one of the early editors of the *Journal*.

Tuesday, 8. I rode to Baxter's, sixteen miles; about eighty people, many came that never attended at other times. My text was 1 John i, 8, 9. I had great liberty, but was tried in getting there; we crossed the Line Creek. After preaching, rode six miles, but was an hour too late. About eight o'clock came to a cabin, an earthen floor, and camp bed. I was very weary and had a pain in my head; but the people were kind: I knew not how to lie down. Edward Bailey lay down, and slept well.

Wednesday, 9. I rode sixteen miles to White's, came in about three o'clock; no preaching appointed. I had time to write, and plan for another trip through Carolina. I have had little time or place for prayer till I came here; the roads are so bad, I have my carriage to refit almost every week. This is Caswell County; the poor people have been much put to it, the year past, for bread; the present year they have exceeding fine growing corn; Lord, remember the poor!

SECOND VISIT

(March 12-March 28, 1782; age 36)

THIS WAS the longest interval between any two visits and 1781 was the only year between 1780 and 1816 in which the itinerant evangelist made no visit. Hostilities of the final phases of the Revolution may have discouraged his visiting in 1781. He secured promises from Philip Bruce and James O'Kelly to join the ranks of the Methodists.

The average breadth of the state is one hundred miles; the extreme length is 503 miles. Asbury almost never traversed the length of the state; his pattern was usually north-south or vice-versa. (Lemert, B. F. and Harrelson, M. L., *North Carolina Geography*, 2.)

For many years, Asbury considered Philadelphia his headquarters, although he never had an episcopal residence.

His area was the entire United States. Baltimore came to be, in effect, "the national headquarters of the church." (Gross, *The Beginnings of American Methodism*, 58; Tippy, *Frontier Bishop*, 75.)

Tuesday, 12. I have been much tried this day two various ways; I feel myself greatly humbled. This morning I poured out my soul to God in the granary, and was refreshed in my spirit. When we came to New Hope Creek we could not ford it; so I crossed on a log. Hitherto the Lord has helped me. I would not live always; neither would, or choice, know what is before me.

Sunday, 17. I preached with great liberty to a solemn, attentive people. I met society, and the people spoke freely. I am willing to travel and preach as long as I live; and I hope I shall not live long after I am unable to travel.

I obtained the promise of brothers P. Bruce and O'Kelly to join heartily in our connexion. I feel much led out in spirit for the preachers who are to meet in conference, that we may all be united together in love and peace, and firm resolves to carry on the work which God hath called us to.

Sunday, 24. At Kimbrough I preached to a large congregation, but I am afraid the word preached will not profit them. I spoke warmly for about an hour; there came on a rain, and the people appeared more afraid of their saddles being wet than their souls being lost.

Wednesday, 27. I preached to about one hundred people at the Tabernacle on Deut. xxxiii, 29. I trust there is more of the life of God here now than when I was here last.

Thursday, 28. I have felt much this day from the coldness of the weather—but no matter. Brother Henry

Ogburn met me again: I am generally blest with the preachers; when one leaves me another meets me, and my soul enjoys God as a satisfying portion.

THIRD VISIT

(c. December 24, 1782—c. January 1, 1783; age 37)

ASBURY came from and returned to Virginia, providing the only one-sentence account of a visit in the entire series. Apparently no *Journal* entries were made on the visit. Gates, Hertford and Northampton counties border Virginia, while Bertie lies south of Hertford County. (Newsome and Lefler, *The Growth of North Carolina*, 176.) The entry for the visit is the same in Tipple's *The Heart of Asbury's Journal*, which offers no further information. Missing are references to sermons preached on the visit. This was one of the few times he was in the state on Christmas Day.

New Year's Day, 1783. I have passed through Gates, Hertford, Bertie, and Northampton counties, in North Carolina: I am now in Southampton county, in Virginia, and have this day preached in St. Paul's.

FOURTH VISIT

(February 17-April 5, 1783; age 37)

THIS WAS one of the longest visits of the decade. Asbury noted awareness of peace with his native land and the ill effects of the Revolution in the vicinity of Hillsboro. The Treaty of Ghent was signed later that year. He was subjected to the practice of bleeding in the arm and tongue, customary for the times. He was at Green Hill's again.

Stuart C. Henry in *George Whitefield: Wayfaring Witness* (52, 59, 116), and Albert D. Belden in *George Whitefield: The Awakener* (*passim.*) recount briefly Whitefield's work in the American colonies several decades prior to

Asbury's initial visit to North Carolina. These are scant references to this work in Asbury's accounts. Asbury visited Whitefield's tomb in Newburyport, Massachusetts on June 25, 1802, commenting briefly on the occasion. (*Journal*, II, 348.)

Monday, 17. We proceeded to the Yadkin circuit.⁴⁴ It is well we are on this side the Dan River, the late rains might else have prevented our going on for a season. On our route we passed through Salem, a Moravian town,⁴⁵ well built after the German manner: every one appeared to be in business. We lodged at Mr. Thomson's, a settler on the Moravian lands, which is a tract of sixteen miles square: neither was the cabin comfortable, or our host pleasing.

Sunday, March 2. Came to Short's; and preached to a number of people, who appeared solemn, while I enforced "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." We rode on to L——'s, lodged in a cabin; but the bed was clean.

Monday, 3. Cold as it was, we rode from Guilford to Caswell county, a distance of twenty miles, and met with a considerable congregation, among whom were a few warm-hearted people: I hope the Lord will work here. Here was a cabin with one room, a barn, and stables. I have little time to write or place to read: the barn is my closet for prayer.

Friday, 7. I had a large congregation at Hillsboro,⁴⁶

⁴⁴ The Yadkin Circuit was formed in 1780 and embraced all the counties in North Carolina west of Guilford.

⁴⁵ The Moravians came to North Carolina in 1753, and most of them settled in what is now Forsythe County. Salem was selected as their central settlement. The first house in Salem was completed in 1769, and as early as 1794 a school for boys. In 1802 a girl's school was opened, which soon became known as Salem Female Academy. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 23.) Woodmason says that the twelve-thousand-acre tract of land on which the Moravians settled was originally a grant to George Whitefield and sold by him to Count Zinzendorf, a German Moravian. (Hooker: *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution*, 64, 77.) No evidence has been found, however, to substantiate this claim.

⁴⁶ Asbury had turned eastward and had entered the New Hope Circuit.

and there was more attention and solemnity observable than formerly. I visited three young men who are to die shortly; they wept while I talked and prayed with them. I walked to the church; it was once an elegant building, and still makes a good appearance at a distance, but within it is in ruins.⁴⁷ The calamities and destructive waste of war have been severely felt in these parts.

Tuesday, 11. Preached at Wim's to about thirty people—one or two faithful souls among them. The son of Mr. Wims has been cured of a confirmed dropsy, by the recipe of Mr. P. of Brunswick, Virginia, who has thought proper to keep his remedy secret. Would it be a wonder if God should render it unsuccessful, or that some judicial dispensation should light on those who will not make generally known a discovery so useful? O what a distressed people have been in these parts during the late contest! to the fightings without were added all the horrors of a civil war within. Poor brother B———t was twice robbed, and escaped with his life.

Saturday, 15. Preached to some Calvinistic professors, and sinners. The people are very careless, and professors are unfaithful: what have I suffered on account of these things!

Rode twenty-eight miles to H———'s,⁴⁸ O how this family is changed for the worse. Black and white now wicked. We got our horses and took our leave about an hour by sun, and came to sister Kimbrough's, where we found the family at prayer. We were wonderfully directed along a road I had never but once before trod; here my soul is blessed, my burden is gone.

Saturday, 22. I preached to a poor, unfeeling people, at a place the circuit preachers had left. We were

⁴⁷ This must have been an Anglican church as the Methodists had no house in Hillsboro at this time. On August 2, 1780, Asbury preached at the home of Mr. Cortney, a tavern keeper, in the town. (See note under that date.)

⁴⁸ This may have been Abraham Hill's. (See *Journal* entry for July 19, 1780.)

fortunate enough to eat about eleven o'clock; we got nothing more until about that hour next day; we pushed on to get to M———'s, arrived there at eight o'clock at night, there was no fodder, no supper, no prayer. Next morning we started at sunrise, and with difficulty getting over the river, came to Winstead's about ten o'clock: here we breakfasted.

Sunday, 23. I have peace. I was close and fervent in speaking at the widow T———'s. Hard times—we can scarcely get food for man or beast.

Wednesday, 26. I spoke at Green Hill's, to a proud and prayerless people, many of whom were backsliders.

Friday, 28. By getting my feet damp, I have taken cold, and have had a return of my old complaint; an inflammation in my mouth and throat; I could not eat flesh, and have little else to eat.

Saturday, 29. My throat growing worse, I was bled in the arm and tongue, which gave me some relief.

Monday, 31. Preached at T's. and P's, with some fervency: the work revives. While I am enabled to praise God for health and peace: I lament that I am too apt to catch the spirit of the people I am among: I want to be more habitually serious.

Saturday, April 5. I heard the news that peace was confirmed between England and America.⁴⁹ I had various exercises of mind on the occasion: it may cause great changes to take place amongst us; some for the better and some for the worse. It may make against the work of God: our preachers will be far more likely to settle in the world; and our people, by getting into trade, and acquiring wealth, may drink into its spirit. Believing the report to be true, I took some notice of it while I treated on Acts x, 36, at brother Clayton's, near Halifax, where they were firing their cannons, and

⁴⁹ This was doubtless a report of the provisional treaty of November 30, 1782. The final treaty was signed at Paris on September 3, 1783.

rejoicing in their way, on the occasion. This day I prevailed with brother Dickins to go to New York,⁵⁰ where I expect him to be far more useful than in his present station.

FIFTH VISIT

(December 20, 1783-January 5, 1784; age 38)

THIS WAS ASBURY'S first visit to North Carolina as an independent state, following the signing of the Treaty of Ghent in 1783. Asbury quickly established the habit of preaching in courthouses. He was a constant reader of sermonic literature; he had had no college or university training.

While on his itinerary through eastern counties, he received a letter from John Wesley in which he was appointed general assistant in America. All official Wesley itinerants to the New World had gone from America before the end of the American Revolution. (Sweet, *Men of Zeal*, Chap. III.)

In colonial days, mail service in North Carolina was "irregular, slow and unsatisfactory." As late as 1773, it required two weeks for a New Bern letter to reach Salem, and in the following year, post riders were averaging only sixteen miles per day. (Robinson, *The North Carolina Guide*, 64.)

Asbury commented interestingly on a Presbyterian. A biographical novel, *Francis Asbury: Bishop on Horseback* has been written by Dr. Norman E. Nygaard, a Presbyterian clergyman (1962).

In 1722, the village on Queen Anne's Creek was named Edenton by the legislature in honor of Governor Charles Eden. In 1767, a courthouse was built at Edenton in

⁵⁰ During the Revolutionary War, New York was occupied by the British and dropped from the list of appointments after 1777. This led some historians to declare that the work ceased and Wesley Chapel was occupied by the British army. (See Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, I, 119.) This was not the case. The work continued throughout the war under the leadership of James Dempster, Daniel Ruff, Samuel Spragg, and John Mann, a local preacher. (*John Street Records*, I; Wakeley, *Heroes of Methodism*, 260-298. Seaman, *Annals of New York Methodism*, 77ff.) On Asbury's appointment John Dickins proceeded at once to New York and took charge of the society.

Chowan County. It has been in use ever since and is one of the earliest public buildings still standing in the United States. (Lefler, *North Carolina, History, Geography, Government*, 93, 97.) On this visit Asbury received the sacraments from an Anglican pastor. He preached at the courthouse on the forty-eighth and fifty-third visits.

Very rarely did an Asbury visit extend into a new year.

Saturday, 20. I spent the evening at Colonel Williams's⁵¹ in Currituck county, North Carolina, in company with brothers Ivy, Baldwin, and Morris.⁵² The work revives; many are brought to God; and I am comforted.

Sunday, 21. I suppose we had five hundred people at Coinjock chapel.⁵³ *Monday* at White's, and *Tuesday* at Winfield court house,⁵⁴ I presume we had six or seven hundred people, inattentive and wild enough: I had little faith, and less liberty. From this neighbourhood I went to Nixonton,⁵⁵ where numbers also attended; but I spoke with little comfort to myself. Spirituous liquor is, and will be, a curse to this people.

Wednesday, 24. Set out in the rain to Hertford town (Perquimans County): I spoke in a tavern; the people seemed wild and wicked altogether. I journeyed on through the damp weather, and reached Pettigrew's about six o'clock.

Here I received a letter from Mr. Wesley, in which he directs me to act as general assistant; and to receive

⁵¹ Colonel Hallowell Williams was a prominent Methodist and a member of Congress held at Halifax in 1776. He was the first man who entertained a Methodist preacher in North Carolina, Pilmoor visited him in 1772, and Coke was in his home in 1785. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 34-36, 148.)

⁵² Richard Ivy was on Nansemond Circuit, John Baldwin was at Norfolk, and Edward Morris was on the Bertie Circuit. (*Minutes*, 1783.)

⁵³ Coinjock Chapel was an Anglican church in Currituck County which was regularly used by the Methodists. Pilmoor preached there in 1772, and Coke preached there in 1785. Coke referred to it as a "pretty chapel" and remarked that "we do regular duty in it." The Methodists have never established permanent work at Coinjock, however. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 35.)

⁵⁴ Winfield Courthouse was two miles south of Elizabeth City in Pasquotank County. It was located there from about 1758 until the 1780's. The building said to have been the courthouse is now a residence.

⁵⁵ Nixonton was on Little River in Pasquotank County.

no preachers from Europe that are not recommended by him, nor any in America, who will not submit to me, and to the minutes of the conference.

I preached in Edenton, to a gay, inattentive people: I was much pleased with Mr. Pettigrew,⁵⁶ I heard him preach, and received the Lord's supper at his hands. Thence I crossed the Chowan river, and preached, journeying through Bertie, Hertford, and Northampton counties, to considerable congregations.

Friday, January 2, 1784. Rode to Doctor P————'s. After preaching here, I saw Henry Metcalf,⁵⁷ who travels through this circuit, a man of a sorrowful spirit, and under constant heaviness.

Monday, 5. A few met me at Northampton court house; after preaching we rode on through the rain, to brother Anthony Moore's, where I was warm, dry, and comfortable.

I have read two volumes of Sermons written by Mr. Knox, of the West Indies. I am much pleased with his defence of revealed religion; and, indeed, through the whole work there is something sublime and spiritual; so catholic too, and free from peculiar doctrines: I esteem him as one of the best writers amongst the Presbyterians I have yet met with.

⁵⁶ Charles Pettigrew was the Anglican pastor at Edenton in Chowan County. He entertained the circuit riders, and his chapel on his plantation was a regular Methodist preaching place and a point on the Columbia Circuit until 1839. Asbury doubtless preached in his church, though the courthouse was sometimes used. The Methodist society was formed in 1808 by Enoch Jones. (Records of Edenton Methodist Church; Miss Alma Browning.)

A plaque bearing the following inscription to the Reverend Charles Pettigrew has been placed in historic St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Edenton:

"The Reverend Charles Pettigrew

Born in Pennsylvania

Master of Edenton Academy 1773-1775

Ordained by the Bishop of London 1775

Minister and Rector St. Paul's Church, Edenton 1775 many years

Trustee of the University of North Carolina

Chosen to be the First Bishop of North Carolina 1794 but not Consecrated.

Died in Tyrrell County 1807

Educator, Patriot, Pastor"

(Correspondence, The Rev. George B. Holmes, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Edenton, North Carolina, June 10, 1964). (Carroll).

⁵⁷ Metcalf was admitted to the conference in 1783, appointed to Pasquotank Circuit, and died in 1784. (*Minutes.*)

SIXTH VISIT

(January 31-March 17, 1784; age 38)

ASBURY had Jesse Lee (1758-1816) with him on a visit for the first time, one of the most protracted visits of the decade. Asbury apparently preached his first funeral sermon in the state. He noted a "short, simple living love feast" and commented on "plunging baptism." He indicated a favorite Scripture text. Jones Chapel was one of the earliest Methodist houses of worship in the state. He read Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, to which he often turned in later years.

An Antinomian is "one who holds that, under the gospel dispensation, the moral law is of no use or obligation, faith alone being necessary to salvation." (*Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth Edition*). The theological term, or its adherents, were referred to in the sixth, seventh, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, twenty-fourth and twenty-sixth visits. A fuller discussion of this doctrine is provided in Mack B. Stokes' *Our Methodist Heritage* (53, 54).

Louise Stahl's *Lest We Forget: Sketches of Some Makers of Early Methodism in North Carolina* has a sketch of Lee (14-17).

After riding some miles to Halifax court house, about ten o'clock in the morning, I had some coffee for my breakfast.

Saturday, 31. Preached at a church, and held a love feast. My toe, which has been inflamed for some time past, is now very troublesome. Sister Martin's kindness has been a plaster for all my sores.

Thursday, February 5. Rode to Guilford quarterly meeting;⁵⁸ thence, twenty-five miles, to Short's; and thence to Madeira's: here my toe became so bad, I was

⁵⁸ Guilford Circuit was carved out of the New Hope Circuit in 1783. Its boundaries are uncertain; but it covered most of the area between Raleigh and Greensboro, including Guilford County. The place of the quarterly meeting attended by Asbury is now known but was probably not as far west as Guilford Courthouse. (See Grissom, *op. cit.*, 97.)

obliged to halt. I applied different poultices to take out the inflammation.

Wednesday, 11. I feel much better, and hope shortly to be able to go on the Lord's work again; this is my life, my all. During my confinement I have been reading the sacred text.

Lord's Day, 15. Lord, my soul thirsteth for holiness in myself and others. I found my heart led out in prayer for those I cannot preach to. The Lord is my witness, that if my whole body, yea, every hair of my head, could labour and suffer, they should freely be given up for God and souls. During my heavy affliction I could scarcely have met with a greater disappointment than my being unable to go to the Yadkin,⁵⁹ but it might not be to any great purpose; and Providence was hindered. By the help of a stick, I can now visit the barn and stable. The more I pray, Satan tempts the more—but this is according to custom. I hope to live the life of love and holiness below, triumphing over all my foes.

Wednesday, 18. Being sent for, I went to Mr. Bostwick's (?), on Dan River.⁶⁰ I have been engaged in reading Baxter's *Saints' Rest*,⁶¹ and my soul was often drawn to God in secret prayer.

Sunday, 22. Preached at the funeral of Absalom Bostwick's daughter.

Monday, 23. Preached twice; began to fear I should stop again—my foot swelled, and my toe inflamed.

Tuesday, 24. Rode forty miles—next day preached to fifteen people.

Thursday, 26. Rode to Hillsboro. The snow was

⁵⁹ The Yadkin Circuit, which Asbury did not visit on this journey, covered all of North Carolina west of Guilford County. It was formed in 1780 and first served by Andrew Yeargin. (See *Minutes*; Grissom, *op. cit.*, map.)

⁶⁰ This was probably in Rockingham County.

⁶¹ Richard Baxter (1615-91), one of the greatest of English theologians, wrote his famous *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* in 1650. John Wesley printed extracts from Baxter's *Aphorisms of Justification* in 1745 and his *A Call to the Unconverted* in 1782.

deep—the street dirty—my horse sick—the people drinking and swearing. I endeavored to preach on “A man’s gaining the whole world,” &c.

Friday, 27. Brothers Allen and J. Cromwell ⁶² were with me: we took sweet counsel together, and refreshed each other’s bowels in the Lord.

Thursday, March 4. Preached at Browder’s, and then hastened to the widow Kimbrough’s. Here I was wonderfully entertained with a late publication by Silas Mercer, a Baptist preacher, in which he has anathematized the whole race of kings from Saul to George III. His is republicanism run mad. Why afraid of religious establishments in these days of enlightened liberty? Silas has beaten the Pope, who only on certain occasions, and for certain reasons, absolves subjects from allegiance to their sovereigns; and if the nations of Europe believed the sweeping doctrines of Silas, they would be right to decapitate every crowned head, and destroy every existing form of Church government. If plunging-baptism is the only true ordinance, and there can be no true Church without it, it is not quite clear that ever Christ had a Church until the Baptists *plunged* for it.

Sunday, 7. Although the day was unfavourable, many attended at Pope’s Chapel, where I was wonderfully assisted, and enabled to be close on 2 Cor. xiii, 5—a favourite subject. We had a short, simple, living love feast.

Monday, 8. I enlarged on Isa. iv, 6, 7, at Pope’s chapel. This neighbourhood has been poisoned by preaching Antinomianism; but I hope it will yet come to something.

Thursday, 11. After preaching at S————’s, we rode to Long’s.⁶³ I have had great times in Tar River cir-

⁶² Beverly Allen was on the Salisbury Circuit and James O. Cromwell on the Pittsylvania Circuit.

⁶³ Long lived in Edgecomb County near the Halifax County lines.

cuit;⁶⁴ the congregations have been large and living, more so than in any circuit I have passed through since I crossed the Potomac.

Wednesday, 17. I preached at Jones's Chapel ⁶⁵—a better house than I expected to have seen built by the Methodists in North Carolina. We then rode fifteen miles to W———'s, where we were kindly received, and comfortably entertained.

SEVENTH VISIT

(January 20-February 15, 1785; age 39)

FRANCIS ASBURY had been elected bishop at the famed Christmas Conference at Baltimore's Lovely Lane Chapel on December 26, 1784. This was his first episcopal visit to the state. He came from Virginia and continued to South Carolina. He soon developed the habit of spending some of every winter in that state. He made an interesting comment on the mode of baptism. He was compelled to borrow a horse twice on the visit.

Asbury made two other visits to North Carolina in 1785. The story is related of his giving up formal attire at public appearances. (See also Tipple: *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 149.)

Asbury and Lee were at St. David's Episcopal Church, Cheraw, South Carolina on their visit to the state. Lee heard of the low state of religion in New England from a native of Massachusetts there and decided to go to New England. He subsequently became the "virtual founder of New England Methodism." St. David's Church, partially restored in 1953, still stands. (Footnote, *Journal* I, 482.)

Thursday, 20. My horse was lame. I rode with patience to A. Arnet's⁶⁶ and was blest: we rejoiced in the Lord together.

⁶⁴ Tar River Circuit lay east of the New Hope and stretched from near Raleigh through the valleys of the Tar, Neuse, and Pamlico Rivers. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, map).

⁶⁵ Jones lived in the western part of Halifax County. Jesse Lee preached his first sermon in Jones's barn.

⁶⁶ Arnet must have lived in Rockingham County. Asbury again stayed there on March 1, 1786.

Friday, 21. After preaching at Thompson's (Forsythe County), and baptizing some children, we set out for Short's (Rowan County). Travelling onward we came to a creek: it was so dark by this time that we could not find the ford; we rode back a mile, and engaged a young man who undertook to be our guide, but he himself was scarcely able to keep the way. We rode with great pain to Waggoner's chapel, and after pushing on through deep streams, I had only nine hearers; this was owing to the carelessness of the person who should have published the notice of our coming.

Sunday, 23. I had about one hundred hearers; to whom I spoke on Josh. xxiv, 15. We lodged with F. C., who was very kind, although he could afford but one bed for three. The horses fared well. Next morning we set off, and came to Old Town instead of Salem:⁶⁷ by the evening, we reached brother Hill's, on the Yadkin circuit. Thus far the Lord has led me on; and I still hope to get along according to appointment.

Friday, 28. My horse being unfit to travel, I borrowed another, and went on seventeen miles to Fisher's river, where I met with a few poor people. Thence we rode through the barren mountains, and crossed the frequent rivers in our course, and came to W————'s; 29th, next day I preached at Heady's, and rode on to the Herndon's⁶⁸ in Wilkes County: here we were kindly en-

⁶⁷ Salem was a Moravian community in Forsythe County, founded in 1766. It was one of the communities of the "Wachovia Tract," an area of 100,000 acres secured by Bishop Spangenberg in 1753. Washington visited the community in 1791. It was later united with Winston, which was chartered in 1851 to become Winston-Salem. (Silvers: *Forsyth County*, 14-18.) Old Town is a community a few miles north of Winston-Salem.

⁶⁸ Colonel Joseph Herndon lived in "a hospitable mansion on the headwaters of the Peedee," or Yadkin, River in Wilkes County, North Carolina. (Shipp: *Methodism in South Carolina*, 152.) Jesse Lee, who had not attended the Christmas Conference, came from Salisbury and joined Asbury here. The party now consisted of Asbury, Henry Willis, Woolman Hickson, and Lee. Asbury was wearing "black gown, cassock, and band," and Lee objected to this dress as unbecoming a Methodist simplicity. Asbury laid it aside and seldom wore it again. Strickland says he wore gown and bands when he dedicated Cokesbury College, but Smith denies this. (Lee: *Life and Times of Jesse Lee*, 149; Strickland: *The Pioneer Bishop*, 163; Smith: *Francis Asbury*, 89, 94.)

tertained, although there were few people to preach to. Nothing could have better pleased our old Church folks⁶⁹ than the late step we have taken in administering the ordinances; to the Catholic Presbyterians, it also gives satisfaction; but the Baptists are discontented.

Thursday, February 3. Rode twenty miles to Wither-
spoon's: here was a large assemblage of people; some to pay and receive taxes; some to drink; and some to hear me preach: I gave them a rough talk on Rev. ii, 5-8. From this place we rode to Allen's. The people here are famous for talking about religion: and here and there is a horse thief.

Sunday, 6. Yesterday some were prevented from offering their children to God in baptism, by a zealous Baptist: to-day brother Willis spoke on the right of infants to baptism; our opposer soon took his leave.

Monday, 7. I preached at Elsberry's, and rode thirty-one miles to Morgan Bryan's. The weather has been cold and uncomfortable. I have ridden on the horse I borrowed, nearly three hundred miles in about nine days.

Tuesday, 8. I observed this as a day of abstinence. I preached and administered the sacrament: held a love feast—our friends were greatly comforted. Here I plunged four adults,⁷⁰ at their own request, they being persuaded that this was the most proper mode of baptizing.

Thursday, 10. Rode to Salisbury,⁷¹ where, as it was court time, I had but few hearers; and some of these made their escape when I began to insist on the neces-

⁶⁹ The "old Church folks" were the former Anglicans.

⁷⁰ "In one of his letters Asbury declared that owing to the encroachments of the Baptists in Virginia, baptism by immersion was practiced, but abandoned at the end of the year." (Tipple, *Heart of Asbury's Journal*, 234.)

⁷¹ Methodism was introduced in Salisbury in 1783 by Beverly Allen, and a circuit was formed with thirty members. An account of the first sermon preached in a schoolhouse there was written by a convert and is preserved in Lednum. (*Op. cit.*, 372-76; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 245-47.)

sity of holiness—a subject this which the Antinomians do not like to hear pressed too closely.

Tuesday, 15. I gave up my horse, and borrowed one of Mr. Randall's.⁷² I fear my horse will lose his eyes. I visited B———; one who has departed from God; he appeared to be sensible of, and lamented it; yet, he said, he had not power to pray and seek.

EIGHTH VISIT

(March 19-April 26, 1785; age 39)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina to Virginia, apparently completing his first episcopal tour. The Conference at Green Hills was the First Annual Conference of the newly-organized Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Coke was present. The first Conference, or "Conversations," as they were called, was held in the Foundry in London with John and Charles Wesley on June 25-29, 1744. (Tees, *Methodist Origins*, 118.)

Asbury's meeting with Governor Richard Caswell was the only one with a governor of the state. Caswell served as governor seven one-year terms, more than any other man in the state's history. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 173.) A Historical Highway Marker indicates his grave near Kinston, N. C.

Asbury was acquainted with many political leaders, as Calhoun of South Carolina, Gough of Maryland, Bassett of Delaware, Governor Tiffin of Ohio, Lieutenant Governor Van Courtland of New York and others. (Intro., *Journal*.) An article on his friendships with prominent political figures is found in *Methodist History*, I, No. 4, July, 1963, 14 ff.

⁷² John Randall lived in the present Stanley County, a few miles north of Norwood. Jesse Lee, traveling the Salisbury Circuit, preached in his home in 1784. "The man of the house was always deaf and dumb," said Lee, but "He is esteemed as a pious man." The community became a regular preaching place and Asbury stopped there on numerous occasions (February 15, 1785; April 3, 1789; December 20, 1793; November 16, 1798; February 23, 1800; December 8, 1804.) Services were first conducted in the Randall house and then in a brush arbor. A church was erected before 1800. Randall Church is now the oldest in Stanley County. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 248.)

Martin Ruter, "Spiritual Father of Texas," president of two Methodist colleges consecutively, scholar and book agent of the Western Book Concern, was born on April 3, 1783, in Charlton, Worcester County, Massachusetts, during this visit. Asbury was his bishop in Ruter's early ministry. His unpublished materials showed he had begun a biography of Asbury. (Gross, *Martin Ruter: Pioneer in Methodist Education*, *passim*.) Ruter's name appeared on the "Mite Subscription" list prepared by Asbury shortly before the latter's death. (*Letters*, 528.)

Asbury noted a "bell went round" to assemble people for worship, as town criers assembled Europeans in earlier generations.

Hearing of brother Daniel at Town Creek (about ten miles south of Wilmington), I resolved to make a push for his house; it was forty miles distant, and I did not start until nine o'clock. I dined at Lockwood's Folly,⁷³ and got in about seven o'clock. O, how happy was I to be received, and my dear friends to receive me! I have been out for six weeks, and ridden near five hundred miles among strangers to me, to God, and to the power of religion. How could I live in the world if there were no Christians in it!

Saturday, 19. After preaching at Town Creek, I rode in the evening to Wilmington,⁷⁴ night came on before we reached there, and from the badness of the causeway, I ran some risk; we went to ———, but he was not

⁷³ Lockwood's Folly was the present Supply, thirty-seven miles below Wilmington on Lockwood's Folly River. The settlement was established by and named for a Mr. Lockwood from Barbados, who was driven away by the Indians. (*A New Voyage to Georgia*, in Georgia Historical Society Publication, Vol. II, quoted in the *Wilmington Messenger*, August 22, 1897, 16.)

⁷⁴ The Methodists had difficulty in establishing a permanent society in Wilmington. A class was formed on the Cape Fear River near Wilmington before the Revolutionary War by Philip Bruce and James O'Kelly, but it did not endure. In 1784 Beverly Allen and James Hinton were sent to form a circuit, but their small classes were not permanent. They reported only eighty members in the whole Cape Fear area, and in 1786 Wilmington was merged with the Bladen Circuit. The first class of white people was formed in Wilmington in 1797, and it was said that "the blacks were much more attentive to religion than the whites." (Lee: *History of the Methodists*, 209; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 219, 224.)

prepared to receive us, after to ———, where we had merry, singing, drunken raftsmen; to their merriment I soon put a stop. I felt the power of the devil there.

Sunday, 20. The bell went round to give notice, and I preached to a large congregation. When I had done, behold, F. Hill came into the room powdered off, with a number of fine ladies and gentlemen. As I could not get my horse and bags, I heard him out: I verily believe his sermon was his own, it was so much like his conversation. I came away well satisfied that I had delivered my own soul.

Monday, 21. On my way I stopped at A———'s and baptized some children; the poor mother held out a piece of gold to me. This is the pay of the priests here for such service: Lord, keep me from the love of honour, money, and ease.

Wednesday, 23. I had a few hearers at the Lake Waccamaw chapel. There has been much injury done here to the cause of religion by some who promised much in this way, and performed little. I lodged near the Waccamaw Lake, which is seven miles in circumference, fed by several streams running through the adjacent marshes, and surrounded nearly on all sides by a sandy beach; this is a desert country; has few inhabitants, and fewer still who have any deep sense of religion.

Tuesday, 29. Rode to Elizabethtown, crossing the north-east branch of Cape Fear River. I called at S———'s, and offered baptism to his sick wife, which she declined accepting; after I came away she was distressed at her refusal, and sent her son four miles after me; myself and my horse were both weary, but I returned and had a solemn time.

Wednesday, April 6. I preached at Swansboro⁷⁵ in

⁷⁵ Asbury had followed a roundabout route from Wilmington, turning back westward to Lake Waccamaw in Columbus County, northward to Elizabethtown in Bladen County, and then eastward on a long ride to Swansboro.

sight of the sea. Here are a wicked people indeed; nevertheless, a few have joined society.

Monday, April 11. Preached in the court house at Kinston. I was entertained very kindly by Governor Caswell.⁷⁶

Tuesday, 19. Preached at the Cypress chapel, and had many people to hear. I met Doctor Coke at Green Hill's that evening: here we held our conferences in great peace.⁷⁷

Monday, 25. I rode to Doctor Peets: this man has given up family and private prayer, and yet is in distress about his soul.

Tuesday, 26. I preached at Bridge Creek chapel.⁷⁸ I was very ill, and was tempted to think the Lord was about to lay me aside, or take me away, and detain Doctor Coke in America.

⁷⁶ Richard Caswell (1729-89) was governor of North Carolina in 1776-80 and served a second term in 1785-87. (*Dictionary of American Biography*, III, 571.) The capitol of the state was at New Bern. Caswell lived at Kinston and is buried there.

⁷⁷ This conference which Asbury mentions so briefly was the first conference of the newly formed Methodist Episcopal Church and the fourteenth in America. It represented the Carolinas and Virginia, in which there were 31 circuits and 9,063 members. It was held in the home of the Rev. Major Green Hill, one mile from Louisburg, North Carolina. Hill was a man of prominence, a large holder of slaves, a member of each Provincial Congress, treasurer of the state, and a major and chaplain in the Provincial Army. The house in which about twenty preachers were entertained at this conference is still standing and occupied. Hill later moved to Tennessee, and in his home near Nashville, called "Liberty Hill," Bishop McKendree held the first Tennessee conference in 1808. At the 1785 conference Coke objected to the passage of Lee's character, although he repented and apologized. The few ordained elders were placed over groups of circuits at this conference and thus originated the office of presiding elder, although the term was not used until 1789. Here also Beverly Allen was ordained deacon and elder, probably the first Methodist ordinations in North Carolina. (Lee: *Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee*, 159; Smith; *History of Georgia Methodism*, 27-28; Shipp, *op. cit.*, 157.)

⁷⁸ Bridge Creek Chapel in the old colonial precinct of Bertie was an Anglican chapel and a regular preaching place for the Methodists. (*Historical Papers of Trinity Historical Association*, 9-13, 57.)

NINTH VISIT

(December 17-December 25, 1785; age 40)

ASBURY was following his usual pattern of coming from and returning to Virginia, traveling primarily in eastern counties, the part of the state to be settled first. He met some state legislators, as the assembly was in session. He noted some dangers he faced in travels.

Missing in accounts of Asbury's visits to New Bern are references to his visiting Royal Governor William Tryon's Palace, built in 1767-1770 and partially destroyed by fire in 1798. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 195, 259.)

Peter Cartwright was born on September 1, 1785 in Amherst County, Virginia. He himself preached some 14,000 sermons, received about 10,000 persons into the church, baptized about 12,000 persons, served as member of Congress and was a typical backwoods preacher and powerful exponent of "muscular Christianity." He attended eleven conferences. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1960 ed., Vol. 4, 950). He wrote *The Backwoods Preacher: An Autobiography of Peter Cartwright*. Potts' *Letters* (352) preserves a copy of *The Ordination of Peter Cartwright*.

Saturday, 17. Having proceeded on, I arrived at Brother Reddrick's, in Gates's county, North Carolina, where I spoke a little.

Sunday, 18. I had more hearers at Winton⁷⁹ than I expected; they were attentive to what I said on Joshua xxiv, 19.

At Wicocon the glory is departed. A few Baptist women stood at a distance and wept, whilst I administered the sacrament; they dared not come to the table, lest they should be discovered by their own people.

On *Thursday* last we made an attempt to cross the Roanoke at Cashie⁸⁰ but could not get a flat; we then made for Oliver's ferry, and having no knowledge of

⁷⁹ Winton is across Chowan River in Hertford County.

⁸⁰ The Cashie River flows into the Roanoke. The present crossing is at Windsor in Bertie County.

the way, I waded through Rock West twice, and wet my books. The river was rising rapidly, and we had still six miles to Long Ferry: I was very unwell, and my spirits greatly sunk. After getting over, our difficulties did not cease; we had to wade several deep and dangerous swamps: we, at length, by kind Providence, were brought safely to brother Currell's, where we met brother Morris.⁸¹ The two following days we went on in the same manner, both horses and riders sometimes in danger as they worried through the swampy wilds.

A solitary day this!—plenty of water, if nothing else. We employed a black man to ride our horses, and we took to a canoe; being remounted, and journeying on, we came to a stream that was impassable—we found ourselves under the necessity of going round by Martinsburg, and thus got into the road, and now pushed forward with spirit, until we came to Swift's Creek;⁸² here the causeway was overflowed, and the logs most of them afloat; my horse fell, but I was preserved by his securing a fore-foot hold on the timber after falling; thus we toiled over our swampy routes and crazy bridges, till seven o'clock; and about that time arrived at Neuse Ferry, having ridden about forty tedious miles.

Came to Newbern.⁸³ Found brothers Allen and Baldwin⁸⁴ in the church; I preached at three o'clock, on

⁸¹ Edward Morris was one of the preachers on the Roanoke Circuit which extended into this section of North Carolina. (See *Minutes*.)

⁸² Asbury probably reached Swift's Creek in Pitt County. Since entering North Carolina he had proceeded through the present Gates, Hertford, Bertie, and Edgecomb counties. This whole section was a "swampy route" traversed by the Roanoke, Tar, Neuse, and Pamlico rivers, Swift and Fishing creeks, and other streams.

⁸³ New Bern in Craven County was laid out by Baron Christoph von Grafenried shortly after 1710 and named for the capitol of his native Switzerland. Here was established in 1762 the first school authorized by legislative enactment in North Carolina. Pilmoor preached in New Bern at Christmas in 1772, and stayed with William Wood there. Methodism flourished in the town during the early period. (*Account of the Founding of New Bern*; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 7, 37, 169, 320.)

⁸⁴ John Baldwin was serving the Wilmington Circuit. Beverly Allen had been on that circuit the previous year and had remained in North Carolina in 1785 even though he had been appointed to Georgia. (See *Minutes*; Betts: *South Carolina Methodism*, 55.)

"The world by wisdom knew not God." The assembly was in session and some of the members were friendly.⁸⁵

Wednesday, 21. Sailed down to Beaufort, and preached in the church.⁸⁶ The people are kind, but have very little religion. On the same evening I pushed down to the Straits,⁸⁷ and the next day preached at the Straits chapel; thence I returned to town, and preached again; after which we sailed back to Colonel Bell's,⁸⁸ whence we first started.

Saturday and *Sunday*, 24, 25. We held quarterly meeting at Swansboro; many people—little religion.

We came to Ford's ferry on Drowning creek.⁸⁹ The waters had risen; and extended far outwards from the banks of the stream; here we were brought to a full stop: providentially, we found a man there who was waiting for his brother to fetch him over; the brother came, and we all crossed over together; not, however, without danger—bushes would strike the horses, and their capering about had well-nigh upset the boat.

TENTH VISIT

(February 2-March 28, 1786; age 40)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina to Virginia. He attended a three-day conference at Salisbury. Interesting references were made to the liquor problem and treatment

⁸⁵ New Bern at this time was the state capitol.

⁸⁶ The church at Beaufort was Anglican and was used by preachers of various denominations and also for school purposes. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 149.)

⁸⁷ The Straits was a mainland community fourteen miles by land from Beaufort, bordering the straits of Core Sound. The Straits Chapel was Tabernacle Church, an Anglican meetinghouse.

⁸⁸ Colonel and Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Bell's sister were the first Methodists in the New Bern area, and Bell's Chapel was one of the first meeting-houses for Methodists. Colonel Bell's two sons, Caleb and Jacob, became Methodist preachers. (*Ibid.*, 150.)

⁸⁹ Drowning Creek rises in Moore County and flows through Scotland and Robeson counties. East of Robeson it is known as Lumber River. Asbury probably crossed in Robeson County.

of his illnesses. His reference to "a good house of logs" was one of the earliest made to a Methodist building in these accounts. A collection was taken for him.

At the Christmas Conference in 1784 in Baltimore, John Dickins offered a resolution, which was adopted, that chose the name "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America" for the new church. He died in 1798 of yellow fever and was buried at historic Old St. George's Methodist Church, Philadelphia. (Stahl, *op. cit.*, 11-13.)

Andrew Jackson took up the study of law at Salisbury in 1784, was admitted to the bar there in 1787, and began to practice at Martinville, Guilford County. In the following year, he moved to what is now the state of Tennessee. ("Andrew Jackson," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1960, Vol. 12, 851.)

*Thursday, February 2.*⁹⁰ We made a push for the Highlands, and got as far as brother Smith's. On *Friday* we aimed to get to the Horse Ford; but missing our way, we made but twenty-five miles, reaching Herman's who treated us kindly, and would receive nothing—this was well for us, for we had but little to give.

Saturday, 4. Was a very rainy day; however, we pushed on, and rode this day about fifty miles. We crossed the north branch of the Catawba River, and arriving late at the south branch, we providentially met with a man who was acquainted with the ford and piloted us safe over; it was dark, and the river mild: through a heavy day's journey we came, wet and weary, to Mr. Moore's.

Sunday, 5. I preached at brother Connelly's, where there is a large society, and a revival of religion.

Monday, 6. We rode to W. White's, and appointed preaching for the next day; here I had about one hundred hearers.

⁹⁰ Asbury entered North Carolina into present Cleveland County and proceeded northward.

Wednesday, 8. We rode forty computed, and, perhaps, in truth, fifty miles, to quarterly meeting at Gordon's, at the Mulberry Fields, on the Yadkin River: here we met with brothers Ivey, Bingham, and Williamson.⁹¹ *Thursday*, the sacrament was a time of refreshing.

Saturday, 11. I rode through rain and hail to B———'s, and preached to a few serious people on Psalm cxxviii, and we were blessed together. O, what happiness do they lose who never visit the poor in their cottages!

Sunday, 12. At Joseph Herndon's⁹² it was a chilly day, but there was some life among the people.

Monday, 13. There were many to hear at K———'s.

My rides are little short of twenty miles a day in this mountainous country, besides my public labours; my soul has peace, but this body is heavy and afflicted with pain.

Tuesday, 14. We rode through the snow to Heady's, where, to my surprise, I found that the poor people had built a good house of logs; and not satisfied with this, they must needs collect a little money for me, if I would receive it.

Sunday, 19. Preached at Morgan Bryan's. Next day I set off in the rain, and travelled with it; we swam Grant's creek, and reached Salisbury in the evening, wet and weary. I thought we should scarcely have preachers at the time appointed, but the bad weather did not stop their coming. We spent three days in conference, and went through our business with satisfac-

⁹¹ The quarterly conference was for the Yadkin Circuit. Richard Ivey was the elder over the Caswell, Salisbury, and Halifax circuits; Henry Bingham and Thomas Williamson were on the Yadkin Circuit. (*Minutes*, 1785.) Asbury was in Caldwell and Wilkes counties.

⁹² Colonel Joseph Herndon lived in eastern Wilkes County. (See note under note under *Journal* entry for February 10, 1785.)

tion.⁹³ Having sent our horses into the country, we could not get them when they were wanted; I therefore borrowed brother Tunnell's⁹⁴ horse, and went on to my appointments.

Wednesday, March 1. I found many waiting at Newman's church, Rockingham County, to whom I enlarged on, "Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Provisions here are scarce: some of our friends from the Delaware are suffering. I arrived in the night at A. Arnett's: my being in a poor cottage did not prevent my being happy, for God was with me.

Thursday, 2. I preached on, "This do in remembrance of me," and it was a solemn, good time.

Saturday, 4. At the widow Dick's the preachers fell in with each other: there were Foster, Ellis, L., and Hull,⁹⁵ the latter is a smooth-tongued pretty speaker, a youth that promises fair for future usefulness.

Tuesday, 7. At Stanfield's I had many hearers, and more liberty in speaking than I have had for some time past. It is hard to get and preserve the spirit of preaching; it seems as if God, at times and places, withholds his Spirit from his servants; or else the power of Satan is so strong as to depress the life and liberty of the speaker.

⁹³ The conference at Salisbury was one of three held in 1786, the others being at Lane's Chapel in Virginia the following April and at Baltimore in May. Twenty-four preachers attended the Salisbury conference, seven of them being entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Fishburn. The latter had joined the society under Beverly Allen in 1783. (Lednum, *op. cit.*, 374; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 126. See note under *Journal* entry for February 10, 1785.)

⁹⁴ John Tunnell (1755-90) was one of the preachers ordained at the Christmas Conference and had been stationed at Charleston, South Carolina, but later became one of the pioneers of Methodism in the Holston country, where he died at Sweet Springs, Virginia, in July, 1790. Asbury preached his funeral. (See *Journal* entry for July 10, 1790; Price: *Holston Methodism*, I, 176-83.)

⁹⁵ James Foster was elder in Georgia, Reuben Ellis an elder in North Carolina, and Hope Hull was on the Pee Dee Circuit. The L might have been Jesse Lee, who had strong North Carolina connections but who was at this time on the Caroline Circuit in Maryland. He was on that circuit until March of this year and was at the conference in Virginia on April 10. It would have been possible for him to attend the North Carolina session in the interim. (Lee: *Life and Times of the Rev. Jesse Lee*, 182.)

Friday, 10. I rode once more to Hillsboro, where I met with a cool reception: I am now satisfied never to visit that place again until they have a society formed, constant preaching, and a desire to see me. O, what a county this is! We can but just get food for our horses. I am grieved, indeed, for the sufferings, the sins, and the follies of the people.

Tuesday, 21. Came to Whitaker's chapel, near Fishing Creek,⁹⁶ where I spoke, with but little consolation to myself, to about seventy souls. I feel my body unwell; but my soul is stayed in cheerful dependence upon God.

Wednesday, 22. Rode to D.'s chapel, where I was met by about fifty hearers: spirituous liquors have greatly injured the people here.

Friday, 24. At Conniconnara chapel, I had nearly gone through my subject when a man began to talk; his brother carried him away, after fruitless endeavors to silence him. Brother Dickins spoke, and I came away in great pain to brother Clayton's.

Saturday, 25. I took some Hiera Picra⁹⁷ and felt better. Read Form of Discipline, in manuscript, which brother Dickins has been preparing for the press.⁹⁸

Sunday, 26. We had a large congregation, and a solemn time at brother Clayton's. After meeting returned to brother Dickins's. He and his wife cleave to God; but there is a great declension elsewhere.

⁹⁶ Whitaker's Chapel on Fishing Creek in Halifax County, North Carolina, was notable and was perhaps the meetinghouse of John Dickins when he lived in the county. Nearby lived Mr. Long and Mr. Bustian who made the first gifts to the school which Dickins had planned.

⁹⁷ Hiera Picra was "a cathartic powder made of aloes and canella bark." (*Webster's New International Dictionary.*)

⁹⁸ This was the first Discipline in its present form, Dickins after two years at Wesley Chapel in New York had returned to North Carolina to serve the Bertie Circuit. This circuit was formed from a part of the Roanoke Circuit in 1783 and contained some of the points served previously by Dickins. At the Salisbury Conference he was again sent to New York, later to become the first Book Agent. (Moore: *Pioneers of Methodism in North Carolina and Virginia*, 106-17; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 60-61, 103).

Tuesday, 28. I called on sister Bruce, at whose house I preached when she lived near Portsmouth, Virginia. I found her at the point of death, her soul filled with the peace and love of God.

ELEVENTH VISIT

(February 8-March 9, 1787; age 41)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia to South Carolina through eastern counties. He noted hazardous travels in this section. The Cape Fear is one of the state's major rivers. Other major rivers are Tar, Neuse, Roanoke, Yadkin, and Catawba. (Lemert and Harrelson, *op. cit.*, 10.)

Asbury noted his favorite Scripture text, I Timothy i, 15, and the observance of a love feast. The first observance of a love feast by Methodists in America was recorded by Joseph Pilmoor. Dr. Frank Baker traces the origin, observance and later development of the love feast in American Methodism briefly in *Methodism and the Love Feast* (49).

Thursday, 8. Came on, wet and unwell, to Proby's.

Went on to Nixonton,⁹⁹ where I had many to hear, and was blessed in my own soul, and, I think, spoke to the cases of some of my audience.

Friday, 9. I had a long ride of nearly fifty miles to Gates County. We stopped at one Newby's, one of the Society of Friends, who entertained us kindly. We reached sister Gipson's¹⁰⁰ cold and weary. The poor flesh complains, but my soul enjoys peace and sweetness.

⁹⁹ Nixonton was on Little River in Pasquotank County. Asbury had entered the state through Camden County and proceeded southward along the general course he pursued in 1784.

¹⁰⁰ In a letter to Asbury written from Knotty Pine Chapel in Gates County, on March 17, 1799, Mrs. I (or J.) Baker, wife of a preacher, mentioned Ann Gipson among those who had died in the community. "Ann Gipson, converted from the height of pride and vanity to a humble lover of God and man; full of good works." (Moore: *op. cit.*, 35; also *Letters*.)

Sunday, 11. We had a large congregation and an open time at Knotty Pine chapel. Here we have a little revival.

Tuesday, 13. I had about sixty people at Wicocon: I spoke as I felt, on Jer. xiii, 11. I mourned over the people and left them.

I came to Hardy's where I spoke with some light on Matt. xxii, 5. I unhappily ran a splinter into my leg, which has alarmed me.

I found we had to go twelve miles by water, and send the horses another way. O what a world of swamps, and rivers, and islands, we live in here! I met brother B——— and A———; two devoted young men; the former a native of Maryland, the latter of Virginia. At the desire of several of the brethren I preached at Washington,¹⁰¹ where many collected in the courthouse, whom I addressed on my favourite text, I Tim. i, 15. Three miles on the water, and riding three more on roads under the water (such is the inundated state of the country), made our jaunt unpleasant.

Thursday, 22. We set off for Newbern. Stopped at Kemp's Ferry, kept by Curtis, where we were kindly entertained *gratis*. I feel heaviness through labour and temptation, yet I am given up to God.

Friday, 23. I arrived at Newbern. I felt the power of death as I journeyed along. We rode round the town, and could get no certain information about preaching, brother Cole ¹⁰² being absent. We were at last taken in at Mr. Lathrop's. The place and people were in such a

¹⁰¹ There were Methodists in Washington, Beaufort County, as early as 1784. It was taken into the Pamlico Circuit in 1789. The first meetinghouse was built in 1789, largely by Ralph Potts, an Englishman who is regarded as the father of Methodism in Washington. It was on the east side of Market Street near the courthouse. Asbury visited the community in 1801 and 1802. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 150, 152.)

¹⁰² Lee Roy Cole (1749-1830) was the elder over circuits which included Newbern. He was licensed to preach by George Shadford and went to North Carolina in 1777. He was ordained at the Christmas Conference. For some reason he was suspended in 1785 but was readmitted the following year. (See note under December 20, 1786; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 61-63.)

state, that I judged, by my own feelings, it would be as well to leave them just as I found them—and so I did.

Tuesday, 27. It was rather a dry time at the love feast and sacrament. There was some life and melting while I enforced, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." We rode then to H——'s, on Island Creek. I went alone into the woods, and had sweet converse with God. At night we were poorly provided against the weather; the house was unfinished; and, to make matters worse, a horse kicked the door open, and I took a cold, and had the toothache, with a high fever.

Thursday, March 1. I had more hearers, and they were more attentive than I expected: I trust it was a profitable time. Rode to brother Johnson's—without the labour of slaves he manages to have abundance for man and beast.

Tuesday, 6. My horse is stiff, and almost foundered, and there is an appearance of a swelling on his head. I have always had hard struggles to get to Charleston. Lord, give me patience, and bear me up!

Wednesday, 7. Crossed the main ford of Black River, and came through a wild country to Colonel R——'s; the colonel's wife is a tender, devoted woman.

Thursday and Friday, 8, 9. Directed our course to the south: crossed Cape Fear, and reached Drowning Creek. Rested a day at W——'s, a kind people, but without religion.

TWELFTH VISIT

(April 7-April 15, 1787; age 41)

ASBURY and Coke traveled together from South Carolina to Virginia on one of the briefest visits of the decade. Interestingly, Asbury did not refer to Coke as Superintendent or Bishop here. (He did refer to him as Bishop Coke in

1814, as Coke was sailing to Ceylon.) He often indicated the sermon topic or text of his traveling companion.

The First Annual Conference held in South Carolina was in March, 1787. It was there that Superintendents of the Church first called themselves bishops in the *Minutes*. This was not changed by the members of the Conference in subsequent *Minutes*, thus in 1787 and afterwards, Asbury and Coke were called bishops. (Footnote, *Journal*, I, 536.) Asbury referred to himself thus on November 10, 1804: "The Superintendent Bishop of the Methodist Church in America being reduced to two dollars, he was obliged to make his wants known." (*Journal*, II, 446.)

For many years, preachers were promised, but not always paid, the salary of sixty-four dollars per year. Between 1800 and 1816, this was raised to eighty dollars. In 1816, the amount was raised to one hundred dollars. (Gross, *The Beginnings of American Methodism*, 67). Bishop Robert R. Roberts, successor of Asbury in 1816, in early years had a salary of but \$200.00 and traveling expenses with an additional allowance for his family. (Tippy, *Frontier Bishop*, 128.)

Saturday and Sunday, 7, 8. Attended Anson quarterly meeting, in North Carolina: the Doctor preached on, The Love of Christ, and I on, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation"; sacrament followed.

From *Saturday to Saturday*, I have ridden about three hundred miles and have preached only about half the time. O may the Lord seal and water his own word, that all this toil of man and beast be not in vain!

Tuesday, 10. The Doctor and myself preached to a few simple people at W's, I hope not in vain. At our next meeting we had many hearers. We have scarcely time to eat or sleep.

Thursday, 12. I preached at Salisbury. Afterward rode to Huggins's, where we had many hearers, and a melting among the people.

Good Friday, 13. I was much led out at Caton's.

Thence to M'Knight's chapel,¹⁰³ where we found a living people.

Saturday, 14. We hasted to C——y church, where we had many people: after riding twenty-two miles, we had another meeting about six o'clock; and about midnight got into bed.

Sunday, 15. Rose about six o'clock, and went to New-man's church, (Rockingham County) where the Doctor and myself both preached: the people were rather wild, and we were unwell. I came to Arnat's about eight o'clock, having ridden forty miles: the Doctor went to Dick's ferry, and did not get in until near midnight.

THIRTEENTH VISIT

(January 20-February 21, 1788; age 42)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia to South Carolina through eastern counties. He provided main points of a sermon delivered at Sampson Courthouse, where he had an estimated 500 persons attending. On another occasion he had 800. The region was settled about 1775. Campbellton and Cross Creek were later united and incorporated as Fayetteville in honor of Marquis de Lafayette. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 102.)

Sunday, 20. I preached at Col. Jarvis's; and on *Monday* at Saunders's: dull times at both these places.

Tuesday, 22. At Coinjock ¹⁰⁴ there is a death here—

¹⁰³ McKnight's Chapel, named for George McKnight, was in Yadkin, now Forsyth County, near Clemmonsville, now Clemmons. Conferences were held here in 1789, 1790 and 1791. McKnight's home was one of the earliest preaching places for Methodists. An inscription on his tombstone in the cemetery of Sharon Church near Lewisville reads: "The memory of George McKnight Senu (Senior) born July 8, 1765. Departed this life March 22, 1847. He lived 81 years 8 mont and 14 day. In youth he joind the Methad (Methodists) then maryed got sotfkt (sophisticated) joined the Morafens (Moravians) then moved to Stoks had preaching in his oan house." (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 95, 126 ff. Inscription furnished by G. R. Stafford of Lewisville.)

¹⁰⁴ Asbury traveled through Currituck and nearby counties on the ninth visit.

has been experimenting on extremes; wise doctrine-hard discipline. I doubt whether it will end well.

I have ridden about eighty miles, and preached four times to about eight hundred people, most of whom were dead and ignorant; yet I hope God will arise.

Currituck—a pleasant place: I rode along the shore and enjoyed the view of its banks of evergreen.

I preached at Camden court house with freedom, but the people appeared insensible: after meeting, we rode, hungry and cold, to brother C——'s.¹⁰⁵

Thursday, 24. We had a violent storm; so we kept within doors; and man and beast were well provided for.

Friday, 25. Was an uncommonly cold and windy day; I nevertheless attempted to preach at Richardson's chapel. In the evening visited W. P.

Saturday, 26 and Sunday, 27. We had cold weather, and cold people at the quarterly meeting at Flatty Creek Chapel.¹⁰⁶ On Sabbath evening I preached at Nixonton (in Pasquotank County on Little River).

Monday, 28. Rode to Gates's; and next day preached at Knotty Pine chapel:¹⁰⁷ there were but few people, and it was a barren meeting.

Wednesday, 30. Preached on "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men."¹⁰⁸ Alas for the rich! they are so soon offended. Rode to

¹⁰⁵ Brother C. must have been one of the Chamberlains who lived in the north end of Camden County near the present South Mills. (J. F. Pugh, Camden.)

¹⁰⁶ Flatty Creek is in Pasquotank County on Pasquotank River. The chapel is no longer in existence there. (J. F. Pugh, Camden.)

¹⁰⁷ Knotty Pine Chapel was six miles north of Gatesville on the Sommer-town Road in Gates County. It was an Anglican chapel and was connected with the Edenton Parish possibly from 1701 to 1740. Nearby was the colonial home of Colonel William Baker which Asbury sometimes visited. (See *Journal* entry for April 1, 1801.) On March 17, 1799, Mrs. I. Baker, a minister's wife, wrote from Knotty Pine Chapel to Asbury and gave him a list of persons who had died there. (Moore: *op. cit.*, 35.)

¹⁰⁸ Asbury seems to have preached in a room at the south end of the Old Tavern at Hertford in Perquimans County. (*Historical Papers of the Trinity College Historical Association*, Sec. 9-13, p. 56.)

Winton,¹⁰⁹ is a little town on Chowan River; here I had a dry meeting with a few people in the court house. I housed for the night with W———. I seldom mount my horse for a ride of less distance than twenty miles on ordinary occasions; and frequently have forty or fifty in moving from one circuit to the other: in traveling thus I suffer much from hunger and cold.

I preached at W———'s, with some liberty. Our brother Chastaine stamped to purpose.

Saturday, February 2. At Wicocon¹¹⁰ I enlarged on Peter's fall.

Sunday, 3. I preached on Heb. vi, 11, 12. I rode that evening to friend Freeman's, whom I had not visited for five years past: I found him still an honest Baptist, and we were kindly entertained.

Rode to Ross's in Martin's county. The rise of the waters of the Roanoke River had inundated the lowlands more than a mile from the banks, and made the ferry altogether a wonderful sight. We came to our lodging about nine o'clock, and found a plain, kind-hearted host.

I preached a funeral sermon; my text, "The sting of death is sin." I spoke on the nature of the law; of sin—its guilt, power, nature and punishment; and the victory through Christ. Does it not appear that those who live in sin, which is a breach of the law, wish to abolish the law, seeing that they must know the necessary consequence of its violation? And if this *postulation* is just, what saves them from theft, murder, rape? Self preservation. Alas, poor world! is this all thy virtue?

Wednesday, 6. Rode twenty miles and had the ice to

¹⁰⁹ Winton is the county seat of Hertford County. (Newsome and Lefler, *The Growth of North Carolina*, 451.)

¹¹⁰ Wicocon was not a community but a stream in Bertie County, North Carolina, which gives its name to an area. (*Colonial Records, North Carolina*, II, 330; IV, 332.)

break in two swamps. Preached at Lloyd's, near Washington.

Saturday, 9. I had a very unfeeling people at Mc. O's, to whom I preached with some freedom on Luke iv, 18. Death! Death! Death! in the lowlands.

Sunday, 10. I had many to hear at S.'s; but it was an uncomfortable time; then I rode to Cox's on Neuse River, where we had an open time, and there is a prospect of good. We then had to move towards Trent.¹¹¹ Our rides are still long—from fifteen to twenty miles a day.

Wednesday, 13. We had many dead souls at the quarterly meeting at Lee's.

Thursday, 14. My heart melted for the people: they do not, will not pray; and if they so continue, must be undone.

Friday, 15. Came to poor J.'s, where I spoke dreadful things to a lifeless people on Isa. liii.

Saturday, 16. We rode to T——'s, an old stand in Duplin County, where I was met by a few souls. We had naught to eat, nor where to lodge short of Colonel C——'s; we pushed for that shelter, and reached there about nine o'clock at night; a poor place for religion it is, but we met with good entertainment.

Sunday, 17. I had about five hundred hearers at Samson Court house, to whom I enlarged on Peter's denial of his Master. 1. He was self confident. 2. Followed afar off. 3. Mixed with the wicked. 4. Denied his discipleship, and then his Lord.

Tuesday, 19. At Fayetteville I was unable to preach. *Wednesday* we pushed on for the south state, but being unacquainted with the way, we fell ten miles too low:

¹¹¹ Asbury went to the Trent River area around the present town of Trenton in Jones County. The Trenton Circuit, mainly in Jones and Lenoir counties, was formed from part of the New River Circuit in 1792. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 165.)

after riding as many in the night, we ended our blunders and our fatigue for that day at S.'s, who used us kindly.

Thursday, 21. We rode twenty miles in the rain through the woods and sands, and had but a poor time at Col. M's: thence we descended to the Green Ponds,¹¹² fifteen miles, where we were very comfortable at Crossland's.¹¹³

FOURTEENTH VISIT

(April 22-April 28, 1788; age 42)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina to make his initial visit to Tennessee, originally named Franklin and nicknamed "Lost State of Franklin" and the "child of North Carolina." This was one of the briefest visits of the decade and one of the earliest to the western section, recorded in only four *Journal* entries. He noted pioneer conditions and physical dangers of travels. Although there are almost no accounts of his encountering hostile Indians in the state, hostilities between Indians and white settlers had occurred in the colony in the Tuscarora War (1711), French and Indian War (1754-1763), and the Pontiac Conspiracy (1760s). By the Indian treaties with the United States in 1785, 1791, 1798, most of the land in North Carolina east of mountains became state property. After 1798, the Cherokees had only the southwest part of the state. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 91, 133-36, 140, 180.)

There were several mountain passes in the western section of the state through which settlers went on the way westward. The Fancy Gap led from the state to Virginia; the Watauga and Swannonoa Gaps led from the state to Ten-

¹¹² Green Ponds was in Richmond County, North Carolina, near the South Carolina line. On this trip through North Carolina, Asbury had passed through Currituck, Camden, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Gates, Hertford, Beaufort, Pitt, Jones, Lenoir, Duplin, Sampson, Cumberland, Hoke, Scotland, and Richmond counties.

¹¹³ The Crosslands probably lived at the extreme upper border of Marlboro, South Carolina, near the present town of Gibson. The family is prominent in the county.

nessee; Butt Mountain Gap and Cooper's Gap led from South Carolina to western North Carolina and to Tennessee. (*Ibid.*, 179.) Asbury did not always indicate the specific route he took to Tennessee and Kentucky or returning.

Charles Wesley, "Sweet Singer of the Evangelical Revival," died on March 29, 1788 in England. (Telford, *The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley*, 206.)

Tuesday, 22. Rode to Rutherford court house; and the next day to Burke courthouse: it being court time, we went on, and reached brother White's on John's River,¹¹⁴ about ten o'clock at night. Here I found both the saddles broke; both horses foundered; and both their backs sore—so we stopped a few days.

I preached on Rev. xxii, 5-8; and had liberty in speaking to the people: our souls were blessed in a near access to the Lord. Our preachers in the Yadkin circuit have been sick; they have had hard travelling the past winter; and the work has consequently suffered. I have read D.'s Study of Divinity—the catalogue of books at the end I thought of more value than all the rest of the work.

Sunday, 27. I preached at the Globe, on the main branches of John's River, where there are a few who fear God. There was some stir, and I hope some good done.

Monday, 28. After getting our horses shod, we made a move for Holston,¹¹⁵ and entered upon the mountains;

¹¹⁴ John's River is in Burke County between Morganton and Lenoir.

¹¹⁵ Stephen Holstein (Holston) settled in what is now Smyth County, Virginia, before 1748 and gave his name to the Holston river and valley of Southwest Virginia and East Tennessee. (States Historical Marker K-30, Smyth County, 8-5 miles east of Marion.) Asbury crossed the mountains from Morganton, North Carolina, through the gap just east of Roan Mountain near the present town of Elk Park. His route approximated present Highways 181, 19 and 11E, through Bluff City, Elizabethton and Bristol. The first Methodist society in the region was probably in Pulaski County, Virginia, at Page's meetinghouse, a log church and a campground said to have been the earliest in the area. Holston Circuit appeared as an appointment in 1783 with Jeremiah Lambert as preacher. It included all the settlements on the Watauga, Nolli-

the first of which I called steel, the second stone, and the third iron mountain: they are rough, and difficult to climb. We were spoken to on our way by most awful thunder and lightning, accompanied by heavy rain. We crept for shelter into a little dirty house, where filth might have been taken from the floor with a spade. We felt the want of fire, but could get little wood to make it, and what we gathered was wet. At the head of Watauga we fed, and reached Ward's that night. Coming to the river next day, we hired a young man to swim over for the canoe, in which we crossed, while our horses swam to the other shore. The waters being up we were compelled to travel an old road over the mountains. Night came on—I was ready to faint with a violent headache—the mountain was steep on both sides. I prayed to the Lord for help. Presently a profuse sweat broke out upon me, and my fever entirely subsided.

FIFTEENTH VISIT

(May 19-June 2, 1788; age 42)

ASBURY came from Virginia, traveled through Northampton, Granville, Franklin and Halifax counties and returned to Virginia. He noted observance of a love feast and a congregation of 1,000 persons. Green Hill's was becoming a regular stopping place.

Political history was made when North Carolina rejected the Constitution of the United States at Hillsboro meeting in 1788 (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 170.)

chucky and Holston rivers in the present Greene, Washington, Carter, Johnson, Sullivan and Hawkins counties in Tennessee, and Washington, Smyth, Russell, and perhaps Scott and Lee counties in Virginia, with one or two appointments on the headwaters of New River, in Grayson County, Virginia, or Ashe County, North Carolina; some of these counties had not then been formed. The circuit had sixty members. (Price: *op. cit.*, I, 77, 94; Lundy, *Holston Horizons*, 12). When Asbury entered, the circuits were the Holston and Nollichucky and the conference this year appointed preachers to the Holston French Broad, New River, and Greenbrier circuits.

In 1790, more than fifty per cent of the total population of New Hanover, part of present Columbus, Warren and Chowan counties were slave population. From $33 \frac{1}{3}$ to fifty per cent of the total population of Brunswick, Jones, Craven, Perquimans, Gates, Hertford, Northampton, Halifax, Franklin and Granville counties were slave population. All other counties extant at that time had smaller percentages of slave population. (*Ibid.*, 152, 176.)

Monday, 19. We rode about fifty miles to S——'s; the weather was warm in the extreme; we had rain, thunder, and lightning—and were weary enough.

Tuesday, 20. After riding nearly thirty miles we came to M'Knight's chapel in North Carolina. Here I preached on Peter's denial of Christ. Thence we went to Hill's. After meeting, we proceeded to the neat and well-improved town of Salem; making a journey, besides the labours of the day, of nearly forty miles.

I came to the quarterly meeting at C——'s, where I spoke feelingly and pointedly; and the word appeared to have effect.

Thursday, 22. Preached at P——'s chapel: we then rode to C——'s, about seven miles from Guilford court house, where we had a good time.

Friday, 23. Was a damp, rainy day, and I was unwell with a slow fever and pain in my head: however, I rode to Smith's chapel and preached; and thence to brother Harrison's on Dan River, and preached. In the space of one week we have ridden, through rough, mountainous tracts of country, about three hundred miles. Brothers Poythress, Tunnell, and myself have had serious views of things, and mature counsels together.

Sunday, 25. Preached, and had a love feast and sacrament. I then rode to the widow Dick's: many were waiting here, and the power of God was felt by some, whilst I enlarged on Isaiah lv, 1-3.

Monday, 26. We had a good time at Martin's. Leaving this, on our way to Stamfield, we were obliged to swim our horses across Dan River, and losing our road, made it late before we arrived.

Thursday, 29. Reached Edmund Taylor's (Granville County) about two o'clock, and gave a short discourse on "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help." Thence to Pope's, to Green Hill's, to Long's, and to Jones's Chapel: on our way to the latter place we got out of our route when within a mile of the chapel, and did not reach it till two o'clock.

Sunday, June 1. At Clayton's there are a hundred blacks joined in society; and they appear to have real religion among them—here Ethiopia doth stretch out her hand unto the Lord. I suppose there were not less than a thousand souls at preaching.

Monday, 2. Preached at Moore's in Northampton—once a poor, dead people, but now revived, and increased from eleven to sixty members.

We had much of the power of God at Clark's: sixty members, among whom are some children, are the subjects of this work. I feel life among these people—preaching and praying is not labour here: their noise I heed not; I can bear it well when I know that God and Christ dwells in the hearts of the people.

SIXTEENTH VISIT

(January 14-February 3, 1789; age 43)

THE ITINERARY was from Virginia to South Carolina, through Halifax and Chatham counties, primarily. Asbury noted observance of a love feast, shouting at service and filling appointment of another preacher. He showed occasional irritation at last of advance publicity of his travels through the state. Within a decade of the close of the

American Revolution, newspapers were established in the eastern towns of Hillsboro, Fayetteville, New Bern, Edenton and Wilmington. Not until 1850-1851, did newspapers begin daily publication, as the *Raleigh Register* and *Wilmington Daily Journal*. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 175, 498.) There are no indications of how much Asbury depended on newspapers for publicity in these accounts of visits.

Dr. John King's association with the state has been recounted. (Stahl: *op. cit.*, 8, 9.)

Wednesday, 14. I had about three hundred hearers at the Low Ground chapel; our brethren shouted whilst I enlarged on Isaiah lxiii, 1. I have felt very solemn for two or three days past, as though God would speak through me to the souls of the people.

Thursday, 15. Rode to Moore's: had a dead, dull people, except those few who came from a distance. Crossed Roanoak, and arriving at the place of preaching a little after night. I spoke on, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people," &c.

Saturday and *Sunday*, 17, 18. Preached at Whitaker's chapel,¹¹⁶ where we had a profitable time; I found God has been working, and that many souls had been awakened.

We came to J——'s; in this neighbourhood the Christians are singularly devoted, but sinners yet stand it out. The Lord has begun to work on Sandy Creek, in Franklin county, where twenty souls have been lately brought to God. Came to Bemnet Hills, hungry and unwell. My soul enjoys much of God.

We had a shaking time at Hill's; a sweet love feast and sacrament. Thence I went to Pope's chapel: I came to G——'s.

¹¹⁶ Whitaker's Chapel is near Enfield, in Halifax County. R. Whitaker lived twenty miles from Pollock's Ferry on Roanoke River. (See *Journal* entry for March 16, 1801.) Grissom notes also a Whitaker's Church on Dutchman's Creek in present Davie County, then Rowan County. (*Op. cit.*, 214, 267.)

Saturday, 24. Rode to Kimbrough's,¹¹⁷ twenty miles, where there were many people, and but little engagedness among them. After attending a few appointments on *Tuesday, 27*, I crossed Haw River, and rode twenty miles to brother Kennon's, in Chatham county: I had not been in this county for eight years; we had a meeting at night, but I was strangely shut up.

Thursday, 29. Rode to W.'s, wet and water-bound: we found the poor Antinomian drunk; however, as the rain was great, we made out to stay.

Friday, 30. Rode through the rain to Bowdon's. Deep River was very high; and we had an awful time crossing it.

Saturday, 31. Came to Fair Creek, which was nearly swimming high. Then to Little River, but we could not cross; we stopped at M'D's, and ate our own morsel, afterward we rode down the river, and were thankful to be housed.

Monday, February 2. I attended an appointment made for another preacher at Mask's, where there were a few serious souls.

Tuesday, 3. I stopped on my way at Dr. King's¹¹⁸ and took dinner, and had my horse shod. By some means my appointments have not been published.

SEVENTEENTH VISIT

(April 1-April 10, 1789; age 43)

ASBURY traveled from South Carolina to Virginia and was joined by Bishop Coke. He made only four Journal entries.

¹¹⁷ John Kimbrough had lived in Wake County, but went to South Carolina in 1756. (See note under February 17, 1785.) Some of his descendants probably remained in North Carolina. Either the *Journal* account is not strictly chronological or Asbury took a zigzag course in Chatham and Wake counties.

¹¹⁸ Dr. John King lived in Franklin County, near Louisburg, but "in 1789 or 1790" he moved to Wake County near Raleigh. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 59.) If he lived in Franklin County at this time, Asbury doubled back on his trail from Chatham County. (See notes under May 29, 1772, and June 23, 1780.)

This was the second time Coke joined Asbury in the state. A Conference was convened in present Forsyth County. Asbury showed concern for a preacher for Catawba Indians, his initial reference to them in these accounts. Wesley's endeavors in the colony of Georgia in the 1730s was in large measure to Christianize Indians. (Telford, *The Life of John Wesley*, chap. VI.)

On June 1, 1789, Bishops Asbury and Coke presented an address to President George Washington, to which he replied. John Dickins and Thomas Morrell had arranged the meeting. This was the first allegiance of any denomination offered the new president of the republic. (Footnote, *Journal*, I, 598.)

The State Convention, meeting in Fayetteville in 1789, adopted the Federal Constitution, the twelfth state to do so. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 171.)

During his first decade, there were practically no references in the accounts of Asbury taking collections for the purpose of erecting local church buildings.

Wednesday, April 1. The people came together at Jackson's¹¹⁹ at twelve o'clock. I did not reach there until three. I enlarged a little on Zech. xiii, 12,¹²⁰ and was somewhat severe. I rode to Savannah Creek, and met with an Antinomian people. Reached Threadgill's; having been out twelve hours, and ridden nearly forty miles, without food for man or beast.

Friday, 3. Preached by the way, and came to Randall's,¹²¹ twenty miles. We have ridden three hundred miles in about nine days, and our horses' backs are bruised with their loads. I want more faith, patience, and resignation to the will of God in all things. I wish to send an extra preacher to the Waxsaws, to preach to the Catawba Indians: they have settled amongst the whites on a tract of country twelve miles square.

¹¹⁹ Jackson lived just across the line in Anson County.

¹²⁰ Zech. 13 has only nine verses. There is no clue as to the correct passage.

¹²¹ See note under February 15, 1785.

Sunday, 5. We had a move whilst I was speaking on Isa. xxxiii, 14, 15. Some souls were brought to experience peace with God. Here Doctor Coke came up with us. We expect to continue together for some time. We had a long ride to Jones's. I preached there, and continued on to M'Knight's, on the Yadkin.

Friday, 10. We opened our conference, and were blessed with peace and union. Our brethren from the westward met us, and we had weighty matters for consideration before us.¹²²

We left M'Knight's, having about two hundred miles to ride in four days.

¹²² This conference at McKnight's Chapel in present Forsyth County was an important meeting. It included the Holston preachers. Thomas Ware says Asbury passed through his New River Circuit and that he accompanied the bishop to the conference by way of the Flower Gap (*Life and Travels*, 160), but since Asbury came from South Carolina this is an obvious error; Asbury came through Holston in 1788. Among the "weighty matters" transacted was the launching of the *American Arminian Magazine*, which the newly appointed (1789) Book Steward, John Dickins, published at Philadelphia. The preface of the first edition was signed by Asbury and Coke at "North Carolina, April 10th, 1789." (Ware; *Sketches of the Life and Travels of Rev. Thomas Ware*, 160; Price: *op. cit.*, I, 143, 144; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 140, 141. See note under April 13, 1787; preface to *The Arminian Magazine*, April 10, 1789.)

CHAPTER TWO

Francis Asbury's Eighteenth through Thirty-Seventh Visits: 1790-1799

Some Principal Events in North Carolina History: 1790-1799

- 1790 At first official United States Census, North Carolina had population of 393,751 (second in rank among states)
- 1791 Formation of Buncombe and Lenoir counties
April-June 12, Washington's Southern Tour
- 1792 Formation of Cabarrus and Person counties
Washington elected to second term
- 1794 First Session of the General Assembly held in New State House in Raleigh
- 1795 University of North Carolina opened doors to students
Birth of James K. Polk, the fourth president, in Mecklenburg County, near Pineville
- 1796 Birth of John Motley Morehead, governor (1841-1845), prominent railroad builder and businessman
State of Franklin, formerly portion of western North Carolina, became Tennessee and entered Union
- 1799 Formation of Ashe, Greene and Washington counties

EIGHTEENTH VISIT

(January 14-c. January 29, 1790; age 44)

ASBURY had Richard Whatcoat (1736-1806) as a traveling companion, from South Carolina to Virginia. Asbury indicated seven counties in which they traveled. Whatcoat was born in Quinton, Gloucestershire, England and served as apprentice at nearby Darlaston. He joined the Wednesday Society at the age of 22 and soon became a class leader and preacher. He eventually entered the ministry and was ordained by Wesley for American missionary service. He became a bishop in 1800 (Baker, *The Methodist Pilgrim in England*, 76.)

There are scant references in these accounts of the large migrations from the state in Asbury's lifetime. Undoubtedly, this affected the growth and strength of the new church. A. D. Murphey estimated that between 1790 and 1815 the state had lost 200,000 people by emigration, mainly to the states of Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Indiana, Illinois, Mississippi, Kentucky and Missouri. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 213.) Asbury ordained Thomas Anderson to the office of elder on the visit, his first ordination in the state following the organization of the Church in December, 1784.

Friday, 15. Crossed Roanoke, and was met by several preachers at sister Pegram's, where the Lord was with us.¹

Saturday, 16. I had a long ride to Roger Jones's: we had a good season at the sacrament; several spoke powerfully of the justifying and sanctifying grace of

¹ Whatcoat says they reached the Roanoke on January 14, and slept at Stephen Shels in Warren County. Asbury preached, and the exhorter was Philip Bruce, a North Carolinian who was presiding elder of the north district of Virginia. Bruce was of Huguenot descent and a zealous patriot who was present "as a sort of chaplain" at the battle of King's Mountain near his birthplace. On the fifteenth they rode to "Widow Pegram's" where Bruce exhorted and the sacrament was administered. They slept that night at John Falcon's in Warren County. Whatcoat's spelling is very uncertain. (*Journal of Bishop Richard Whatcoat*, printed by Sweet in *Religion on the American Frontier, The Methodists*, 90.)

God. A hundred souls have been brought to God: thus the barren wilderness begins to smile. I found it a time to speak from Isaiah lii, 1.

We had to ride sixteen miles; and here, O what my spirit felt! It is a day of very small and feeble things, and but little union among the people. I found it needful to enforce that prayer: "O Lord, revive thy work!" One poor black fell to the ground and praised God.

Tuesday, 19. I had some freedom in preaching at Bruce's; but I fear there is too much vanity and Antinomian leaven amongst them to permit much good to be done.

Rode to Thomas Tomlinson's; but here they made no appointment. At Merritt's chapel, on New Hope Creek, Chatham county, I enforced, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?"—there was some feeling among them; but they are not a united people.²

Thursday, 21. I rode to the widow Sarah Snipe's,³ twenty miles, and preached on Isaiah xiv, 22; then crossed Haw River, and came to M————'s, about two hours in the night, where I found a congregation waiting, to whom I spoke on, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," &c; the people were tender.

Friday, 22. Came to William Rainey's,⁴ in Orange county, to a quarterly meeting, where seven of our preachers met together; the first day the people were dull; the second, our congregation was large; my subject was, "we will give ourselves to prayer and the ministry

² On the seventeenth the party rode to Pope's Chapel, where Asbury preached. Whatcoat and Bruce rode with James Lester. On the eighteenth they proceeded to Bruce's, where Asbury preached, and on the nineteenth they went on to the home of Thomas Tomlinson on Neuse River in Wake County. On the following day Reuben Ellis, a North Carolinian and notable figure in early Methodism, then presiding elder of the South Carolina district, was with the party. They went on to the home of William O'Kelly, presiding elder of the North Carolina district. Merritt's Chapel or New Hope Chapel was in Chatham County. The New Hope Circuit was formed in 1778 and appeared in the *Minutes* in 1779. It included parts of Orange, Chatham, Cumberland, and Wake counties, and took its name from a creek that flowed into Haw River in Chatham County. (*Ibid.*, 91; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 64, 67.)

³ Whatcoat, *op. cit.*, 91.

⁴ Whatcoat, *Ibid.*, 91.

of the word." I ordained Thomas Anderson⁵ to the office of an elder. We rode through a heavy rain sixteen miles to our friend Gerald Burr's,⁶ here they have built us a complete house of the heart of oak. Proceeded twelve miles to Rocky River and preached at William M'Master's chapel,⁷ afterward we had a night meeting and upon the whole I believe we were speaking about four hours, besides nearly two spent in prayer. We came to our friend Key's,⁸ and were kindly entertained. Thence we went to Mr. William Bell's⁹ on Deep River, and were received in the kindest manner; before I left the house, I felt persuaded that that family would come to experience the power of religion.

Tuesday, 26. We had to make our way through a dreary path, and rode about fifty miles; we were favoured by only getting a sprinkling of rain, which became very heavy after we were housed at Thomas Chiels's,¹⁰ about eleven o'clock. Rode to Doctor Miles King's,¹¹ twenty-five miles, and performed the funeral rites of Captain Clark,¹² who was sick when I was here

⁵ Thomas Anderson was serving the New Hope Circuit. (See *Minutes*.)

⁶ Gerald Burr (or Burrough) lived in Chatham County. (Whatcoat, *op. cit.*, 91.)

⁷ The chapel named for William McMasters was in the same county. (*Ibid.*)

⁸ James H. Keys lived at Hillsboro in Orange County. He later moved to Murfreesboro, Rutherford County, Tennessee, where Asbury stayed with him on February 12, 1807. From both places he carried on correspondence with Edward Dromgoole, whose papers are in the library of the University of North Carolina and have been published in part by Sweet. Dromgoole (1751-1835) was from Sligo, Ireland, a Roman Catholic, who publicly recanted after hearing the Methodists. He came to America in 1770 and settled near Baltimore, and became a preacher under the influence of Robert Strawbridge. He was a conspicuous figure in the Christmas Conference. In 1777 he married Rebecca Walton of Brunswick County, Virginia. He located in 1786; Asbury remarked that "Edward Dromgoole is a good preacher, but entangled with a family." He was until his death a local preacher in Brunswick County, where he entertained Asbury and other Methodist leaders on numerous occasions. The church at his home came to be known as Dromgoole's Chapel, later united with Olive Branch. (Sweet, *op. cit.*, 159.)

⁹ William Bell lived on Deep River in Randolph County above Randleman. He was the stepfather of John and William McGee, leaders of the great Kentucky revival and founders of the camp meeting movement. (Whatcoat, *op. cit.*, 91.) His wife was the Revolutionary heroine Martha Bell, who won local renown by capturing a desperado called Steve Lewis. This exploit is described by Caruthers in *The Old North State in 1776*. (Sidney Swaim Robins, "Bishop Asbury on Deep River," in *Chapel Hill News Leader*, July 4, 1955.)

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹¹ Miles King lived in Montgomery County. The party reached his home on the twenty-eighth. (*Ibid.*)

¹² The man whose funeral was preached by Asbury was designated as Crack, perhaps, Clark, in Whatcoat's untrustworthy spelling. (*Ibid.*)

last year. I then prayed for him, and felt as if his sickness was unto death: now, I preached his funeral sermon; my text was, "It is appointed unto men once to die," &c. I felt some enlargement in speaking, and a few people appeared to be moved.

I have read an account of the wonderful revolution in France; may the good of Protestantism and the glory of God be advanced by it!

Since we crossed Roanoke River, we have passed through Warren, Granville, Wake, Chatham, Orange, Randolph, and Richmond counties, in North Carolina.

After passing Hedge Cock Creek, I preached at Night's chapel, on, "My grace is sufficient for thee": there was some quickening, and I was blest. It is no small exercise to ride twenty miles, or more, as we frequently do, before twelve o'clock; taking all kinds of food, and lodging, and weather too, as it comes, whether it be good or bad.

I saw the hand of the Lord in preserving my life and limbs when my horse made an uncommon start and sprung some yards with me; it was with difficulty I kept the saddle.¹³

NINETEENTH VISIT

(March 26-April 5, 1790; age 44)

ASBURY AND WHATCOAT continued to travel together. Asbury was named for his paternal grandfather. His father's name was Joseph and his mother's Elizabeth. Their only other child was a daughter who died in infancy. (Clark, *op. cit.*, 3.) Asbury was never married. He held the view—in essence—that it was unfair and unwise to marry and leave a home to travel for fifty-one weeks out of fifty-two per year. The location of his preachers, at marriage or for other reasons,

¹³ According to Whatcoat they entered South Carolina on the twenty-ninth and were entertained by Jacob Abit, or Abbott. (*Journal*.)

caused Asbury great difficulty in his administration (Duren, *Francis Asbury*, xiii), although there are negligible comments on the problem in these accounts.

The quarterly meeting was a meeting usually held with the quarterly visitation of the presiding elder. In early years, the quarterly fast was observed on Friday, a sermon was preached on Saturday afternoon, followed by the Quarterly Conference; and a prayer meeting was held in the evening. On Sunday morning at nine o'clock, there was a love feast, and at half past ten a sermon, followed by the sacraments. (Wheeler, *1,000 Questions and Answers Pertaining to the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 106.)

Friday, 26. Rode about twenty-two miles. Stopped at Col. William Graham's,¹⁴ dripping wet with rain. He received us, poor strangers, with great kindness, and treated us hospitably. We had awful thunder, wind, and rain. I was still unwell with a complaint that terminated the life of my grandfather Asbury, whose name I bear; perhaps it will also be my end. We were weather-bound until *Monday* morning, the 29th of March. For several days I have been very sick and serious. I have been enabled to look into eternity nevertheless, there was one drawback—what will my enemies and mistaken friends say? Why, that he hath offended the Lord, and he hath taken him away. In the afternoon I felt somewhat better. Brother Whatcoat preached a most excellent sermon on, "The kingdom of God is not in word but in power"—not in sentiments or forms, but in the convincing, converting, regenerating, sanctifying power of God. I am making close application to my Bible. Reading the Prophets at my leisure whilst on my journey, I met with a pious Baptist. Glory to God for what religion

¹⁴ Josiah Smith rode with them sixteen or eighteen miles. In a storm they reached Colonel William Graham's on Little Broad River and remained there until the twenty-ninth, when they rode to George Moore's. (Whatcoat: *Journal*.) He was a Revolutionary soldier and a leading citizen of Rutherford County. (Griffin: *Essays on North Carolina History*.)

there is still to be found amongst all sects and denominations of people!

Wednesday, 31. Rode to Gilbert Town, and preached at Holland's¹⁵ with some freedom, but was very unwell in the afternoon.

Thursday, April 1. Rode about fifty miles through Rutherford and Burke counties: it is a day of small things there.

Crossed Catawba River at Greenlee's ford, and came to our good friend White's,¹⁶ on John's River, about eight o'clock at night. When I set off in the morning it seemed as if I should faint by the way. I was so ill with a mixed internal complaint to which I am subject. We arrived in the very nick of time. *Friday* being a very rainy day, and there being no necessity that day to ride. I feel happy in the prospect of death and rest; yet I am willing to labour and to suffer the Lord's leisure.

Saturday, 3. Quarterly meeting began. Brother Whatcoat and myself both preached, and there was a reviving among both white and black; and I trust some souls were blessed.

Sunday, 4. Was a serious day; none were admitted to our private meetings but members; many spoke, and most felt the power of God. We then hasted to the Globe chapel, where the people met, but had not patience to wait: we had a rough road, and John's River to cross twenty times. I was desired to preach sister Eliza Biggerstaff's¹⁷ funeral. She was formerly a Presbyterian; then a Methodist; the last of all a Christian; and there is good hope that she died in the Lord. I was resolved to fulfill her desire, and preached on i Cor. xv, 56, 57, to about eight souls.

¹⁵ This was Major James Holland, member of Congress, merchant, and lawyer. (Griffin, *Ibid.*)

¹⁶ The travelers held a quarterly conference at the home of William White, at which Thomas Anderson, presiding elder of the eastern district in South Carolina, exhorted. Here they remained until April 4. (Whatcoat's *Journal*.)

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

Monday, 5. We made an early move. After worming the stream for a while, we took through the Laurel Hill, and had to scale the mountains, which in some places were rising like a roof of a house. We came to the head of Watauga River; a most neglected place. Here the people have had their corn destroyed by frost, and many of them have moved away. It was thus we found it in Tyger's Valley. We passed by W——'s, a poor lodging, and slept at the Beaver Dam in a cabin without a cover, except what a few boards supplied: we had very heavy thunder and lightning, and most hideous yelling of wolves around; with rain, which is frequent in the mountains.¹⁸

TWENTIETH VISIT

(June 1-June 7, 1790; age 44)

ASBURY AND WHATCOAT came from and returned to Virginia. Only three *Journal* entries record the visit. Asbury made no specific mention of his preaching. Seven men were ordained. The office of exhorter was almost as old as Methodism (Wheeler, *1,000 Questions Concerning the Methodist Episcopal Church*, 73.)

Asbury made his initial visit to Kentucky with Whatcoat, Hope Hull and John Sewell in May, 1790, coming through Virginia and reaching North Carolina (*Journal*, I, 636-641). He was the first Protestant bishop to cross the Alleghenies. (Gross, *op. cit.*, 59.)

Restoration of some forty buildings is being carried out by Old Salem, Inc., a non-profit organization in Winston-Salem. The first Salem Tavern played an important part in the early history of Salem. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 104.)

¹⁸ "We were saluted with a tremendous storm of lightning, thunder and rain which almost put out our fire. Oh, that we may reign with Christ in his Glory." (Whatcoat: *Journal*.)

Tuesday, June 1. I rode about forty-five miles to Armstrong's, and next day about four o'clock reached M'Knights on the Yadkin River, in North Carolina:¹⁹ here the conference had been waiting for me nearly two weeks: we rejoiced together, and my brethren received me as one brought from the jaws of death. Our business was much matured, the critical concern of the council understood, and the plan, with its amendments, adopted.

Saturday and Sunday, 5, 6. Were days of the Lord's presence and power—several were converted. We had an ordination each day. We have admitted into full connection some steady men, with dispositions and talents for the work.²⁰

Monday, 7. Rode through Salem Town; the Moravian brethren have the blessing of the nether springs, and houses, orchards, mills, stores, mechanics' shops, &c. I rode about three hundred miles to Kentucky in six days; and on my return about five hundred miles in nine days. O what exertions for man and horse! ²¹

TWENTY-FIRST VISIT

(January 6-February 7, 1791; age 45)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia through eastern counties to South Carolina. Courthouses were used frequently

¹⁹ Asbury and Whatcoat rode up Cripple Creek to Armstrong's near the Flower Gap. George McKnight lived a mile and a half west of Clemmonsville, the present Clemmons, in Yadkin, now Forsyth County, near the Yadkin River. McKnight's Chapel was an important preaching place where several conferences were held. On the fourth Whatcoat rode to Adam Peathree's to have the horses shod. (Whatcoat, *op. cit.*, 103.)

²⁰ At this conference Asbury preached and ordained seven elders. The exhorters were Thomas Anderson, presiding elder in South Carolina, and Isaac Lowe, who was serving the Guilford Circuit. On leaving McKnight's the party rode to John Hill's. (*Ibid.*, 104.)

²¹ Whatcoat says that they rode to Isaac Lowe's home in Rockingham County on June 7. On the following day they refreshed themselves at Nathan Williamson's and lodged with James Rice in Caswell County. On the ninth they called at Gabriel Lee's and lodged with John Cannon in Granville County. The next day they were at Colonel Smith's, crossed the Roanoke at Taylor's Ferry, and lodged with Tignal Jones in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. Thus Whatcoat's chronology varies somewhat from that of Asbury.

as preaching places. His coming must have been an important occasion in many isolated communities.

Tipple in *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road* (109) characterized Asbury's style as "plain, direct, pointed"—without trying to adorn his thoughts in other than "Quaker gray." There was occasional playfulness with words and phrase-making. Two characteristic phrases here are "backsliders" and "loose walkers." "Backslider" deserves a place in the early Methodist vocabulary. He used "Gospel slighters" in the first visit. He only infrequently referred to the Lord's Supper—usually using the term *sacraments*.

Thursday, 6. I did not reach chapel until three o'clock. Next day I reached Colonel Williams's, Currituck, North Carolina.²² Here we had a quickening time. I possess peace of mind; and feel no murmuring nor discontent. My horse is very lame, and the roads in this country are very deep.

Saturday, 8. After preaching at B——'s, I hastened to S——'s ferry, on Pasquotank River, where I waited about three hours. The Negroes were dancing. I stayed behind until all the company were over, and then crossed about eight o'clock; and about nine, reached brother P——'s.

Sunday, 9. Preached at New-begun church in the morning, and at Nixonton in the evening, in the court house, which was nearly filled.

Tuesday, 11. Yesterday I rode to brother B——'s, within five miles of Gates court house.²³ My fare is sometimes poor, my rides are long, my horse is lame; yet, whilst Christ is mine, I feel nothing like murmuring or discontent. I have passed through Winton, Wicocon,

²² See note under December 20, 1784.

²³ The present Gatesville is in Gates County.

Campbell, and Hardy counties,²⁴ preaching as I journeyed, and found a few living souls.

Sunday, 16. Came to Gardener's, to quarterly meeting, where I enlarged on Peter's fall, and it was a serious, powerful meeting.

I thence rode to our late brother F———'s, whose funeral rites I performed. Although the weather was cold, the congregation was large. I was importuned to visit the town; but found there were but few who really wished me to go. I, however, went, and preached to them at candlelight, and many of them laughed at the foolish old prophet. Perhaps, when I next come to see them, they will be more serious. Thence we hastened to brother Jones's, whose wife lately departed this life in the full triumph of faith—and his son is engaged in horse-racing. This brought to my mind young P———; who, after the death of his pious father, turned away the preachers, and sinned with a high hand; but the Lord followed him; and after he had spent a good deal of the substance left him by his father, he was made a happy subject of the grace of God. I will not give up all hope for young Jones.

Saturday, 22. Crossed Neuse River, at Smith's ferry, and came to the dwelling of the late Gen. Hardy Bryan²⁵—a man I had often heard of, and wished to see; but death, swift and sudden, reached the house before me. His son H——— died the 18th of last November; his daughter Mary, December 28th; and himself the 10th instant: each of them feared the Lord, and were

²⁴ No such counties have ever existed in North Carolina. Asbury or Hollingsworth must have meant communities instead of counties. Winton then and now is the county seat of Hertford County. Wicocon (spelled variously) is a river near Winton which gave its name to a geographic area. Hardy and Campbell may have been communities. (William G. Tarlton, Researcher, North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Raleigh.)

²⁵ General Bryan was a barrister who lived in the bounds of the New River Circuit which took its name from a stream in Onslow County, though it embraced several counties. He had recently been converted from deism through the instrumentality of his wife and the ministry of Thomas Ware, who was elder of the circuits in the area the previous year. He died shortly thereafter. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 165; Ware, *op. cit.*, 164-167.)

happy souls. I felt strangely unwilling to believe the General was dead, until I could no longer doubt it: at the grave-yard I had very solemn feeling, there was some melting among the people whilst I enlarged on Psalm xii, 1.

Sunday, 23. I had very great opening on 1 Thess. iv, 13, 14. It was on the occasion of the late lamented deaths. Surely this is loud preaching—it is one of the most awakening scenes of my life: how soon were these dear souls justified, sanctified, and called home to glory! Hail happy dead!—We toil below, but hope, ere long, with you to sing God's praise above. Lord, help us to improve this providence, and always be looking and longing for glory!

Monday, 24. I had a most dreary ride to Trenton: (Jones Court house).²⁶ Here I met with Lewis Bryan, brother to the late General—his heart and house open. After getting some refreshment we went to the chapel, where I preached with great freedom: there were brethren present who came to meet us from a great distance. In the evening, brothers C——, and L——, and A——,²⁷ held meeting.

Tuesday, 25. I preached at Lee's chapel. There is a very great change for the better since I was here three years ago: They have now built a very decent house for worship. I was unwell in my body, but happy in my God, and resigned to his will.

Wednesday, 26. Preached to a large congregation at brother D——'s, on White Oak River. I baptized and administered the sacrament. After dinner I rode twelve miles to L——'s, and found the people waiting: about six we began exhortation and prayer, and about midnight laid ourselves down to rest.

²⁶ Trenton was the county seat of Jones County.

²⁷ These persons may have been J. Cannon of the New Hope Circuit, Isaac Lowe, the elder of North Carolina circuits northward, and John Ahair on the Bladen Circuit. (See *Minutes*, 1791.)

Thursday, 27. I had many to hear at Swansboro: the people were attentive. O that God may bless his work to them! Surely all shall not be in vain. I returned to brother T——'s, a mile out of town; but the people found where I was and came out. Sometimes I am tried when I cannot enjoy my hours of retirement; but we must bear all things, if thereby we may do good, and gain the more souls to Christ.

Friday, 28. We rode sixteen miles to an old chapel on the way to Richland's; (Onslow County) the people and myself suffered from the weather; however, I spoke a little, and administered the sacrament; after which, I rode, cold and hungry, sixteen miles more to brother C. Ballard's.

Sunday, 30. The truth was delivered sharply and pointedly; but the people were wild and unfeeling.

Tuesday, February 1. I had a large congregation at the Sand Hills. Feeling myself enlarged in spirit, although weak in body, I entered very extensively into the nature and excellencies of the Gospel. We administered the Lord's supper, and had a shaking among the people: brothers Lowe and Bowen²⁸ were there, and we rejoiced in the Lord together. We were honoured with a little cabin at a distance from the other houses about eight feet wide and nine feet long, and were as happy as *princes in a palace*.

Wednesday, 2. We had our difficulties in getting along an unknown path. Arrived at DeV——'s ford; we met with a very kind man, who gave us and our baggage a passage on a broken canoe; then led us part of our way, and sent a servant to conduct us on. We reached Anderson's about two o'clock; and found many people waiting; but they appeared to be unfeeling. We were most kindly treated. The people were about to settle a newly-

²⁸ These persons were perhaps Isaac Lowe and Thomas Bowen, the two elders of North Carolina circuits.

introduced minister; so we may go off for a year or two, and by that time the way may be open for our return. I am charged with dreadful things about the council; but I believe the Lord will make it appear where the mischief lies.

Crossed Cape Fear River, and rode thirty miles to sister Turner's. Here I spoke to some assembled people, some of whom felt, and my labour was not in vain in the Lord. My own soul was blessed. I was awfully impressed with the conviction that the interests of religion had been injured by backsliders and loose walkers.

Saturday, 5. We had many at the quarterly meeting for that part of the country. My subject was: "And Peter went out and wept bitterly."

Sunday, 6. We had a little melting among the people at noon, and in the evening. Ah! my God, how few there are who truly love thee!

Monday, 7. Rode to Lockwood's Folly,²⁹ and preached at Charlotte River to not less than one hundred people; a vast congregation for so lonely a part of the world. The soil is very barren, and the country, consequently, but thinly settled. We were recommended, for lodging, to a certain squire's; but Providence so ordered it, that we came to a simplehearted brother S——'s: where we were kindly received, and abundantly supplied with everything necessary for man and horse. As our time would admit, I was disposed to indulge a desire I had of going by Pyraway, about twelve miles distant. We crossed Wacamaw River: it is about one hundred and fifty yards wide; our horses ferried themselves over by swimming. I preached in the evening on "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

²⁹ Lockwood's Folly was the present Supply in Brunswick County.

TWENTY-SECOND VISIT

(March 27-April 9, 1791; age 45)

ASBURY was accompanied by Bishop Thomas Coke, traveling from South Carolina to Virginia. In October, 1791, Asbury would have traveled twenty years on the American scene. A Conference was held during the visit.

On April 29th, he noted in the *Journal* the death of John Wesley. A lengthy paragraph was given to the event. Asbury's comments on Wesley's literary works were almost universally favorable. A typical comment from his pen: "I am still employed in reading: I admire the sterling truth contained in Mr. Wesley's writing on divinity." (*Journal*, II, 76.) Asbury preached a sermon on the death of Wesley on May 26, 1791. (*Ibid.*, I, 675.)

Political history was made when President Washington made a Southern Tour through North Carolina in April, 1791. He visited Craven, Pender, Jones, Edgecombe, Halifax and Rockingham counties shortly after Asbury completed his visit. (*Guide to North Carolina Historical Highway Markers, Fifth Edition*, 12, 23, 29, 54.)

Lord's Day, 27. We found the people insensible at the Waxsaws Church: some few seemed alarmed whilst Isa. xxxiii, 14 was opened and enforced.

Wednesday, 30. We came to Salisbury: I felt unwell, and no freedom to speak. Doctor Coke gave them a sermon, and we then rode five miles to B——'s. Next day we reached Jones's; and the day after (*first of April*) M'Knight's, where we opened conference in great peace. Many of the preachers related their experience, and it was a blessed season of grace.

Monday, 4. We rose, after sitting each night (Sabbath excepted) until twelve o'clock. Several of our brethren expressed something like the perfect love of God, but they had doubts about their having retained it.

Tuesday, 5. We rested awhile at Salem on our way, and came in the evening to brother W——'s, and had

a meeting there. I believe trouble is at hand; but I trust God with his cause, and Christ with his Church. My soul drinks into holiness.

Friday, 8. I observed as a day of abstinence and prayer, reading and meditation. O for more of heaven! Poor Minter's case has given occasion for sinners and for the world to laugh, and talk, and write.

Saturday, 9. We had a large congregation at Arnett's; I felt life in speaking, although weak and weary in body. We rode seven miles to the banks of Dan River, but knew not where to cross. At length we came to T. Harrison's: thus ended the labours of the day.

TWENTY-THIRD VISIT

(January 8-February 5, 1792; age 46)

ASBURY AND THOMAS MORRELL, apparently on their only visit together, came from and returned to Virginia. Asbury enumerated ten eastern and Piedmont counties in which they traveled. Two other visits were made in the same year. Sermon points were noted. After a thirty mile ride in snow and ice, he preached immediately.

Thomas Morrell (1747-1838) served in the American Revolution; was converted in 1785; became a local preacher; was ordained an elder; appointed a Presiding Elder in New York City. "He was a powerful, practical preacher." He and John Dickins arranged an appointment with President Washington for the presentation of an address by Asbury and Coke. (Cliffe, *op. cit.*, 83, 84; Footnote, *Journal*, I, 703.)

In 1792, Raleigh was chosen as the state capital. During colonial days, North Carolina had a "wandering legislature." The lawmaking body had met in at least eleven towns, including Edenton, Bath, New Bern, Wilmington, Hillsboro, Halifax, Smithfield, Fayetteville, Tarboro and Wake Courthouse. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 194, 195, 198.) Asbury spoke at nearly all of these places once or several times.

Sunday, 8. I preached at the widow Hardy's to a large congregation: I felt freedom in speaking, and the souls of the people appeared tender. The prospect of our journey ahead seemed gloomy; however, we came down in the snow, and got on board a leaky *flat*, which we were obliged to bale as we went; the ferry was five miles wide, our horses restless, the river (Roanoke) rough, and the weather very cold; but the Lord brought us safe to shore,³⁰ twelve miles from our destined place: we were strangers to the road, and had not an hour's sun; nevertheless, kind Providence brought us through the dark and cold to brother Ward's about eight o'clock: here I sold my carriage and took horse again.

Thursday, 19. I rode with no small difficulty to Green Hill's, about two hundred miles, the roads being covered with snow and ice.³¹ Our conference began and ended in great peace and harmony: we had thirty-one preachers stationed at the different houses in the neighborhood. I find we have had a good work in the eastern district of North Carolina in the past year. For some time back I have traveled with much difficulty, having few hearers, much weakness of body, and uncomfortable weather.

Monday, 23. Our conference rose. I had twenty miles through severe cold to Brother B——'s.

Tuesday, 24. Brother Morrell, my fellow traveller, was unwell: we had our horses roughed, which detained us an hour or two after the appointed time. I reached brother T——'s, and said a little from Philip. ii, 14-16; but the people could not hear, their souls and their

³⁰ Asbury seems to have entered North Carolina from Nansemond County, near Whaleyville, Virginia. Contrary to usual custom, he did not cross Roanoke River until he was near its mouth in Tyrrell County.

³¹ During the eleven days that elapsed between entries in the *Journal*, Asbury must have traveled through some of the counties mentioned on January 27. Green Hill lived one mile north of Louisburg.

bodies were cold. Finding it was twenty-two miles to my next appointment, I set off without refreshment, intending to reach brother D——'s near Hillsboro;³² on the way, however, hearing of brother S——, a local preacher, we called on him, and he gave us freely of such things as he had.

Thursday, 26. I was led out with freedom on the last two verses of Heb. xii, at M——'s. I find outward difficulties in my progress; the roads are covered with ice and snow, and the severity of the weather prevents my having an opportunity, when I wish, of spending time in private exercises, but, blessed be God! I am resigned, and am kept from sin, and my soul is stayed upon God.

Friday, 27. After riding thirty miles through ice and snow to Rainey's, I found many people waiting for me, and I began, without any refreshment, to speak on, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." 1. I endeavoured to point out the object of this faith; 2. Its subjects; 3. Its nature; and 4. Its victory. In our route through North Carolina we passed through Bertie, Gates, Tyrrel, Tarborough, Franklin, Wake, Chatham, Orange, Guilford, and Randolph counties.³³ We have travelled nearly eight hundred miles since the 7th of *December*, last past. Seldom have I been tempted to a murmuring thought; it is now the 29th of *January*: I want nothing but more mental and private prayer.

Tuesday, 31. Yesterday and to-day we have ridden about sixty miles, a great deal of the way through heavy hail and rain. I gave an exhortation at C——'s, on *seeking the kingdom of God*. Here we had all things

³² Hillsboro is in Orange County, about fifty miles west of Green Hills.

³³ The counties through which Asbury traveled covered a large part of northern North Carolina. His itinerary involved much wandering through that section of the state. Tarboro is not a county but a town in Edgecomb County.

richly to supply our wants; and what was still better, we found the Lord had souls in this family.

February, 1. I preached to a considerable congregation at M'D————'s³⁴ on Acts xiii, 38.

Saturday and *Sunday*, 4, 5. I attended a quarterly meeting.

TWENTY-FOURTH VISIT

(March 11-March 20, 1792; age 46)

ASBURY AND HOPE HULL (1763-1818), founder of Georgia Methodism, traveled from South Carolina toward Virginia. No specific counties were mentioned. He noted a "close love feast." He was a serious, life-long student of general history, reading much American history through the years. He always carried books with him, sometimes in his saddlebags, and when there were too many for the saddlebags, in a box. A comprehensive list of his readings of historical works would fill several pages. (Tipple, *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 91-103.)

Asbury strongly desired to observe the Sabbath as a day of rest, avoiding travel on it whenever possible. He was compelled to violate the practice, however, on occasions, in order to meet his appointments.

Sunday, 11. Preached at Smith's³⁵ on Romans v. 1-3; and kept the holy, solemn Sabbath as a day of rest for man and beast.

Monday, 12. Rode forty miles to Major Moor's, cold and weary. I have read two volumes of Gordon's American Revolution, containing about one thousand pages. We came to the widow M'————'s: here we heard that fifty poor wandering sinners had been brought back to

³⁴ M'D———— was probably M'Donalds, North Carolina, between Rowland and Fairmont in Robeson County, from where Asbury passed into Dillon County, South Carolina.

³⁵ He crossed the Broad into the state at Smith's Ferry, having traveled through Newberry, Laurens, Union and Cherokee counties after leaving Ninety-Six. He entered Rutherford County and proceeded northward.

God in this wild place, and we rejoiced at the glad tidings.

Friday, 16. I was very much chilled in riding twenty-five miles over the mountains to Wiltshire's: at three o'clock I preached on Heb. iii, 12-14. I was very unwell and in much pain. There was a poor man in the house who was wild enough to swim the river on a mare with another man behind him—what a mercy that he was not drowned!

Saturday, 17. I felt death in some measure at this place. Brother Hull preached and I exhorted.

Sunday, 18. We had a close love feast, and few testimonies of the power and love of Christ: there was some little melting also amongst the people; but it is hard to civilize, methodize, and spiritualize; sin, Satan, flesh, and hell are against us.

We have rested two days besides Sabbaths, and ridden two hundred and fifty miles in about two weeks: our entertainment is generally mean.

Monday, 19. Our horses backs being bruised, we had our difficulties in getting to Rehoboth.

We were well-nigh cast away in going to the widow W——'s. It was very dark, and we were bewildered in the woods. My saddle turned, and I slipped from my horse, but received no harm. I had to walk nearly half a mile through mud and water to reach the house.

Tuesday, 20. I came to Gordon's, on the Yadkin. It is seven years since I was here—dead! dead! The World—the devil—Antinomianism in doctrine and practice. I was led out in preaching on Deut. xxxiii, 29.

TWENTY-FIFTH VISIT

(December 10-December 22, 1792; age 47)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia to South Carolina, but made no specific references to counties visited. He presided

at conference at Green Hill's from December 11th-15th, noting increases in converts in the United States. In the previous July, in New York, he prepared a short biographical sketch of his early ministry in England, aware that following the death of John Wesley, in 1791, there would be increased interest in his work. (*Journal*, I, 719-722.)

The Yadkin River flows into South Carolina where it assumes the name Pee Dee (Lemert and Harrelson, *op. cit.*, 10.)

All General Conferences held in Asbury's lifetime, *i.e.*, 1792, 1796, 1800, 1804, 1808 (excluding 1812) were convened in Baltimore. In 1812, the Conference met in New York. (H. T. Hudson, *The Methodist Armor*, 256-258.)

Monday, 10. We crossed Roanoak at Black's ferry, and directed our course for Lewisburg. We passed Warrington, and missed our way. We remembered the name of William Myrick, and inquiring after him, found he lived nearly on our way; we accordingly called on him, and were gladly received, and kindly entertained. Memory is good in distress: had we not housed here, we should have had our difficulties in getting to sister L——'s.

Tuesday, 11. Rode to Green Hill's, near Louisburg. Here I met the preachers in conference, and we were closely employed until *Saturday* morning. We had about forty preachers from the two districts in North Carolina. Our labours finished, we rode to Neuse River.

Sunday, 16. Preached at Merritt's.

Monday, 17. Rode fifteen miles to S——'s: preached on *Christ*, the believer's *wisdom*, *righteousness*, *sanctification*, and *redemption*. We had a difficult road in going to Haw River, but a kind Providence brought us along very well, although the weather was exceedingly cold: we crossed the stream by fording, about half-past eight o'clock, and about ten arrived at R——'s, very cold and in much pain. I know not why, but so it is,

that I cannot feel that I hold such sweet communion with God in cold weather as in warm; it may be that—

“Nature being oppress’d.

Commands the mind to suffer with the body.”

The great love and union which prevailed at the late conference makes me hope many souls will be converted in the ensuing year: an account was brought in of the conversion of about three hundred souls last week within its limits—chiefly in the Lowland circuits. Glory be to God! I feel that he is with us: and I have good evidence that fifteen or eighteen hundred souls have professed to have been converted in the United States within the last twelve months. At Rainey’s, a congregation of willing, patient souls was called hastily together, to whom I preached on 2 Peter i, 4. I was led out on the corruption that is in the world, arising from three grand sources,—the lust of the flesh; the lust of the eye; and the pride of life.

Wednesday, 19. I was detained until about ten o’clock. and then rode on to S———’s, and dined: we then hastened on to Deep River, and lodged at Mr. B———’s. Lord, show kindness to those who have succoured me!

Thursday, 20. I took a route along a new path below the Narrows of Pee Dee; and after riding forty-five or fifty miles, came in, cold and hungry, about seven o’clock, and found a congregation waiting: I was fatigued, and could say but little to them.

Friday, 21. I rode thirty miles to Rocky River; but few to hear.

Saturday, 22. The people were attentive and behaved well at Anson court house. In the evening we had a weary ride to brother Jackson’s.

TWENTY-SIXTH VISIT

(March 16-March 28, 1793; age 47)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina to Tennessee. His companion was Henry Hill, a companion not listed by Tipple in *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road* (171, 172). Tennessee entered the Union in 1796. He noted observance of a love feast.

Asbury mentioned one of his earliest meetings with Daniel Asbury, prominent pioneer preacher in western North Carolina. Some sources indicate the two men were not related. However, Mr. Frank L. Asbury, great-great-grandson of Daniel Asbury, states that according to his records, Daniel and Francis were first cousins. (Correspondence, Mr. Frank L. Asbury, 307 Elmwood Drive, Greensboro, North Carolina, March 7, 1962.)

Saturday and *Sunday*, 16, 17. Attended quarterly meeting in Union circuit. There were no elders present. I preached on Eph. vi, 10-18, and felt a great death among the people. *Sunday*, we administered the sacrament and held love feast. I desired Daniel Asbury to preach and brother William Gassaway to exhort, whilst I retired to write to Isaac Smith ³⁶ desiring him to take the presidentship of Union, Catawba, Little Pee Dee, Great Pee Dee, Anson and Santee circuits.

The people hereabouts have been poorly handled by those who, whilst they made a great profession of religion, maintained Antinomian principles and practice. I have been unwell, occasioned by the change of seasons, houses, and tables. Came to brother M——'s on *Sun-*

³⁶ For the identity of these preachers see Shipp: *op. cit.*, 215. For biographical data see Betts, *History of South Carolina Methodism*, 85, 171, 172. A full day's ride must have taken Asbury eastward to Union County, North Carolina, for his quarterly conference. Union Circuit had just been formed. From there he went to Burke County, North Carolina, near Morganton. Union Circuit was called Lincoln when formed by Daniel Asbury in 1790. It became Union in 1795 and changed to Lincoln again in 1805. It embraced the whole area along the state line, including Lincoln, Burke, parts of Mecklenburg, Cabarrus, and Union counties in North Carolina, and parts of York and Spartanburg counties in South Carolina. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 273.)

day evening, to get a day of rest. I feel the want of religion in families, congregations, and societies. I have travelled about three hundred miles the last three weeks; and have escaped the excessive rains, but have had to wrestle with floods.

Monday, 18. I spent in writing sundry letters to the north; and in my favourite study.

Tuesday, 19. I had a full house at L———'s. I felt very unfit for public exercises, both in body and mind. I have little desire to come here again:—we can hardly get entertainment. We want brethren and children here. A woman invited us to her house; but when I understood the distance, I determined to haste along, and made it about thirty miles to F———'s, in the cover of the mountain: where we rested in peace, after getting a little Indian bread, fried bacon, and drinking some of our tea. Our lodging was on a bed set upon forks, and clap-boards laid across, in an earthen-floor cabin. But worse than all the rest, these people decline in religion. I feel awful for them on this account. Next morning, about sunrise, we took the path up the mountain.

I sent Daniel Asbury to Dr. Busnell's, to inquire if there was any expectation of my coming to Burke to preach; for, being indisposed, I intended to turn aside to Johns River. Daniel Asbury returned; and the plain, pointed sermon on, "The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost": every one, young and old, lawyers, doctors, and clerks, were obliging, attentive, and serious. Doctor Busnell is a man I have heard of these twenty years, but knew him not until now. He descended from the Bohemians. His son Joseph was happily brought home to God by means of the Methodists; he lived to God, and died in Winchester about twelve months ago. The Doctor's usage to me was that of a gentleman and Christian. The transition with respect

to entertainment was very great; here we had a table, bed, room and whatever we wanted; but all this could not give me rest, having a return of my rheumatic and nervous complaints.

Friday, 22. Rode up to Johns River: I am heavy, cannot attend study nor mental prayer, and company is irksome. O that my soul were always flaming with perfect love! In the evening eight of us met together, and conversed on the work of God: all was love. Brother P. gave us an animating sermon on "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small."

Sunday, 24. I preached on 1 Cor. xiv, 3; there was a noise, and a shaking each day: some were awakened, one professed to be converted, and several to be quickened: the meeting lasted from nine, A.M. to four o'clock, P.M. "While he was yet speaking there came also another." I heard there was a conference appointed at Reese's chapel, in Charlotte county, Virginia, to form what they call a free constitution, and a pure Church; and to reject me and my creatures.³⁷ I know not whose hand is in this; I hope they will call themselves by another name. Only let them settle in congregations and tax the people, and I know how it will work. If we (the itinerant connexion) would give the government into the hands of a local ministry, as some would have it, and tax the people to pay preachers, for Sabbath work—this would please such men; but this we dare not do. Whenever the people are unwilling to receive us and think they can do better, we will quietly withdraw from them; and if those who wish the change can serve them better than we have done, well. Perhaps some of them may think with Hammett, in Georgia, that I am the greatest villain on the continent; I bid such adieu, and appeal to the bar of God. I have not time to contend,

³⁷ The reference here is to the O'Kellyites who were organizing the Republican Methodist Church in Virginia. (See letter of November 23, 1793.)

having better work to do: if we lose some children, God will give us more. Ah! this is the mercy, the justice of some who, under God, owe their all to me, and my *tyrants*, so called. The Lord judge between them and me! There appears to be a general quickening in the Yadkin circuit, and about eight souls have professed conversion there in the last three months.

Monday, 25. I rested and prepared to cross the *Harmon harim*—the multitude of mountains.

Tuesday, 26. We wrought up the meanders of Johns River to the Globe,³⁸ and met a few people at Mr. Moor's, a Baptist, a very kind head of a respectable family.

Wednesday, 27. We began our journey over the great ridge of mountains: we had not gone far before we saw and felt the snow; the sharpness of the air gave me a deep cold, not unlike an influenza. We came to the head of Watauga River. Stopped at Mr. S——'s, and had some enlargement on, "The promise is to you and to your children," &c. My soul felt for these neglected people. It may be, by my coming this way, Providence will so order it, that I shall send them a preacher. We hastened on to Cove's Creek, invited ourselves to stay at C——'s, where we made our own tea, obtained some butter and milk, and some most excellent Irish potatoes: we were presented with a little flax for our beds, on which we spread our coats and blankets, and three of us slept before a large fire.

Thursday, 28. We made an early start, and came to the Beaver Dam; three years ago we slept here in a cabin without a cover. We made a breakfast at Mr. W——'s; and then attempted the iron or stone mountain, which is steep like the roof of a house. I found it

³⁸ John's River is in the northern area of Burke County, between Morganton and Lenoir. Globe is in Caldwell County. There was a chapel at Globe. (See *Journal* entries for April 27, 1788 and April 4, 1790.)

difficult and trying to my lungs to walk up it. Descending the mountain, we had to jump down the steep stairs, from two to three and four feet. At the foot of this mountain our guide left us to a man on foot; he soon declined, and we made the best of our way to Julius Dugger's³⁹ ford, on Roans Creek. We came down the river, where there are plenty of large, round, rolling stones, and the stream was rapid. My horse began to grow dull: an intermittent fever and a deep cold disordered me much. I was under obligations to Henry Hill, my new aid, who was ready to do anything for me in his power. Perhaps Providence moved him to offer to travel with me, and his father to recommend him. Twenty years ago a rude, open loft did not affect me—now it seldom fails to injure me.

TWENTY-SEVENTH VISIT

(December 9-December 23, 1793; age 48)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia to South Carolina. In 1793, he was one half way through his Journal of forty-four years' duration. A Conference was held at Green Hill's from December 10th through 13th.

Enoch George volunteered at Conference to go and preach. "Here am I, send me," were his words. He entered the ministry in North Carolina in 1790 and was elected to the episcopacy in 1816, serving for twelve years until his death in Staunton, Virginia in 1828. He was the fifth American Methodist bishop. (Tipple, *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 195, 196; Wheeler, *op. cit.*, 196-198.)

Monday, 9. Crossed Roanoak in a flat, with seven horses; but we were mercifully preserved. Came to

³⁹ Ramsay's *Annals*, 142.

Warrenton. I had a violent pain in my head, and, my horse's back being injured, I stopped at Myrick's, having ridden only twenty miles.

Tuesday, 10. Came to Louisburg, and held our conference at Green Hills, about a mile from town. Great peace and unity prevailed amongst us. The preachers cheerfully signed an instrument, expressing their determination to submit to, and abide by, what the General Conference has done.

Friday, 13. Our conference rose: it was agreed that the next conference should be held in Petersburg; there the preachers from North Carolina, Greenbrier, the Center and South Districts of Virginia, may all meet, and change properly, and unite together for their own and the people's good.

Saturday, 14. Rode to father P.B.——'s. O that the last days of ancient Methodists may be the best! I have a cold and pains; but there is ease in peace, and love, and communion with God.

Sunday, 15. We had as many people at father B——'s as we could find room for: I delivered some alarming words from Isaiah lxxv, 2.

Monday, 16. Rode up the Neuse; fed at Tomkins's, and hasted to the widow Carson's (about forty miles).

Tuesday, 17. After riding about twenty-six miles to R——'s, I gave them a short discourse on, "The foundation of God standeth sure": after eating, we had to ride sixteen or eighteen miles in the evening home with brother McGee.⁴⁰ In the morning we crossed Deep River, in a flat, not without danger; thence down Caraway Creek to Randolph town; thence to Uwharrie at Fuller's Ford. Here we were assisted by some young men with a canoe. Thank the Lord, both men and horses were preserved! The young men *sometimes*

⁴⁰ See *Journal* note and entry for January 22, 1790.

prayed and sometimes swore. After riding three miles, came to Wood's, but Russel's was the place of preaching, where I found some who had heard me in Virginia many years past: I laboured to speak, although my throat was very sore: the hearts of the people appeared to be cold, as well as their bodies.

Friday, 20. I had to ride thirty miles by two o'clock; but was so poorly I declined preaching. *Saturday* and *Sunday* I spent at John Randle's: I gave place to brothers George M'Kenny (on the Caswell Circuit) and Jonathan Bird (on Anson Circuit). On Sunday evening, I gave the family a discourse at Wyatt Randall's.⁴¹

Monday, 23. Crossed Rocky River: this is a bold stream; it rises in Mecklenburg (County), North Carolina, and, after running eighty or ninety miles empties itself into Pee Dee, a little below Montgomery.

TWENTY-EIGHTH VISIT

(March 13-April 14, 1794; age 48)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina toward Tennessee. He often tried to avoid traveling on the Sabbath. He had heard rumors of war. Nicholas Watters was from one of early American Methodism's leading families of clergymen. His brother William Watters was the first native American preacher to receive assignment to a regular circuit. (*Sweet, Men of Zeal*, 132.) Asbury noted his choice subject and gave sermon points. Occasionally only short notices were given of his intended appearance in some communities. He provided a description of Cokesbury School. Because of his appointive powers, some termed him a despot.

⁴¹ John and Wyatt Randall lived in Stanley County, and Asbury frequently stopped there. He was there first on February 15, 1785, when he borrowed a horse. Randall's Church is still active a little west of the Yadkin at Tillery Lake and north of Norwood. The property of three and one-half acres was deeded by John Snugg in 1813 to Henry Ledbetter, John Christian, George Allen, John Randall, and Wyatt Randall as church trustees. Ledbetter was an itinerant preacher from 1787 to 1795. (Correspondence, Jeffrey F. Stanback, Mount Gilead, N. C., 1953.)

Waxhaw is the birthplace of Andrew Jackson (1767-1845), seventh American president, claimed by North and South Carolina because of conflicting claims of state boundary line. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1960, Vol. 12, 851, Article, "Andrew Jackson.")

Thursday, 13. Rode thirty miles more to the Waxhaw,⁴² after preaching at the chapel in the woods. I went to Brother T——'s, where we had a room to ourselves; and our horses were richly fed: this was a great favour—such as we do not generally receive in this country.

Saturday, 15. We set out under discouraging prospects; having had a heavy rain the night before. We came to Shepherds,⁴³ where we had to swim our horses alongside a canoe, and had they not struggled powerfully and freed themselves, from among the bushes and grape-vines, they had certainly drowned: we returned across the stream, and then brought them down the creek, to a place where there were no trees in the way, and we got safe across.

Sunday, 16. The waters being still high, our passage difficult, and having no inclination to travel on the Sabbath, we continued at Shepherd's, where we stayed the night before. Notice was circulated through the neighborhood, and by eleven o'clock there was collected a congregation of sixty or seventy people.

Monday, 17. We set out, and passed Charlotte, in Mecklenburg; here I learned that meeting was appointed for me at A——'s. I came to L. Hill's, where I met with Nicholas Watters and Daniel Asbury,⁴⁴ hav-

⁴² Waxhaw was across the line in Union County, North Carolina. Asbury had followed a familiar route from Remberts through Camden and Hanging Rock.

⁴³ Mr. Shepherd probably lived near the Union-Mecklenburg county line.

⁴⁴ Nicholas Watters was on the Union Circuit with Tobias Gibson, who was Asbury's traveling companion, and William McKendree. Daniel Asbury had been on the French Broad Circuit in 1788 but was not located. He began traveling again in 1803 and served the Union Circuit. (*Minutes*) He lived at Rehobeth, the present Terrell.

ing ridden thirty-four miles. By the time I reach Justice White's I shall make out to have ridden about one thousand miles in three months and to have stopped six weeks of the time with great reluctance. I preached at——, on 2 Tim. ii, 12-17. I gave 1. The marks of a Christian; one of which is, that he suffers persecution. 2. The marks of heretics and schismatics; the former oppose the established doctrines of the Gospel—the latter will divide Christians. 3. That we must continue in what we have been taught by the work, the Spirit, and faithful ministers of Christ. 4. That the Holy Scriptures are the standard sufficient for ministers and people to furnish them to every good work.

Thursday, 20. I directed my course, in company with my faithful fellow-labourer, Tobias Gibson, up the Catawba, settled mostly by the Dutch. A barren spot for religion. Having ridden in pain twenty-four miles we came, weary and hungry, to O——'s tavern; and were glad to take what came to hand. Four miles forward we came to Howes Ford, upon Catawba River, where we could neither get a canoe nor guide. We entered the water in an improper place, and were soon among the rocks and in the whirlpools: my head swam, and my horse was affrighted: the water was to my knees, and it was with difficulty we retreated to the same shore. We then called to a man on the other side, who came and piloted us across for which I paid him well. My horse being afraid to take the water a second time, brother Gibson crossed, and sent me his; and our guide took mine across. We went on, but our troubles were not at an end: night came on, and it was very dark. It rained heavily, with powerful lightning and thunder. We could not find the path that turned out to Connell's. In this situation we continued until midnight or past; at last we found a path which we followed till we came to dear old father Harper's plantation; we made for the house, and

called; he answered, but wondered who it could be; he inquired whence we came; I told him we would tell that when we came in, for it was raining so powerfully we had not much time to talk; when I came dripping into the house, he cried, "God bless your soul, is it brother Asbury? wife, get up." Having had my feet and legs wet for six or seven hours, causes me to feel very stiff.

Friday, 21. We set forward towards brother White's, and took our time to ride twelve miles.

Saturday, 22. My soul enjoys peace; but O! for more of God! This campaign has made me "groan, being burdened." Bad news on my coming to the mountains; neither preachers nor elders have visited Swannanoah since last October; poor people—poor preachers that are not more stable: but all flesh is grass, and I am grass. I have provided brothers Gibson and Lurton ⁴⁵ for the westward. I wrote a plan for stationing; and desired the dear preachers to be as I am in the work: I have no interest, no passions, in their appointments; my only aim is to care and provide for the flock of Christ. I see I must not leave Charleston till the third or fourth week in March; then the rains will subside, and the creeks and rivers be passable, and so shall we escape the danger of drowning ourselves and horses. I feel that my sufferings have been good preaching to me—especially in crossing the waters. I am solemnly moved in not visiting my Holston and Kentucky brethren. It may be their interest to desire the preservation of my life: while living I may supply them with preachers, and with men and money. I feel resolved to be wholly the Lord's, weak as I am; I have done nothing. I am nothing, only for Christ! or I had long since been cut off as an unfaithful servant; Christ is all, and in all I do, or it had not been

⁴⁵ Tobias Gibson went to Lexington in Kentucky, and Jacob Lurton went to the Cumberland Circuit in Tennessee. (See *Minutes*, 1794.)

done; or when done, had by no means been acceptable.

Sunday, 23. My subject at Justice White's was Heb. ii, 1-3; I had more people than I expected. I have visited this place once a year; but Mr. Kobler and Lowe ⁴⁶ have both failed coming at all; I pity them and the people. If I could think myself of any account, I might say, with Mr. Wesley, "If it be so while I am alive, what will it be after my death?" I have written several letters to the westward to supply my lack of service. I am mightily wrought upon for New Hampshire, Province of Maine, Vermont, and Lower Canada.

Saturday, 29. Started for Nolenten's, and came part of the way alone. After winding about the creeks and hills, I came to a cabin: here I found a few serious people, to whom I preached on 1 Tim. iv, 8; after which I spent the evening with dear brother S. in his clean cabin.

Sunday, 30. After riding about five miles, I came to a meeting house: it was a cabin half floored, with long open windows between the logs.

Monday, 31. I had the house filled with serious people, and found much to say on Ruth i, 16, 17; whatever weight there might have been in the discourse, I was happy in my own soul.

Tuesday, April 1. I was very happy whilst riding alone down to Doctor Brown's: on my way, I saw Babel, the Baptist-Methodist house, about which there has been so much quarrelling: it is made of logs and is no great matter. I am astonished at professors, old professors, neglecting family and private prayer; Lord, help! for there is but little genuine religion in the world.

Wednesday, 2. Came to E's. meeting house, near Hunting Creek, in Surry county: here I met with some

⁴⁶ John Kobler and Isaac Lowe were the elders over the circuits in North Carolina and Holston. (See *Minutes*, 1794; letter to John Kobler, March 23, 1794.)

old disciples from Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia, who have known me these twenty-two years. Our meeting was attended with mutual pleasure: my soul enjoyed much sweetness with these people. There has been some trouble amongst them; but I know God is with them. I was secretly led to treat on sanctification at W.'s; and if the Lord will help me, I am resolved to speak more on this blessed doctrine. After preaching, I came to Cokesbury school,⁴⁷ at Hardy Jones's: it is twenty feet square, two stories high, well set out with doors and windows; this house is not too large, as some others are: it stands on a beautiful eminence, and overlooks the Lowlands, and river Yadkin.

Monday, 7. I set out alone, and missing my way, got entangled in the bush and thickets, and made it about twenty miles: although it was a trial to me, it might be intended to prevent the poor people from being disappointed who came late.

I had the pleasure of dining and drinking tea with a Moravian minister, who has the charge of the congregation at Muddy Creek. Next day I called at Salem.⁴⁸

I rode twenty miles to Levin Ward's, on the head waters of Dan River, Stokes county. I was greatly fatigued; but having no appointment to preach, after a good night's rest, I was much refreshed. Having little opportunity of being alone, I wandered into the field

⁴⁷ Cokesbury School was located on the Yadkin River near Phelps Ferry in the lower end of present Davie County. This was doubtless the school for which John Dickins made the plan and for which Mr. Long and Mr. Bustian gave some money in 1780. (See *Journal* entry and notes for June 19, 1780.) The money was doubtless used for Cokesbury College in Maryland. James Parkes, the son-in-law of Hardy Jones, was taken from the district and became principal of the school this year. (Cummings, *Early Schools of Methodism*, 71, 72; Grissom, *op. cit.*, 134-38; Turner and Bridgers, *op. cit.*, 468.) There is some confusion in the *Journal*, which indicates that Asbury preached in Surry County before reaching the school; he was traveling northward and would have passed the school long before reaching Surry County.

⁴⁸ The Moravian community of Salem, later united in Winston-Salem, was in Forsyth County. The confusion in the account continues. Salem was southeast of the meeting-house in Surry County, north of Cokesbury School, and directly south of Stokes County to which he proceeded. Asbury either entered his exact route incorrectly or doubled back on his trail during the five-day hiatus in the *Journal* between April 2 and April 7.

for solitude. I met with Philip Sands,⁴⁹ from Old Lynn, a child of Providence: after passing solemn scenes at sea, he was taken and left in the Lowlands of North Carolina. First a Christian, then a preacher. He was stationed in Guilford; but offered himself a volunteer for Swannanoa; which station hath been vacant near six months; one of the preachers appointed there being sick, and the other married; and now because I have power to send a preacher to these poor people, some are pleased to account me and call me a despot.

Friday, 11. I went to Simpson's house. I was greatly chilled and unable to preach. The house was very open, but brother Bird⁵⁰ sounded away bravely. It appeared as if my fingers were nearly frozen. I went home with brother C. and had everything comfortable.

Saturday, 12. I had a small congregation, but a good time with some feeling souls at brother J's, on my choice subject, Heb. iii, 12. We have rumours of war with England. But the Lord reigneth, although the earth be so much disquieted. I came through Rockingham, and saw my old friends: lodged with father Low, who is seventy-six years of age, and happy in God.

Monday, 14. Brother Sands set out for Swannanoah. Had I ventured to Kentucky, how should I have stood the wilderness, with four or five days of such cold, rainy weather as we have lately had? I was thankful to God that I changed my course.⁵¹ I feel wholly devoted to God, and greatly wish to see more fruit of my labour.

⁴⁹ Philip Sands was on the Roanoke Circuit and was sent to the Swannanoa with Josiah Cole, to change after six months with Christopher S. Mooring and Pemberton Smith, who were on the Yadkin Circuit. (See *Minutes*.)

⁵⁰ Jonathan Bird was on the Tar River Circuit.

⁵¹ The Kentucky Conference was then in session at Bethel Academy. Thomas Scott joined the conference that year, and during the session he was lodged at the home of Captain John Lewis. He served circuits from 1789 to 1795. (See *Scott's Journal*, *op. cit.*, and his "Memoirs" in *Western Christian Advocate*, 1851-54; also notes under May 13 and 17, 1790.)

TWENTY-NINTH VISIT

(December 13-December 23, 1794; age 49)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia to South Carolina, entering the state in Granville County, the only county he mentioned. In the previous year, he was in the state in March and April, not in May as he indicated. He visited Cokesbury School again. In December, 1794, he completed his first decade in the episcopacy.

That Asbury possessed too much episcopal power was a charge against brought by James O'Kelly some years earlier. (*Journal*, II, 32 [footnote], 204, 205, 459, 460.)

Saturday, 13. We crossed Roanoak, and came to Mr. Smith's, in Granville county. On *Sunday*, 14th, crossed Mountain and Grassy Creeks, and came to brother Owen's, whose wife is a true daughter of Daniel Grant,⁵² my dear old friend in Georgia. He was among the last fruits of that great man Mr. Davies, when he laboured in Hanover, in Virginia, forty years ago.

Monday, 15. Crossed the head streams of Tar River, which are only small branches, and rode on to R——'s (where I had an appointment); and found I had another twenty-five miles forward at L——': so I left brother C—— to fill up my place, and went forward to the latter; where I preached to about two hundred people. I feel weak in body and mind, yet find my soul stayed upon God. "Still onwards I go," fainting yet fighting.

Thursday, 18. I have a long journey to Charleston

⁵² Daniel Grant (d. 1793) and his brother Thomas built in Wilkes County near Washington, the first Methodist meetinghouse in Georgia. The conference met there in 1789 and 1790. (See *Journal* entry, notes, and references for March 8, 1789.) The Davies referred to here is Samuel Davies, the great Presbyterian Preacher. In Hanover, Davies was a correspondent of John Wesley (*The Letters of John Wesley*). Davies went to New Jersey to be president of the Log College. He and Tennent visited Whitefield and Wesley in England, where they solicited funds for the Log College. The Log College became Princeton University.

(S.C.), and but thirteen days to perform it; having appointed to be there the 1st of January.

Friday, 19. We rode twenty-five miles through a powerful fall of rain; but we wrought our way through the swamps, floating and sinking as we went.

Saturday, 20. It snowed as powerfully as it rained yesterday: however, we set out for Salem about nine o'clock, and forded two creeks; but the third we swam. Brother Ward went in, and after a pause I followed; but being cloaked up, my horse nearly slipped from under me: one foot was *properly* soaked. I walked about one mile and rode another, and reached the town about twelve o'clock, just as they were ringing the bell. Feeling the want of a fire, I went to the tavern; but I found but one fire-place there; I sat down with the company, and dried my feet a little, until my companions came along. I have need of power (and I am accused of having too much) to stand such days as this: my soul is kept in peace and communion with God; and, through grace, I will not murmur at my sufferings whilst the salvation of souls is my end and aim. We found a home at father Hill's, from Maryland, about three o'clock, having ridden nineteen miles today, and thirty yesterday. I was thankful for a house and friends, and an opportunity of putting into port. It is a comfort to remember there remaineth a rest for the people of God.

Sunday, 21. I came to Cokesbury school; and after preaching on 1 Cor. xv, 58, I rode down to brother Charles Caton's. Here a few souls have been brought to God since I was in their parts in May last.

Monday, 22. We were detained some time at Long's Ferry by a wagon and a number of horses. Mrs. —— entertained us very kindly, and her husband gave us a hearty welcome when he came home, and found out who we were. It was expected by some that I should preach

at Salisbury, but I did not; so we rode on and reached the widow B's about eight o'clock at night, having ridden thirty miles.

Tuesday, 23. We set out at sunrise: the morning was cold and frosty. We rode ten miles and fed at A's; thence we hasted twenty-five miles to J.R.'s, took a late dinner, and rode to W.R.'s, making upwards of forty miles. Next day we had to swim Rocky River; we then passed Newtown, and made it thirty miles to Jackson's.

THIRTIETH VISIT

(March 30-April 22, 1795; age 49)

ASBURY traveled from South Carolina to Virginia, mentioning specifically Surry and Wilkes counties. He indicated fasting on occasion, which seemed to have a weakening effect because of his almost constant travels. This he did no more than once a month. He noted visiting Daniel Asbury and the rigors of traveling with little or no food. He had three hundred hearers at service. He spoke kind words for the ministers and harsh ones for the conduct of many people.

There are five recognized varieties of fasting: (1) purificatory (2) sympathetic (3) penitential (4) meritorious (5) disciplinary. ("Fasting," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1960, ed. Vol. 9, 106-108.) Asbury apparently practiced the disciplinary variety, that is, the variety in which it was a part of the soul's preparation or the maintenance of self-control in times of a strong temptation.

Monday, 30. I rode forty miles to Moore's. My body is weak, and so is my faith for this part of the vineyard. God is my portion, saith my soul. This country improves in cultivation, wickedness, mills, and still; a *prophet of strong drink* would be acceptable to many of these people. I believe that the Methodist preachers

keep clear, both by precept and example; would to God the members did so too! Lord, have pity on weeping, bleeding Zion.

Wednesday, April 1. We rode thirty miles through a barren country, and came, weak and hungry to brother B——'s clean, comfortable house; and had all things agreeable. I find it hard to ride eight or nine hours without any other nourishment but a little bread and tea.

Friday, 3. Was a rainy day. I had some talk with a few blacks, and was comfortable and happy. We lose much by not meeting these people alone. I find, generally, that those who are held by professors of religion are hard to move.

Saturday and Sunday, 4, 5. Quarterly meeting at Daniel Asbury's meeting house. I notice many attend preaching at such times as these, who appear wild, and do not know how to behave themselves. In the afternoon I met the poor blacks by themselves, and was greatly blessed.

Monday, 6. We crossed Catawba, rode thirty-five miles, and came to brother Fitzhugh's, where we met with kind treatment to sweeten the bitter cup of a hard and hungry day's ride.

Thursday, 9. Crossed Hunting Creek, and came to Arnette's meeting house in Surry County. Here I had near three hundred hearers, to whom I preached on Heb. v, 12-14, and had more enlarged views of this subject than I ever had before. We have had a good work here; fifty souls are lately brought in; appearances are greatly changed for the better since I was here eleven months ago.

Friday, 10. We came to Gordon's, in Wilkes county. I feel awful; I fear lest darkness should be felt here. Ah, Lord, help me to go through good and evil report; prosperity and adversity; storms and calms; kindness

and unkindness; friends and enemies; life and death, in the spirit and practice of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

Sunday, 12. I preached the funeral of grandmother Gordon, aged eighty-seven or eighty-eight years.

Monday, 13. We took our acceptable departure; I cannot live where God is not acknowledged. I passed through the heart of Wilkes county. Here is a poor prospect of religion among all sects. We came in the evening to the house of a poor, honest man. Bless God! we can embrace the poor cabins, and find shelter. The people are kind and free with what they have.

Wednesday, 15. I preached on Heb. iv, 1, to many people, collected from various parts, at brother White's, on John's River, and was greatly assisted.

Thursday, 16. We had preaching, and were engaged in writing letters and copying the minutes. My soul enjoys sweet peace; but I see an awful danger of losing that simple walking and living in the enjoyment of God.

Friday, 17. I observed as a day of rigid fasting; this I cannot do more than once a month. I am frequently obliged to go on three cups of tea, with a little bread, for eight or nine hours, and to ride many miles, and preach, and perform my other ministerial labours.

Sunday, 19. We had a crowded congregation, and a moving season at the sacrament. *Monday* and *Tuesday* we direct our course up John's River.

Wednesday, 22. Crossed the Ridge, and kept on to the westward. We went Major J. White's path, and found it abundantly better than the old one. We reached the top of Ridge in about six miles—here we found ourselves among fruitful hills; then we had a good path for six miles more, except where there were some laurel branches and roots. We stopped at S——'s; and it was well we did, or we should have been well-nigh starved, both man and horse.

THIRTY-FIRST VISIT

(December 7-December 21, 1795; age 50)

ASBURY traveled from Virginia to South Carolina through eastern counties. Sampson, which he crossed and recrossed, is the state's largest county (963 square miles). He had to cross the Neuse and Tar rivers, two of the state's major rivers. (Lemert and Harrelson, *op. cit.*, 4, 10.) He indicated his need for being alone for spiritual refreshment, and his concern for the spiritual needs of the people.

Monday, 7. I preached at brother Clayton's, near Halifax; and then hastened to brother Bradford's where we had a small congregation the next day. Yesterday evening William Glendenning stayed here: he talked very boldly to R. W———; alleging that he was free, &c. I expect he will go on without fear or wisdom, until many of the Methodists will not receive him into their houses and hear the abuse of their ministers, people and discipline.

We crossed Tar River and Town Creek, and came to T. Sheppard's, where we had all things richly to enjoy. I had my trials, and my spirit was greatly afflicted and humbled: I was glad to get alone to pour out my soul unto God.

Saturday, 12. This hath been to me a day of trial and consolation. It is wonderful to see how the people in this country are hid by swamps and creeks.

Sabbath day, 13. We set out in the midst of the rain to Spann's meeting house:⁵³ I had ten hearers, to whom I preached on Luke xii, 32. We came to brother Spann's, who has sold off his property, and is about to move to the high lands of South Carolina: the reason he assigns

⁵³ Spann's meetinghouse was in Pitt County. Spann soon moved to South Carolina, near the present town of Ridge Spring, where he founded Spann's Church, which is still active.

is laudable; and I think God be with him. It rained powerfully in the night, which brought me under great exercise about getting along, having been so often stopped by, and dipped in, the rivers and swamps.

Monday, 14. We crossed Neuse River at Whitefield's ferry, the river rising very fast. We passed North East and Goshen bridges, and Bear Swamp; all of which we crossed in safety, though not without fear: my feet were wet, my body cold, and my stomach empty, having had no dinner. I found a good fire, a warm bed, and a little medicine, each necessary in its place. No people make you more welcome to their houses than these: but is Christ welcome to their hearts? I am sensible of the want of more religion among them.

Friday, 18. After riding about twenty miles, I preached at Father V——'s;⁵⁴ I felt strangely set at liberty, and was uncommonly happy. Here we left Goshen circuit, and Sampson county.

Saturday, 19. We crossed the south branch of Black River, and came to Elizabethtown, about fifty miles above Wilmington: we had a very cold day, and nothing to eat for thirty miles. Brother M'Rea met us near the town and took us to his house; and it was well he did, or we might have been lost in the woods. But the kindness of the people in supplying our wants made up for our toil—Lord, comfort them who comfort us! Here we had a quiet retreat, and spent the *Sabbath* in public and private exercises.

Monday, 21. We set out by sunrise, and had to work our way through the swamps, where I feared being plunged in headforemost. I have lately been much tried several ways; and much comforted. We came down Brunswick county, North Carolina, twenty miles to

⁵⁴ This was either Vick or Van. Both families were numerous in Sampson County.

Norman's, within the line of South Carolina. Cross where you will between the States, and it is a miserable pass for one hundred miles west. I was much led out on Rev. xxi, 6-8. This country abounds with bays, swamps, and drains; if there were here no sinners, I would not go along these roads. I am in want of rest, and should be glad of better fare. O, for patience, faith, courage, and every grace! Sometimes I feel as though I could rejoice to die and go home: but at other times the work of God is in my way, and sometimes my own unworthiness.

THIRTY-SECOND VISIT

(April 6-April 14, 1796; age 51)

ASBURY'S ITINERARY from South Carolina to Tennessee was recorded in only four entries. (Tennessee entered the Union in 1796.) He apparently crossed the state in one week. In preparation for observance of the sacraments, brandy had been substituted for wine.

Burke County, the only one mentioned in the account, was named in honor of Thomas Burke, governor of North Carolina (1781-1782). It was formed in 1777. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 452; Crabtree, *North Carolina Governors*, 49-50.)

Wednesday, 6. We came to Moor's: I was at a loss how to address myself to these people—it may be for the last time: it was laid on my heart to speak from our Lord's lamentation over Jerusalem. I felt awful among them.

Saturday, 9. We came to Cane Creek, in Burke county. We dined on some peach-pie in the woods. In the afternoon there arose a most dreadful storm of rain, with thunder and lightning: it was very awful; we cried to God for man and beast, and were preserved. We

came in about seven o'clock, and were received by T. B. with great kindness.

Monday, 11. We crossed Lovelady's ferry and came to Connell's, where I met with several preachers. After preaching, I was going to administer the sacrament and discovered that what they had provided for wine was in reality brandy; so I desisted. Here I met Doctor B———ll, who is still praying and waiting for the consolation of Israel. I rode a mountainous path six miles to father W———'s, where we dined. Ah! what a round of continual running is my life! Of late, feeble as I am, I cannot help thinking of Cumberland, in Tennessee, and trying to go there: if I must go to Kentucky, I think it is time to go to Cumberland also.

Thursday, 14. We took our departure from Johns River, up the branches of Catawba: on our way we met with a half a dozen living creatures, like men and women, who seemed quite pleased with their mountain wedding; they were under the whip, riding two and two as if they would break their necks; one had a white cloth like a flag, and the other a silk handkerchief; when they had spent their fire, they called at a still-house to prime again. I ascended about one mile up a mountain, and came to M. Davenport's: here I feel deep dejection of mind as well as great weakness of body, and as if I could lie down and die; owing in some measure, I presume, to the great fatigue I underwent in ascending the mountain, which was very steep.

THIRTY-THIRD VISIT

(December 2-December 25, 1796; age 51)

ASBURY was traveling from Virginia to South Carolina; he had as his companion Whatcoat for some seven hundred miles, after which he parted on another route. Asbury had apparently kept one of his horses for at least five years.

One imagines the hardships and rigors they were called on to endure on the Long Road. Asbury provided main points of a sermon; noted a dance converted into a congregation; showed concern for stationing a preacher in Wilmington and noted resemblances of some North and South Carolina rivers.

Asbury apparently never visited Bath, the oldest North Carolina town, which dates from 1706. He did anticipate much growth for New Bern, one of the oldest towns, in the following half century. The state had no large cities in his day. In 1820, four years after his death, New Bern had a population of 3,663; Fayetteville, 3,532; Raleigh, 2,674; Wilmington, 2,633; Edenton, 1,561 and Washington, 1,034. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 88, 89, 208, 209.)

Friday, 2. We had a long, cold, hungry ride to Gates county in North Carolina.

Saturday, 3. We had a blessed season in Colonel Baker's new house, on 1 John iii, 1, 2, 3. I have felt unwell by these changes: sometimes preaching makes me sick, and at other times makes me well. Yesterday we rode nearly forty miles; to-day we laboured, and our horses rested. I feel solemnly given up to God in toil and suffering.

Sabbath Day, 4. We rode fourteen miles to Winton, where I preached to an attentive congregation, from town and country, on St. John's Gospel i, 4. I remembered my old friend Boon; I was invited to and most kindly entertained at the house of one of his daughters. So it is, when the dear, aged parents go off, they leave me their children. Thence to Northampton county, twenty-eight or thirty miles, and came in about six o'clock. We had to-day as on *Friday* last, to breakfast about six or seven in the morning, and to dine about the same hour in the evening. My soul hath been in great peace. I rode to see Richard Whitaker and his wife, after several years' absence: I felt truly solemn

when I found myself at the old house where the father and mother died. I remember well what passed when I was here last—the distress of the doctor, and his kindness to me in the year 1785.

Tuesday, 6. We had a rainy morning. Crossed Roanoke at Edwards's ferry, and came to Champion's: I resolved to preach, although only a part of two families were present. We dined, and hasted to mother Whitaker's, about twenty-four or twenty-five miles.

Wednesday, 7. We had a very sharp morning. I preached at brother Bradford's, on 1 John iv, 16-18. Yesterday on, "The promise is to you and to your children," &c. I parted with my dear brother Whatcoat, after traveling together about seven hundred miles. It was painful to part, yet I was well pleased he had not to drive the rough way, and that through the rain. In this I loved my brother better than myself. We had a comfortable season at sermon and sacrament this day. I felt myself at home in brother Bradford's family.

Thursday, 8. I came again to the widow Philips's, on Swift Creek; the house was filled—my subject was awful, Amos viii, 11: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." I observed—

I. The great and interesting things contained in the word of the Lord.

II. The benefits and blessings communicated by the faithful preaching and hearing, believing and obeying, the word of the Lord.

III. The causes and effects of this famine; deaths, removals, backslidings of ministers and people, and had reference to ancient times. Dreadful effects! the want of means to civilize, moralize, and spiritualize mankind.

I felt differently to-day from what I did yesterday; it was like beating upon a rock; but the Lord can give a

blessing. We are greatly blessed with healthy weather.

Friday, 9. We came to Tarborough (Edgecombe County). They had made a fire in the small apartment of the court house, and I thought it was for preaching, but it was for dancing, and the violin lay on the table. Mr. Clement was kind enough to stop the scene, and we had a serious congregation to hear, to whom I preached on Heb. viii, 9-11. There were two or three houses open to me in town, but I lodged three miles out at brother Toole's.⁵⁵ We rode on *Saturday, 10th*, twenty-eight miles, without food or rest for man or horse, until we came to brother Forbes's, Pitt county, where I spent the *Sabbath*, and preached on Rom. ix, 27. I had many hearers, but it was a cold times, both literally and spiritually; my soul was solemn—my body unwell.

Monday, 12. I rode to father Barrows's: I was much led out on Heb. iii, 12-14. In those words: 1. Christians are cautioned against a most dreadful end. 2. The means to prevent it; and 3. The example of backsliders. The end interesting and great—to hold fast the beginning of their confidence. The means—by exhorting one another daily. We rode twenty miles to father Ormond's; the people came before the rain, but had to return home through it; my subject was, "The little flock"; and I had considerable opening. I feel nothing painful, but the want of a revival of religion: my soul feels as if the Lord will yet do wonders among this people.

Wednesday, 14. We rose early, and rode in haste to Cox's ferry, on Neuse River: the weather was damp and chilly. We had very few to hear at the meeting house; it was a day of great trial, and I was beset on every side.

Thursday, 15. We made a forced march of twenty-

⁵⁵ Geraldus Toole, a prosperous farmer from Edgecomb County, married the only daughter and oldest child of Dr. John King. Toole became associated with his brother-in-law, Joel King, as a merchant. His Franklin County, North Carolina, home was in Hayesville Township, north of Tar River on Toole's Creek. He died in 1846. (Davis: *op. cit.*, 282, 283.)

five miles to Newbern; we had no refreshment for man nor horse. Having an inflammation in one of my ears, and having fasted so long, I was very unwell; but a sermon was expected, and delivered on these words: "Because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation"; my hearers were numerous and serious. I had never viewed the situation of this town before: it is the image of Charleston (S.C.), Neuse and Trent have a likeness to Cooper and Ashley rivers. This is a growing place. Our society here, of white and coloured members, consists of one hundred. I every day see and feel the emptiness of all created good, and am taking my leave of all: what is worth living for but the work of God? I wrote to our brethren in the city stations, not to neglect the sick an hour, nor an absentee from class one week: indeed we ought to be always abounding in the work of the lord; to attend to old and new subjects, to our work, and to every means, like men labouring to find out new means for new difficulties. Should piety, health, and trade attend this Newbern, it will be a very capital place in half a century from this.

Friday, 16. I had great openings on Rom. i, 15-17. I know not when I have visited a place with such pleasing hopes and feelings. I trust there hath been something more than man in this. O! how greatly was my heart knit to these people!

Saturday, 17. I preached at ten o'clock the second part of the same theme, Phil. i, 27. I was exceedingly close on the duties, spirit, and practice of the Gospel. We had a ride fifteen miles to Lee's, upon Trent. I felt solemn and sorrowful at leaving my dear people at Newbern; ⁵⁶ they wished to give me money, but love is better than gold.

Sunday, 18. We had much rain: but few came to

⁵⁶ See letter to Mrs. Parker, December 17, 1796.

meeting. Finding we had twenty miles to Bryans's, we wished to move to Lemuel Hatches's, who was very kind.

Monday, 19. We had to ride early: my horse trots stiff; and no wonder, when I have ridden him upon an average, five thousand miles a year for five years successively. I preached on Heb. iii, 7, 8. I felt as if the Lord and his messengers had left this place. My spirit was grieved at the conduct of some Methodists, that hire out slaves at public places to the highest bidder, to cut, skin, and starve them: I think such members ought to be dealt with: on the side of oppressors there are law and power, but where are justice and mercy to the poor slaves? what eye will pity, what hand will help, or ear listen to their distresses? I will try if words can be like drawn swords, to pierce the hearts of the owners.

I have heard by a person from Baltimore, that by means of the weekly society meeting, our people are all on flame: thank God that it came into my heart to recommend it to them! this also shall comfort us in our toil. I have ridden upwards of thirty miles this day.

Tuesday, 20. At the rich lands, but amongst spiritually poor people. I had about thirty hearers, and here are a few precious souls. Father Ballard and family still stand by us. I had some freedom on Heb. iii, 14:—1. wherein believers are partakers of Christ, past, present, and to come; in wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. 2. The beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end, without which they cannot be saved or safe. I described the nature, effects, and fruits of this confidence in God, in Christ, in the Holy Spirit; in Scripture promises, precepts, threatenings, in and of heaven, earth, and hell.

Wednesday, 21. We had a cold ride of about twenty miles to Stone's Bay; where there are a few people

(who have been forsaken by the preachers), to whom I preached on Heb. x, 38, 39.

Thursday, 22. I came to Nixons's, on the road to Wilmington; here I found a kind people, but the preachers had left them because they did not immediately join in fellowship. Perhaps I was called this way to feel for souls in and round about Wilmington: if we had men and money, it would be well to station a preacher in such places as Wilmington.

Friday, 23. We had an excessively cold ride through heavy sands to Wilmington: when we came to the town wharf there was neither flat nor ferry; the causeway was under improvement; the only expedient therefore that remained was to cross at Negro Head. We came up the sand hills to Wright's ferry. It was truly cold and very bleak on the water, while in a trifling flat; and I feared one or both the horses would be thrown out of it. We were driving through the woods till seven o'clock, and the weather exceedingly cold; at last we came to Rolks's, on Town Creek. We could not spare ourselves the next day, but came off blowing and hiding our fingers. We passed Lockwood's Folly and Shallot River, and came up to father Gause's, where we met with friendship, fellowship and love, and held meeting on Christmas day, it being the Sabbath.

THIRTY-FOURTH VISIT

(March 8-March 24, 1797; age 52)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina to Tennessee. He visited Daniel Asbury and baptized some children. He was unwell much of the time and indicated using mountain bark for medicinal purposes. He noted preaching in some unfinished meeting houses. On occasion, others filled his appointments for sermons for him. He found it difficult to

forego visiting friends wherever he was. Some preacher came one hundred miles to meet him.

John Adams took office as the second American president in 1797.

Wednesday, 8. We rode thirty-two miles to Waxhaw, hungry and faint: at Wren's I was led out on, "Let us not sleep as do others." The next day, at quarterly meeting, I preached on Isa. i, 9: there was a noise and shaking. This evening a little circumstance gave me great pain; I broke my skin in two places. We rode on *Friday* and *Saturday* seventy miles. We passed through a large settlement of Presbyterians; Mr. M'Ree,⁵⁷ their minister, gave us a kind invitation to lodge at his house; but we wished to cross the river at Martin's ferry,⁵⁸ and stay at the widow Featherstone's.⁵⁹

Sunday, 12. We were at Daniel Asbury's. My leg was inflamed by riding, and I found it necessary to poultice it. I sat down and taught the people on, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." We had a living meeting in the evening; some souls were greatly blest.

Monday, 13. We rode into Iredell country, thirty-three miles. We were caught in the rain, which threw me into a chill, followed by a fever; in this situation I came to, and preached at brother Fitzgerald's. Between four and five o'clock, brothers Dean and Dyson (Methodists), Hall and Bowman (Presbyterians) had filled my appointment in the preceding part of the day.

⁵⁷ The Rev. James McRee was pastor of the Steele Creek Presbyterian Church in Mecklenburg County. He lived near Martin's Ferry, the present Withers Bridge. (Douglas: *History of Steele Creek Church*.)

⁵⁸ Martin's Ferry was over the Catawba River near present Belmont. (See 1789 map in Alexander: *History of Mecklenburg County*.)

⁵⁹ Mrs. Featherstone was probably related to Featherstone Wells, who lived at or near the ferry and is buried there in the Featherstone-Fite-Wells cemetery. Mrs. Featherstone is doubtless buried there also, as there are numerous unmarked graves and illegible inscriptions.

Tuesday, 14. I preached at the church in the forks of the Yadkin, on Isaiah xxxv, 1-4. I had to ride eight miles in the rain to Templeton's.

Wednesday, 15. I rode five miles to Mr. Marcis Hoy's, and treated on the *rest that remaineth to the people of God*. In the afternoon I rode twelve miles to father Bruce's, where I found myself at home.

Thursday, 16. We had to ride fifteen miles through the rain to Samuel Oxford's. After preaching on Heb. ii, 1, we rode eight miles to Paynes's. The weather was very damp: I felt the chill through me. The next morning I was seized with a fever which held me more or less until Sabbath morning, when I preached at Perkins's and Connelly's meeting houses; at the former on Heb. ii, 3, and at the latter on 2 Cor. latter part of the sixth chapter. Here as many as eight preachers came to meet me; some of them one hundred miles. I feel myself very unwell, and am afraid that almost every rain will bring on a relapse of the fever. My mind of late is much resigned to the will of God; I feel I have nothing here but the Church of God; I would not throw my life away now or hold it back, if the Lord called for it in labouring, travelling and suffering. I conclude I have ridden one hundred miles this week, and the weather has been very uncomfortable, the roads bad, and our lodging in some very open houses; to which I may add my preaching in new and unfinished meeting houses in March, which is a searching, changeable month, especially near the mountains.

Sabbath day, 19. At Connelly's new church I preached on 2 Cor. vii, 1. I only intended to give a short discourse.

Monday, 20. I had but twenty miles to ride to Esquire White's at the Mulberry Grove. Here I left Doctor S. B———l; but death hath now removed him. I still

continued to feel feverish and feeble, and thought it needful to take mountain bark.

Tuesday, 21. I preached once more at Johns River; my subject was I Cor. i, 24, 25. As I thought it would be my last, I exerted myself until my chill and fever returned. I also administered the sacrament and baptized children.

Wednesday, 22. I set out on my journey for the west; and it had a serious influence on my mind to leave brother Hill behind, who I fear hath a confirmed consumption, and I too so unwell. It began to rain violently before we came to Henley's. I took shelter in a house from the rain, and talked and prayed with a poor woman. We dined at Mr. Henley's, calling at Wakefield only to talk and pray. I cannot well pass by my friends without calling. We hastened across Linville Mountain, which is awfully barren, and came on to Young's Cove. The storm followed us, with thunder, lightning, and rain. We arrived after some of the people were gone; but some returned, and I gave them but a small talk, being very weary in walking down the mountains, and over the rocks.

Thursday, 23. I came to Davenport's. My subject was "Godliness is profitable," &c. Grace in the heart, in all its operations. Bodily exercise for a little time is useful for health—for the present world—for the means of grace. Godliness promiseth everything we can wish for in the present and future life; answering all the purposes of civil, domestic, and Christian life:—justice, mercy, and truth;—every duty and relation; all the joys and all the sufferings of life; all the lawful use of lawful things;—and prepares for the enjoyment of God, Christ, the Eternal Spirit, angels, and glory.

Friday, 24. I was unwell: the clouds were lowering. We had ridden but a mile when the rain began. Brother Jones's house was at hand. Here we stopped two hours,

until some of the rain fell to the earth. There was a short cessation, and about half-past twelve o'clock we set out again, rode six miles, and were driven into Mr. Cook's by thunder, hail and rain. Here we stopped to talk with God and man. Hard necessity made us move forward: the western branch of Toe River, that comes down from the Yellow Mountain, was rapidly filling; and was rocky, rolling, and roaring like the sea, and we were compelled to cross it several times. When we came to ascend the mountain, we had a skirmish of rain, thunder, and lightning—it was distant—it was mercy. I found hard work to ride where Thomas White has driven his wagon, for which he deserves a place in my journal and premium from the State. When we had ascended the summit of the mountain, we found it so rich and miry, that it was with great difficulty we could ride along; but I was wrapped up in heavy, wet garments, and unable to walk through weakness of body; so we had it, pitch, slide, and drive to the bottom. We then came upon the drains and branches of Great Toe River. From Fisher's we had to ride through what I called the shades of death, four miles to Miller's. Here we had to cope with Toe River, and near the house came into deep water. My horse drove to the opposite bank above the landing, and locked one of his feet in a root, or something like it, but freed himself. At last we made the house; the people received us kindly, and gave us such things as they had. We could only partially dry our garments. We heard heavy tidings of a deep rocky ford yet to be passed in our way across Toe River.

THIRTY-FIFTH VISIT

(November 6-November 28, 1798; age 53)

ASBURY was traveling by carriage, presumably with Jesse Lee, from Virginia to South Carolina. While in New York

on June 16, 1798, he indicated that he had received news of the death of his father, Joseph, "aged eighty-four or eighty-five." There was only the briefest comment on the event. (*Journal*, II, 161.)

Interestingly, in 1798, Asbury was at the midway point in the total number of visits to and through the state, and midway through the total of years of itinerating through the state. Brother Jackson, who made some advanced speaking engagements for him, was Reverend Jonathan Jackson, presiding elder in South Carolina. He joined the conference in 1789 and located in 1815. In Asbury's absence, he presided over the South Carolina Conference in 1798. (Footnote, *Journal* II, 178.)

Tuesday, 6. We crossed the Roanoke at Moseley's ferry, and stopped at M'Lane's. Here God is working amongst the people. We came on *Wednesday*, by riding two hours in the night through the woods, to Harris's where I preached on *Thursday*, 8th, from 2 Peter, 4. On *Friday* we rode to Colonel Edmund Taylor's. *Sabbath day*, at Bank's church, I preached on Heb. vi, 11, 12, and administered the supper of the Lord, and ordained John Whitefield deacon. The church was so very open that we could not be outwardly comfortable. We tried to remedy it, in some measure, by closing up some of the windows with blankets. I lodged at Nathan Norris's, one of my sons in Christ, now a father of children, and very useful preacher.

Monday, 12. We rode twenty miles to Charles Cannon's and on *Tuesday*, twenty-five miles to Snipe's. *Wednesday* we forded Haw River, and came through a curious path for a carriage, to the new meeting house on Hickory Mountain. We dined with Mr. Reeves, an ancient friend of mine, and thence proceeded on to brother M'Master's, a local preacher. We have ridden this day thirty miles.

Thursday, 15. We rode from the upper branches of

Rocky River, twenty miles, to Pleasant Garden. When I came to the meeting house, I had little strength of mind or body. We lodged at Daniel Sherwood's. My aged brethren and sisters from Maryland and Delaware rejoiced to see me, a poor, feeble man. They had seen me in better times.

Friday, 16. We rode to Mr. Bell's, on Deep River; ⁶⁰ thence thirty miles to Wood's, upon Uwharrie River. This day was very warm, and we had exceedingly uncomfortable roads. Going at this rate is very trying; but it will make death welcome, and eternal rest desirable. *Saturday* and *Sunday*, at quarterly meeting, my subject was Acts iii, 26. We rode down twelve miles to D. West's, and were benighted, which ill suited me. As we had to travel an unknown road to Henry Ledbetter's, I wished to continue on our journey, and not stop at Hancock; but the people thought and said otherwise, so I stopped, and brother Lee preached; after which I gave a discourse on Acts ii, 39, and came off in haste. D. West escorted me down to the ferry, where we called in vain for the flat. D. West went over, and it was with difficulty that he persuaded the ferrymen to come with the boat and take me. It being dark, and the wind blowing very strong and cold, we had hard work in crossing. I told the company so in the morning, but stay I must and preach, or be accounted proud. At Henry Ledbetter's I preached on Heb. x, 23, 24, and at John Randall's,⁶¹ 2 Cor. vi, 1. Brother Jackson had secured for me riding and preaching enough as far as Camden.

Thursday, 22. We recrossed the Pee Dee River at C.'s Ferry, and made it about eighteen miles to Mask's, where I preached on Heb. iv, 1. On *Friday*, at Bethel, on 2

⁶⁰ See *Journal* entry and note for January 22, 1790.

⁶¹ See note under February 15, 1785.

Cor. vi, 11. *Saturday* and *Sunday*, at quarterly meeting, at Jesse's (a coloured man) meeting house, near Webb's Ferry. My subject on *Saturday* was Acts ii, 17, 18, and on *Sabbath day*, 2 Tim. iv, 1, 2. We then rode seven miles to Isaac Jackson's. *Monday*, rode.

THIRTY-SIXTH VISIT

(February 7-March 17, 1799; age 53)

ASBURY AND LEE were traveling from South Carolina through Brunswick, New Hanover, Craven, Lenoir, Edgecombe, Halifax, Perquimans and Northampton counties. There is no longer a Glasgow County in the State. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 451, 452.) Currituck was the site of the first sermon delivered by Joseph Pilmoor in the state in 1772, as he traveled to Charleston, South Carolina. (Stahl, *op. cit.*, 6.)

Asbury took time to record impressions of nature and provided sermon points. He noted some hearers had had only a half-day's notice of his intended appearance.

Seth Spaight may have been a member of the prominent Spaight family of eastern North Carolina which produced two governors of the state, Richard Dobbs (1792-1795) and Richard Dobbs, Jr. (1835-1836). They are the only father and son governors of North Carolina. (Crabtree, *op. cit.*, 53, 54, 80, 81.)

Thursday, 7. I preached at the meeting house, from Luke iv, 18, 19; and came the same evening to father William Gause's,⁶² where I preached on *Friday*, 8, upon Rom. v, 1-5, we had a living season here. I paid a visit to the sea, and saw the breakers—awfully tremendous sight and sound! but how curious to see the sea gull take the clams out of the sand and bear them up into

⁶² Gause lived in the southern part of Brunswick County, near the South Carolina line.

the air, and drop them down to break them and then eat the flesh! This I saw demonstrated; and if they fail once in breaking the shell, they will take it up again, and bear it higher, and cast it down upon a hard spot of ground, until they effect their purpose.

We are now in Bladen circuit, Brunswick county, North Carolina. I have travelled nearly four hundred miles in the Southern States, and spent three months therein. We rested on *Saturday*, 9, and on

Sunday, 10. We attended at Shallot church; ⁶³ my subject was Acts xiv, 22, I showed, First, that the souls of the disciples must be confirmed in doctrine, experience, practice, and discipline of the Gospel of Christ in the Church of God. It was observed how plainly these were taught in the oracles of God. I offered some arguments in favour of relevation, to induce a continuance in the substance and exercise of faith through life: through much tribulation entering the eternal kingdom of glory: an object so great is not to be gained without great trials from every enemy, in doing and suffering the whole will of God. The day was so excessively cold, and the house so open, that I was chilled through my whole system. After meeting we rode on to Lockwood's Folly: here are several young converts.

Monday, 11. We came by Town Creek, where I stopped fourteen years ago; but what a change since then! Stephen Daniel and his wife are no more; but their dear children are coming to Christ, to fill up their parents places.

Sister Daniel was an excellent woman. It seems as

⁶³ Camp Methodist Church at Shalotte is one of the oldest in Southeastern North Carolina. The present site of Camp Church is on property deeded by Samuel Sleight to the Methodist Church in 1855. It was the location of a traditional camp-ground gathering and from this stems the current name. Bishop Paul N. Garber of the Richmond Area presided at the ground-breaking ceremony for the present building. The building, consisting of brick and redwood, was constructed in the summer of 1957 and was first occupied in November of that year. It stands near Shallotte River on the town's main street. (*The Raleigh News and Observer*, Vol. CXCVIII, No. 144, Saturday, May 23, 1964, 5.) (Carroll)

though old Brunswick in North Carolina, would be a Methodist county, and that most of the rulers would believe in Christ.

Tuesday, 12. I preached at Sullivan's, on Town Creek, from Gal. vi, 9: the house was crowded with people; there were many children to baptize; but my spirits were sunk, and I had no heart to speak.

Wednesday, 13. We came on to Wilmington; here I was in low spirits still. This town has suffered by two dreadful fires; but the people are rebuilding swiftly. I was so afflicted in body, that brother Lee had to preach two sermons in the church: the people were very attentive.

Thursday, 14. We rode twenty miles to Nixon's; (New Hanover County) where I preached a little to a little flock, as there was only a half-day's notice. Through this I have been amazingly dejected, although I am abundantly more happy in constitution and feeling than formerly.

Friday, 15. At Stone Bay: no preaching by the Methodists at this place. We lodged at friend Johnson's: on my last visit I preached here. We made it twenty-seven miles.

Saturday, 16. We rode eighteen miles to Lot Ballard's: here we were at home. It was an excessively cold day; at noon it changed to hail, and terminated in rain. I housed myself; and brother Lee went to the New River chapel to preach to the people.

Sunday, 17. Cold as the day was, and unwell as I felt myself, I could not be absent from the house of God: my subject was Acts iii, 19. The slaves were not permitted to come into the house. We rode to William Bryan's, at Bryantown, upon Cedar Creek; and on *Monday* we held a meeting at Colonel Bryan's, the father of William.

Tuesday, 19. We were at Trenton court house; and on *Wednesday* at Lee's chapel: my subject here was Micah vi, 6-8. I endeavored to show, First, that it is still the voice of many, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, to enjoy his favour and presence, and bow myself before the high God?" that is, worship him acceptably, as though they would give all they have in the world, no sacrifice should be too great; but men are often great in promise, but defective in proformance; they promise much and do little. He hath showed thee, O man! what is good—that is, true religion; the blessed effects and fruits of it—do justly and walk humbly with thy God; see Deut. x, 12; Hosea xii, 6. First, Do justly according to human laws, and the claims and rights of men, as it respects continents, kingdoms, or families. Second, Do justice as it concerns the laws of God—as the second table is a claim of justice to obey parents, and not to take men's lives nor their wives; to bear a true witness. Third, Do justly, according to the commandments of Christ, Matt. vii, 12. "Love mercy," as it extends to the souls and bodies of men; this requires more than to do justly to them: "Walk humbly with thy God"—feel thy total poverty and universal dependence upon God for all things, spiritual and temporal.

We lodged at Mrs. Knight's, the mother of our dear deceased brother Ahairs, once a travelling preacher amongst us.

Thursday, 21. We came to Newbern, originally settled by Germans, and called after *old Berne*, in Switzerland. For sixteen miles of this road we had heavy rain; but I was well cased up, notwithstanding which I took cold. We have travelled from Charleston three hundred and thirty miles in this our retrograde journey, which we have made longer by frequently turning out of our way.

Saturday, 23. My subjects at Newbern were 1 Peter ii, 11, 12; Heb. vii, 25; 1 Tim. iv, 8. We had very uncomfortable weather. We made some spiritual and temporal regulations, in hopes that matters would work much better in future.

Monday, 25. It was cold to purpose, and we had twenty-four miles to ride to William Cox's, on Neuse, near the mouth of Contentney: here my text was 1 John iv, 16, 17. We thence in a manner fled through the counties of Craven, Lenoir, Glasgow, and Edgecombe.

Tuesday, 26. I did not attend at the Rainbow meeting house ⁶⁴ in consequence of my illness, the effect of my riding in the cold the day before.

Wednesday, 27. I was comforted in administering the sacrament; after which, as the day was damp, I left brother Lee to finish, and rode along sixteen miles to Seth Spaight's; a deeply distressed man for the loss of his dear wife, who lately departed this life.

Thursday, 28. We rode thirty-four miles to brother Toole's; ⁶⁵ the rain poured down upon us on our way, and we had to feed under a pine tree.

Friday, March 1. We made out to ride ten miles, to Mr. Hodge's near Sosson's bridge, upon Fishing Creek; where we were kindly and comfortably entertained.

Saturday, 2. We came to brother Bradford's ⁶⁶ quarterly meeting: I was glad, after riding sixteen miles through the damp and severe cold, to sit by the fire.

Sabbath day, 3. I preached a little on 2 Cor. iv, 16-18.

Monday, 4. The generally excessive rains having made the Roanoke impassable at the nearest ferry, we had to ride a circuitous route through Halifax, which made it about thirty miles to Richard Whittaker's in Northampton. We had a bad swamp to cross, but I kept out of

⁶⁴ The Rainbow meetinghouse was in the northern part of Greene County.

⁶⁵ Gareldus Toole lived in Edgecomb County and was the owner in 1790 of twenty-six slaves. (*Heads of Families, 1790, 55.*)

⁶⁶ Bradford's was in Halifax County.

the water. It was well for me my carriage did not upset in the water, which it was very near doing. To travel thirty miles in such a cold day without fire, and no food, except a bit of biscuit, is serious. We were received gladly by our waiting brethren, Whatcoat, Wanner, and Lambeth.⁶⁷ I am of opinion that we have left five hundred miles on the other side of the Roanoke, in all the ground we have ridden over from Charleston, in South, to Halifax, in North Carolina. I went to Rehoboth (a new meeting house), and preached on 2 Cor. ii, 14.

Wednesday, 6. The cold and frost was very severe, and it was with great difficulty we made our way through the swamp from Richard Whittaker's. We rode to St. John's chapel, where brother Lee preached upon Rom. v, 5. The house being open, I was most severely chilled, and unfit for any public service. We lodged at Williford Horton's (Hertford County).

Thursday, 7. We rode to Winton court house; where I preached on Heb. iii, 7. Two-thirds of my congregation were women; perhaps there will be more men when I go there again.

Friday, 8. We rode to Knotty Pine.

Saturday, 9. I preached at Knotty Pine chapel, on Gen. xxiv, 17-19: I was elaborate upon personal and family piety. Here I saw sister Baker; she standeth fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free, and I hope and believe God will save her children: our souls were mutually blessed.

Sabbath day, 10. At Gates court house⁶⁸ many serious people attended: my subject was Heb. vii, 26. I administered the sacrament; and had a solemn, feeling season.

⁶⁷ Richard Whatcoat was presiding elder over ten circuits in Virginia, North and South Carolina. William Lambeth was on the Greenville Circuit. Wanner does not appear in the *Minutes*.

⁶⁸ Gates Court House was the present Gatesville.

Monday, 11. We rode to Constant's chapel,⁶⁹ on one of the branches of Bennett's Creek. The main creek affords a landing at Gates court house, and communicates, after a few miles, with Chowan River. I was made very comfortable in soul and body at Isaac Hunter's,⁷⁰ and had a happy meeting with the poor Africans⁷¹ at night.

Tuesday, 12. The coolness of the weather increases. We rode thirty miles to George Sutton's, in Perquimans county.

Wednesday, 13. It both snowed and rained. We had a meeting at a house near Nagshead chapel;⁷² where I preached a short sermon from 1 Peter iv, 18. We lodged at J. W——'s, a comfortable house, after a very uncomfortable snowy day.

Thursday, 14. At Nixonton I declined preaching and made an exhortation, after brother Lee had given them a long sermon. It is probably eight years since I came through this circuit, which caused this people to exert themselves in coming out, so that we had a very large congregation.

We have ridden, since we came across Roanoke, one hundred and forty-three miles to John Russell's. We have moved rapidly through Gates, Chowan, Perquimans, and Pasquotank counties: as we pass we have lovely levels, fine white cedar on the rivers, creeks, and swamps, for between six and seven hundred miles: from the low lands in Georgia, to Blackwater in Virginia, it is fine lumber land, but unhealthy in some places.

⁶⁹ Constant's, sometimes called Costen's Chapel, was an Anglican church about one-half mile south of the present Sudbury, Gates County. It was the forerunner of the present Philadelphia Methodist Church, built at Sudbury around 1814. (Bishop Costen J. Harrell.)

⁷⁰ Isaac Hunter operated a gristmill on Bennett Creek near Constant's Chapel. His name was on the early membership roll of the chapel, now at Duke University. (See *Journal* entry for March 20, 1801.)

⁷¹ On each of Asbury's visits to Isaac Hunter he mentions the Africans. One-half mile from Sudbury is St. John's African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, probably the fruit of Asbury's ministry. (See *Journal* entry for March 20, 1801.) (Harrell.)

⁷² Nags Head Chapel stood on ground conveyed by James P. Whedbee to the Methodists, and the New Hope Methodist Church now stands on the site. (Winslow: *History of Perquimans County*, 32.)

Friday, 15. It began to rain heavily, but ceased about twelve o'clock; we then rode to a school house, where many attended: my subject was, 1 Peter v, 10. I had the company of several preachers. I then rode on eight miles to brother William Proby's; it was good for me to be there. *Saturday, 16.* I felt greatly depressed in spirit, owing, no doubt, in some measure, to the changeable state of the weather. We crossed the Pasquotank at Sawyer's Ferry: here we were told that we had but seven miles to ride; but we wandered until we made it twelve. We learned that one of the widow Sawyer's daughters was lately committed to the dust; at the gate of the yard we found the mother in tears. As I was not able in body or mind to preach, I gave an exhortation; and after we had dined, we rode ten miles to Samuel Simmons, (in Currituck County) across the North River swamps, which afford as low and as good land as any part of the beech lands of Cumberland or Kentucky. We swiftly passed through Camden and Currituck counties.

Sunday, 17. I made a feeble effort to preach at Williams's chapel, on James i, 24, 25. Our congregation was large. I returned and left brother Lee to finish. We lodged at brother Brunnell's.

THIRTY-SEVENTH VISIT

(October 1-October 30, 1799; age 54)

ASBURY AND LEE were traveling from Virginia to South Carolina. Asbury ordained five deacons. He commented on better Presbyterian-Methodist relations; his "American birthday"; glass windows in a Stokes County Church, a rarity by his mentioning it; visiting a Moravian minister and Daniel Asbury. He provided sermon points and noted that his itinerating helped reach thousands annually who would not otherwise be reached.

Asbury's health was declining in 1799, so much so that he was advised by three doctors called in for consultation to give up evangelistic service. (Tipple: *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 276, 277.)

Robert Paine was born on November 12, 1799 in Person County; entered the Tennessee Conference in 1818; ordained bishop in 1846, the fourth bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South and the first native of North Carolina elected to the episcopacy. (Daniels, *op. cit.*, 635.)

We crossed Dan River at Perkin's ferry, entering North Carolina, and came to John Harris's in Rockingham county,—pious souls from Dorset in Maryland.

By resting at times in this solitary, country life, I have my health better; whilst I am, in some degree, free from the knowledge and care of the Church at large. On *Tuesday*, at Smith's meeting house, I gave a short discourse on Heb. iii, 12, 13. We dined at Martin's, and then came on to father Lowe's: we have ridden but eight miles this day.

At Lowe's meeting house a large congregation attended; I spoke upon Isa. xl, 1. The heat was very painful. I suppose we congregate from three to six thousand souls weekly; thus, if no more, I can say that my travelling hath brought thousands to hear the Gospel, who, probably, would not otherwise have heard it.

Thursday, October 3. We rode twelve miles to Covey's in Guilford county; I thought it best to decline preaching for a few days.

Friday, 4. We rode twelve miles to Mrs. Campbell's, upon the south fork of Haw River. We had to work our way through the woods. *Saturday* and *Sunday*, I attended quarterly meeting at Bethel, upon Belew's Creek,⁷³ where I ordained five deacons,⁷⁴ and preached

⁷³ Belew's Creek was in Forsyth County. It was variously spelled Belew's, Beloo's, Beloo's, and Bielu's. (Fries: *Forsyth, a County on the March*, 127.)

⁷⁴ One of these deacons was John Coe, two of whose descendants were Albert Buckner Coe and his brother Robert Wood Coe, leaders of the Congregational Church in Boston. The ordination certificate is in the possession of the latter.

from 1 Tim. vi, 11, 12; we had a gracious time. We have ridden only twenty miles in two days. I lodged at M'Daniel's.

Monday, 7. We rode through Stokes county, and attended meeting at Love's church,⁷⁵ which has glass windows, and a yard fenced in. After Jesse Lee, I added a few words on Heb. ii, 1. We then came up to William Jean's, near the Moravian Old Town.⁷⁶ We have ridden nearly twenty miles this day. Sitting in meeting so many hours among such a multitude of people, and frequently with a blister on my breast, with the difficulties of driving along broken paths, cause me to be variously tired and comforted.

Tuesday, 8. We held meeting, and had a multitude of Germans present. I improved a little upon 2 Cor. v, 13, 14.

Wednesday, 9. We rode through Salem; here they have lately built a very grand church.⁷⁷ The day was cloudy; the rain began to fall upon us about a mile from Captain Markland's, on Muddy Creek, where we came after riding seventeen miles.

Thursday, 10. Close housed; about twelve souls attended, notwithstanding it rained powerfully, to whom I lectured on Heb. xii, 1-4. I had an interview with Samuel Kenmish, the Moravian minister, and visited him. *Friday, 11.* At M'Knight's,⁷⁸ a very comfortable day: thence we rode on to Hardy Jones's, fifteen miles.

⁷⁵ Love's Church is at Walkertown in Forsyth County. According to local tradition it was organized in 1791. A deed of 1797 records the transfer of one acre from Thomas and Ann Tucker to James Love, Jr. Edmond and William Jean, Edward Cooley, Robert Fulton, and Archibald Campbell as trustees for the Methodist Church. It was burned in 1947 and at once rebuilt. (Fries, *op. cit.*, 133.) The church is a memorial to James Love.

⁷⁶ Old Town was a few miles north of Salem.

⁷⁷ The Home Church was built by Moravians in 1798 and consecrated November 9, 1800. It was a commodious brick structure. There are fifteen buildings in the Old Salem section of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, which were erected between 1767 and 1800. (*Ibid.*, 224.)

⁷⁸ McKnight's meetinghouse was near present Clemmonsville, and was a noted early place of Methodist worship and conference center. (See *Journal* entries and notes for April 13, 1787, and May 10, 1789; Historical Papers of Trinity Historical Association, Secs. 9-13, p. 25.)

Saturday, 12. I said but little at the Academical school house,⁷⁹ now a house for God. I went to see Charles Clayton and wife, who were sick.

Sabbath day, 13. Rode thirteen miles to Whitaker's church,⁸⁰ where I gave a short sermon, on "Casting all your care upon Him, for he careth for you." I was both sick and tired.

Monday, 14. We came to Shadrach Dial's, from Delaware, near Choptank, who in his younger days attended my ministry to advantage. I feel, in general, great weakness of body, but great confidence in God, and constant and near access by prayer. We are now upon Cedar and Dutchman's Creeks, in Rowan County.

Tuesday, 15. It rained, and we rested. On *Wednesday*, we came, twelve miles, to Beal's chapel,⁸¹ where, after Jesse Lee had discoursed upon the word of the Lord as *a fire and a hammer*, I added a few words, on "Take heed how ye hear," whom ye hear, what doctrine ye hear; hear in faith, with prayer, with application, upon all the truths of God. We dined, and then hasted on eight miles to Prather's, in Iredell county. Directly after crossing Hunting Creek, a little circumstance took place, which, if it had happened in the creek, might have been attended with some disagreeable consequences; it was caused by one of the hooks of the swingle-tree giving way.

At Basil Prather's chapel, I gave my thoughts upon "Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: I fear this will be the case with many souls."

Thursday, 17. We came up the ridges, between Rocky and Hunting Creeks, eight miles to John Templeton's;

⁷⁹ Cokesbury School on the Yadkin River in present Davie County, near the residence of Hardy Jones, had been converted to a meetinghouse. (See note under April 2, 1794.)

⁸⁰ Whitaker's church was on Dutchman Creek near Brown's mill in Davie County. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, 214; see *Journal* entry for March 21, 1786.)

⁸¹ Beal's Chapel was on Hunting Creek five miles west of present Mocksville.

over a path no sulky ever went before; my testimony was founded upon James iv, 2, 3.

Friday, 18. We had a very uneasy ride of fifteen miles, on the borders of Surry county, over to Doctor Brown's, in Wilkes county. I feel my mind in great peace and resignation, both as it respects the Church of God, and my own soul. The Presbyterians here are much more friendly with the Methodists now than formerly: I dare not say it is policy; it may be piety.

Saturday, 19. We rode through a damp, and, in the end, a rainy day, twenty miles to George Gordon's, near Wilkes court house: we crossed and recrossed the Yadkin River.

Sunday, 20. This is my American birthday; I have now passed twenty-eight years upon this continent. Do I wish to live them over again? By no means: I doubt if I could mend it in my weakness and old age: I could not come up to what I have done; I should be dispirited at what would be presented before me.

Monday, 21. We came eight miles to William Tribble's. (Wilkes County). We had an open time at a barren place and I felt Divine aid in a short improvement on Gal. ii, 19, 20.

Tuesday, 22. We had a serious, laborious ride of thirty miles to William White's, Esquire, upon Johns River, Burke county. In this route we had to cross the Yadkin ten times; Elk and Buffalo, each twice. Twenty miles of the path were good; ten miles uneven, with short hills, stumps, sideling banks and deep ruts. I have renewed my acquaintance with these rivers; they afford valuable levels, with rising hills and high mountains on each side. The prospect is elegantly variegated. Here are grand heights, and there Indian corn adorns the vales. The water flows admirably clear, murmuring through the rocks, and in the rich lands, gently gliding

deep and silent between its verdant banks: and to all this may be added pure air.

Wednesday and Thursday, 23, 24. Our quarterly meeting was held at William White's, Esquire, and grand patriarch of this settlement, whose family of children, grandchildren, &c., are numerous, and extensively established here. Jesse Lee sermonized each day. My discourse the first day was 1 Tim. iv, 12-16. *Let no man despise thy youth.* I. That Timothy should be exemplary to believers in his words, which formed his conversation; at all times, and upon all subjects,—he that offendeth not with his tongue is a perfect man: in *charity*, love, and beneficence: in *spirit*, the spirit of his mind and temper; purity of heart and intention: in *faith*, justifying, persevering faith; confidence in the sure promises and prophecies of God's work: *attendance to reading*; the word of God in the church, in families, in the closet; *exhortation*; as a gift of God, in which some excel: *doctrine*: the grand doctrines of the gospel—man's original rectitude—his fall—the atonement — repentance — justification — sanctification — the resurrection—the last judgment, and final rewards and punishments. *The gift that is in thee by prophecy*; it is probably, some person, seeing the piety and simplicity of Timothy, had been moved by the Holy Ghost to prophesy that he would be a faithful minister of Christ;—the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. The eldership—here the apostle mentioneth the eldership; and in the first chapter of the second epistle, sixth verse, the laying on or putting on of his own hands upon Timothy. That Timothy and Titus were apostles, and exercised episcopal powers, is plain: they were instructed concerning bishops, elders, and deacons what characters they should be. Titus was left in Crete, and directed to ordain elders in every city. *Meditate upon these things*: ministers should be men of much medita-

tion and prayer; men of contemplative minds, and ready to give up their mental and bodily powers wholly to the work of the Lord. *That thy profiting may appear to all men*—in all things belonging to thy ministerial and Christian calling. The second day of the quarterly meeting I exhorted.

Friday, 25. We had to cross and recross the Johns River, and man it over the hills. I came to Connelly's, twenty-five miles, and dined about five o'clock. I saw a natural curiosity in the mountains—an old trunk of a poplar had fallen, and four limbs of it had taken root at proper distances from each other, and had grown to be large trees—from fifty to sixty feet high and eighteen inches in diameter.

Saturday, 26. I stayed at the house, to read, write, and plan a little. I tremble and faint under my burden:—having to ride about six thousand miles annually; to preach from three to five hundred sermons a year; to write and read so many letters, and read many more:—all this and more, besides the stationing of three hundred preachers; reading many hundred pages; and spending many hours in conversation by day and by night, with preachers and people of various characters, among whom are many distressing cases.

Sunday, 27. The morning was damp and cloudy, yet I must needs go to the quarterly meeting, which was held in a very open house. My improvement was the first epistle of John iii, 18-22. The meeting lasted five hours.

Monday, 28. We rode about forty miles, and fed upon the path. We came to Daniel Asbury's, in Lincoln county. I crossed once more at the *Horse Ford*, where I was formerly in danger of being drowned. At that time the river was high, myself weak, the horse I rode low and young, and we went in at an improper place upon the rocks and amongst the falls of the river.

Daniel Asbury, an experienced guide, conducted me across this time; but not without some difficulty. His horse stumbled and wet his feet; and my head began to swim before we got through; and my carriage to pitch over the large stones, and small rocks. I think I bid a final adieu to this ford. If I must try this route again, I am inclined to go by Morgantown, the capital of Burke county.

The winter approacheth—we must hasten South.

Tuesday, 29. In the morning I rested: in the evening I walked out and preached, that the people might both see and hear me; my subject was 1 Thess. ii, 11, 12.

Wednesday, 30. We rode to Williams's chapel; where Jesse Lee preached. I added a few words. We then hastened to the widow Featherston's, on Dutchman's Creek. We have ridden thirty miles this day over very uneven roads. We soon called a meeting after our arrival.

CHAPTER THREE

Francis Asbury's Thirty-Eighth through Fifty-Ninth Visits: 1800-1809

Some Principal Events in North Carolina History: 1800-1809

- 1800 At second official United States Census, North Carolina had population of 478,103 (fourth in rank among states)
Every section of North Carolina had white settlers except Indian country in the Southwest section
- 1801 Birth of David L. Swain, governor (1832-1835) and president of University of North Carolina.
Thomas Jefferson became third president
- 1802 Birth of Jonathan Worth, Reconstruction Governor, in Guilford County
- 1804 Establishment of first bank in North Carolina
Birth of William A. Graham, governor (1845-1849) and Secretary of Navy
- 1805 Franklin Academy, Louisburg, opened to students
- 1806 Centennial of founding of city of Bath
- 1808 Formation of Haywood County
James Madison elected to presidency

THIRTY-EIGHTH VISIT

(February 20-March 12, 1800; age 54)

ASBURY traveled from South Carolina to Virginia through Piedmont counties with Nicholas Snethen, his "Silver Trumpet," who had been appointed to travel with him at the 1800 Conference. Asbury ordained two deacons. Getting his horse shod was indicative of his concern for the welfare of his horse.

Asbury made his only visit to the then infant University of North Carolina, the only college or university in the state prior to 1830. He was in error about the president of the institution. At the founding of the University, instead of a president, the University had a "presiding professor," who was responsible for all teaching. He was a "Professor of Humanities." David Ker, a Presbyterian minister and teacher, was the first presiding professor. In 1804, Dr. Joseph Caldwell, who had been a professor in the University for several years, became its first president. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 192, 193, 222.)

Asbury made his initial visit to Raleigh and preached, although he had been in Wake County as early as 1789 (fifteenth visit). This is believed to be the first Methodist preacher definitely known by name to preach in the new permanent state capital. (*Edenton Street in Methodism: 1811-1961*, 9.)

The death of President Washington on December 14, 1799 brought comments from Asbury in the *Journal* on January 4, 1800.

Thursday, 20. At Jackson's meeting house (Anson County) we had some gracious feelings. After an absence of ten years, I called once more at friend Stephen Pace's.

Friday, 21. We attended a meeting at Anson court house. We had no small congregation at Mr Cashe's new house. I was kindly entertained at his father's when in Virginia and Tennessee, and now by him. They offered us money, food, lodging, or whatever we wanted. At Threadgill's meeting house Nicholas Snethen preached. We then hasted to Mr. Atkin's. We were compelled to wade Rocky River—the water came into my carriage box.

Sunday, 23. At Randell's church, in Montgomery county, I gave a discourse, after brother Snethen, upon 1 Sam. xii, 23.

Monday, 24. We came to Ledbetter's.

Tuesday, 25. Crossed Pee Dee at Tindelsville, and landed at Andersonborough, without any difficulties; but when we came to Williams Ford, across the river, it was impassable; we then changed our course, and took the ridge road, which was open to the Montgomery line; thence we had to guess our way, until we came to Edward Harris's, where we fed, dined, and prayed with the women and children, and then came on we knew not where. As the sun began to decline, we thought it time to look out; to our surprise we saw a Friend's meeting house, as we judged by its form. I then concluded we could not reach Deep River, and we stopped at John Henley's. We had all we wanted but prayer.

Wednesday, 26. I had to pass over heavy hills, rocks, and small runs, and through thick clay: we were concluding when in Charleston, and after we came into North Carolina, we found that upon Pee Dee, and Yadkin, and Deep rivers, the snow had fallen fifteen and eighteen inches deep, and continued nearly a month upon the ground, and had swelled the rivers, and spoiled the public roads. We lodged at Mr. Bell's ¹

¹ See *Journal* entry and note for January 22, 1790.

having ridden only fifteen miles in two days. We left two appointments on the west side of Uwharrie: so much for that siege. My horse had hard work; my carriage was very loose in the joints by constant and long play; and myself much tired; but I revived when I saw the lawyers going to the Western courts. I thought, if they toiled and suffered for justice and silver, how ought I to labour for truth, and gold that perisheth not, and thousands of people, and hundreds of preachers.

Thursday, 27. I gained a day by the overflowing of Uwharrie, and came to Daniel Sherwood's, in Guilford county, within twenty miles of the track I went down last fall.

Friday, 28. It rained and snowed. I gave an exhortation, and ordained two deacons. We got our horses shod, and then rode to aged William Field's.

Sunday, March 2. We set out early and hasted through deep roads to the Hickory Mountain chapel, not less than twenty-eight or thirty miles. N. Snethen went along, and preached to the people, and brought a few to meet me at friend Reeve's, where we dined about six o'clock.

Monday, 3. We had no small race through Chatham county to Snipe's. We were lost three times before we came to Clarke's Ferry, on Haw River, and had to send a boy a mile for the ferryman, and wait nearly a half-hour.

Tuesday, 4. A clear, but very cold day. We were treated with great respect at the University, by the president, Caldwell, and the students, citizens, and many of the country people. Brother Snethen preached on, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." When the university is finished; I shall take notice of it. I stopped to baptize some children, and then rode on to Massey's.

Wednesday, 5. We rode to Sihon Smith's; and I gave a lecture in the evening.

Thursday, 6. We came to Raleigh, the seat of government. I preached in the State House. Notwithstanding this day was very cold and snowy, we had many people to hear. I baptized a child, and came that evening to Thomas Proctor's.²

Friday, 7. We came to the Union church. Many attended, but the excessive cold, penetrated my whole system. We lodged at John Whitefield's.

Saturday, 8. I rode twelve miles through snow to Edmund Taylor's, senior. This week, from *Monday* to *Saturday* at noon, I have ridden one hundred and ten miles. My mind is kept in great serenity. I have spoken every day but this.

Sunday, 9. We have a great sleet. The healthy and the young went to Bank's church. At four o'clock we had a sermon at father Taylor's, on Eph. iv, 3: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

I. The end; the unity of the Spirit.

II. The means; there might be a union in interest, in opposition, in sentiment, in ordinances, but not in the Spirit; that this union is a union in experiences by the Spirit; and in the spirits or minds of Christians. The means are set forth in the first and second verses of the same chapter; to walk worthy of their Christian character and calling—disorderly walking breaketh union. "With all lowliness," or every mark of humility. Pride is sure to break union: it hath done it in heaven and paradise. "Meekness"; unlawful passion will break union. "Long-suffering"; if men will not suffer long from saints and sinners, they will break union with the Church of God.

Monday, 10. I rubbed along, somehow, to Smith's church. The distress I suffered in my bowels was great,

² Thomas Proctor lived in Wake County. (*Heads of Families*, 104.)

and had been so for three days. My misery was so exceedingly great that I set off to leave the place; but my way from the dwelling house lay by the church; the people were collected; I felt better, stepped in, and gave an exhortation, I took *Stoughton's bitters*, and got relief; and then rode on to friend Harris's.

Tuesday, 11. I preached a short discourse on Joshua's resolution, and rode twelve miles to Edmund Taylor's, junior. I felt unwell.

Wednesday, 12. I attended the funeral of sister Broadie; she professed religion three years, lived happy, and died in the Lord. Nicholas Snethen preached the funeral sermon, from "A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death better than the day of one's birth." I gave some sentiments on, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

THIRTY-NINTH VISIT

(November 6-November 14, 1800; age 55)

RICHARD WHATCOAT traveled with Asbury from Tennessee to South Carolina. In 1787, Wesley attempted to have Whatcoat elected a superintendent, but the Conference refused. He was elected bishop in 1800 over Jesse Lee by a few votes. (*Journal*, II, 231; Stahl, *op. cit.*, 16.)

Asbury on occasion had to forego travel by chaise when roads and trails became intolerable. He encountered every conceivable type and condition of roads in the state. When road building began in the eighteenth century in the state, each county had charge of its own roads, bridges and ferries. Each man was required to work on the roads a certain number of days each year, but the roads that were built in this way were not good ones. As travel increased in the state, so did the number of ferry boats. These were usually owned and operated by farmers who lived near

rivers and streams, although he and his companions apparently had to operate ferries themselves on some visits. A fee, fixed by law, was charged for ferrying people and goods across. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 114, 218.)

Thursday, 6. Crossed Nolachucky at Cureton's ferry, and came to Major Craig's, eighteen miles. I next day pursued my journey and arrived at the Warm Springs,³ not however without an ugly accident. After we had crossed the Small and Great Paint mountains, and had passed about thirty yards beyond the Paint Rock,⁴ my roan horse, led by Mr. O'Haver⁵ reeled and fell over, taking the chaise with him; I was called back, when I beheld the poor beast and the carriage, *bottom up*, lodged and wedged against a sapling which alone prevented them both being precipitated into the river. After a pretty heavy lift all was righted again, and we were pleased to find there was little damage done. Our feelings were excited more for others than ourselves. Not far off we saw clothing spread out, part of the loading of household furniture of a wagon which had over-set and was thrown into the stream, and bedclothes, bedding, &c., were so wet that the poor people found it necessary to dry them on the spot. We passed the side fords of French Broad, and came to Mr. William Nelson's; our mountain march of twelve miles calmed us down for this day. My company was not agreeable

³ Warm Springs, the present Hot Springs in Madison County, was discovered in 1778 by Henry Reynolds and Thomas Morgan. The site became a noted resort. Asbury went from Tennessee to North Carolina along the general route of Highway 70 via Hot Springs and Marshall to Asheville. He probably followed what was called the Old Love Road which ran from near Greenville, Tennessee, and along Paint Creek to the French Broad River six miles below Hot Springs. (Arthur: *History of Western North Carolina*, 492.)

⁴ The "painted rock" was in present Madison County near the Paint Rock community. It figured in the boundary disputes between North Carolina and Tennessee. Surveyors in 1799 described it as being 107 feet high and stated that in 1790, before it had been defaced by smoke, it had red painted animals, fish, fowls, and men on its face. This was discounted by Arthur, who said the red "paint" seemed to be oxidation of iron ore. (*Ibid.*, 47.)

⁵ John O'Haver lived in the present Cocke County, Tennessee, near Newport. (Price, *op. cit.*, II, 116. See *Journal* entry for October 22, 1808.)

here—there were too many subjects of the two great potentates of this Western World—whisky, brandy. My mind was greatly distressed.

Saturday, 8. We started away. The cold was severe upon the fingers. We crossed the ferry, curiously contrived with a rope and poles, for half a mile along the banks of the river, to guide the boat by. And O, the rocks! the rocks! Coming to Laurel River, we followed a wagon ahead of us—the wagon stuck fast. Brother O'Haver mounted Old Gray—the horse fell about midway, but recovered, rose, and went safely through with his burden. We pursued our way rapidly to Ivy Creek,⁶ suffering much from heat and the roughness of the roads, and stopped at William Hunter's.

Sabbath day, 9. We came to Thomas Foster's,⁷ and held a small meeting at his house. We must bid farewell to the chaise; this mode of conveyance by no means suits the roads of this wilderness; we are obliged to keep one behind the carriage with a strip to hold by and prevent accidents almost continually. I have health and hard labour, and a constant sense of the favour of God.

Tobias Gibson⁸ had given notice to some of my being at Buncombe court house, and the society of Killian's in consequence of this, made an appointment for me on *Tuesday, 11.* We were strongly importuned

⁶ Laurel River, or Big Laurel Creek, and Ivy Creek flow through the present Madison County.

⁷ Thomas Foster lived on the Swannanoa River at or near the mouth of Sweeten Creek, after called Foster's Mill Creek, about two and one-half miles south of Asheville on the present Asheville-Hendersonville Road. He built the first bridge across the Swannanoa. He was later a member of the House of Commons, and the State Senate from Buncombe County. He is buried in the Newton Academy graveyard at Asheville. He made no religious profession, but his daughter, Mrs. James M. Alexander, became an active Methodist. (Grissom, *op. cit.*, I, 300; Arthur, *op. cit.*, 153, 154.)

⁸ Tobias Gibson was appointed to the Little Pee Dee and Anson Circuit in South Carolina in 1799. In January, 1800, he was appointed to Natchez, and sometime during the year he made a famous and perilous canoe voyage down the Mississippi and became the founder of Methodism in Mississippi. Jones (*Methodism in Mississippi*, I, 24 ff.) argues that Gibson reached Natchez late in March of 1799, which was nine months before he was officially appointed. If he gave notice of Asbury's presence in Buncombe County, North Carolina, and it was effective as late as November, 1800, it would seem that he must have lingered in the Blue Ridge area for a period before departing for his appointment in Natchez.

to stay, which brother Whatcoat felt inclined to do. In the meantime we had our horses shod by Philip Smith: this man, as is not unfrequently the case in this country, makes wagons and works at carpentry, makes shoes for men and for horses; to which he adds, occasionally, the manufacture of saddles and hats.

Monday, 10. Visited Squire Swain's⁹ agreeable family. On *Tuesday*, we attended our appointment. My foundation for a sermon was Heb. ii, 1. We had about eighty hearers; among them was Mr. Newton,¹⁰ a Presbyterian minister, who made the concluding prayer. We took up our journey, and came to Foster's¹¹ upon Swannanoa—company enough, and horses in a drove of thirty-three. Here we met Francis Poythress¹²—sick of Carolina, and in the clouds. I, too, was sick. Next morning we rode to Fletcher's¹³ on Mud Creek. The people being unexpectedly gathered together, we gave them a sermon and an exhortation. We lodged at Fletcher's.

Thursday, 13. We crossed French Broad at Kim's Ferry,¹⁴ forded Mill's River,¹⁵ and made upwards

⁹ George Swain was born in Massachusetts in 1763. He settled at the head of Beaverdam Creek near Asheville in 1795, after living in South Carolina and Georgia. He was a ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church, member of the legislature and constitutional convention in Georgia, and postmaster of Asheville. He married a Methodist, Mrs. Caroline Lowrie, who was a sister of Joel Lane, founder of Raleigh, and an aunt of General Joseph Lane, Democratic candidate for Vice President of the United States in 1860. George Swain's son, David L. Swain, was three times governor of North Carolina and president of the University of North Carolina. (Arthur, *op. cit.*, 150, 151, 382, 383; Price: *op. cit.*, I, 302.)

¹⁰ The Rev. George Newton, whom Asbury called "almost a Methodist," conducted Newton Academy, once known as Union Hill Academy in Asheville. He lived on Swannanoa River until 1814, when he removed to Bedford County, Tennessee, and became principal of Dickson Academy and pastor of the Presbyterian church at Shelbyville. (Arthur, *op. cit.*, 423, 424.)

¹¹ Foster's was Thomas Foster.

¹² Francis Poythress, a noted Methodist itinerant, was presiding elder over all circuits in North Carolina. He later became insane and died in Kentucky.

¹³ William Fletcher lived on a tract of land near the mouth of Cane Creek in present Henderson County. He moved to Alabama, but his son, John, born in Virginia in 1783, returned and developed the tract. A community called Shufordville developed there, the name being changed to Fletcher about 1880. (Patton: *The Story of Henderson County*, 35, 36.)

¹⁴ "Kim's Ferry" was probably at the home of Benjamin Kimzey, a Welsh immigrant who lived near the mouth of Mud Creek in the present Henderson County. (Patton, *Ibid.*, 38.)

¹⁵ Mills River is in Henderson County. There is a Mills River community between Hendersonville and Asheville.

through the barrens of Broad to Davidson's,¹⁶ whose name names the stream. The aged mother and daughters insisted upon giving notice for a meeting: in consequence thereof Mr. Davis, the Presbyterian minister, and several others, came together. Brother Whatcoat was taken with a bleeding at the nose, so that necessity was laid upon me to lecture; my subject was Luke xi, 13.

Friday, 14. We took our leave of French Broad—the lands flat and good, but rather cold. I have had an opportunity of making a tolerably correct survey of this river. It rises in the south-west, and winds along in many meanders, fifty miles north-east, receiving a number of tributary streams in its course; it then inclines westward, passing through Buncombe in North Carolina, and Green and Dandridge counties in Tennessee, in which last it is augmented by the waters of Nolachucky; four miles above Knoxville it forms a junction with the Holston, and their united waters flow along under the name of Tennessee, giving a name to the State.

FORTIETH VISIT

(January 15-January 22, 1801; age 55)

BISHOPS ASBURY AND WHATCOAT were together. They came from and returned to South Carolina, visiting mainly in Anson County, a route rarely taken. Anson County, of which Wadesboro is the county seat, was named in honor of British Lord Anson. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 451). The following two visits were also made in 1801, a rarity for one year. He noted a revival in the area and noted the

¹⁶ Ben Davidson had 640 acres in present Rutherford County. There was a Ben Davidson's Creek and a Ben Davidson community, later Pisgah Forest. (Patton, *Ibid.*, 39; Arthur, *op. cit.*, 204, 214, 217.)

drink problem, referred to elsewhere in these visits as "Potentate of the Western World" and "liquid fire" (seventieth visit).

Thomas Jefferson took office as the third American president in 1801.

We sheltered ourselves for the night at Thomas Shaw's¹⁷ upon Little Thompson's creek.

Thursday, 15. We are still at Thomas Shaw's. What kind of folks am I among—unhappy people! One aged man had shot the constable when about to serve a warrant on him; a second had stabbed another dangerously—their names may go into shades. O sin! O intoxication! when—when will these people be civilized—and all be truly spiritualized.

On *Friday* we attended at Jackson's meeting house; it was a gracious season. Bishop Whatcoat spoke on Isa. xii, 2. We lodged at Stephen Pace's, upon Brown's Creek.

Saturday, 17. We had a meeting at John Mills's; his wife came from Maryland, he from Virginia; the children are coming to Christ. This neighborhood is visited with a revival of religion.

Sabbath day, 18. We came to Wadesboro after a court week. We held our meeting underneath the court house, within the arches: we had a most delightful day. Bishop Whatcoat spoke with great ingenuity and authority upon "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life." My subject was Luke xviii, 27. We lodged at I. Cash's.

Monday, 19. We came to Webb's ferry: the rain drove us under the roof of the widow Williams, where we

¹⁷ The Rev. Thomas Shaw lived across the line in Anson County. In 1800 he had been on the Great Pee Dee and Georgetown Circuit, and in 1801 he was on the Little Pee Dee and Anson Circuit. His work was on both sides of the state line, and he doubtless had a home, probably a farm, on the North Carolina side.

remained until the storm was over, and then pushed on to James Pickett's, in Richmond county.

Tuesday, 20. I gave a discourse on Amos vi, 1: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion!" I felt some openings.

I have had many and great exercises of mind respecting men and things, but my soul enjoys great resignation: I take the *bitters* of life as things which medicine my soul, producing caution, humiliation, and sanctification.

Wednesday, 21. We rode ten miles to the Presbyterian meeting house: many attended at a short warning. My subject was Heb. vii, 25. We had a quickening season. After meeting we rode three miles to Rockingham,¹⁸ the seat of justice for the county of the same name. We had been expected at twelve o'clock, hence with this circumstance, and that of court time to boot, we had but few hearers. Meeting was held in the academy, a very commodious house for Divine service. Rockingham stands upon a beautiful eminence, and hath some valuable houses; about twenty families make the inhabitants. We were kindly and elegantly entertained at the house of one who had been one of us, but now is of and in the world.

Thursday, 22. We came to Mark's Creek. I spoke on Heb. iii, 13-15. We had a good season. We lodged with Solomon Rye.

FORTY-FIRST VISIT

(February 12-March 24, 1801; age 55)

ASBURY was accompanied by Bishop Whatcoat from South Carolina to Virginia. He noted preaching in a courthouse;

¹⁸ Asbury was in error when he said Rockingham was the county seat of the county of the same name. It is the county seat of Richmond County. Rockingham County is in the northern part of North Carolina on the Virginia border.

reading a letter to a congregation about work in Delaware and Cumberland; visiting the sea; baptism of three persons; preachers leaving the itinerant ministry for light reasons. He noted Ralph Potts building a chapel single-handed.

Asbury's spectacles were left behind. His spectacles and other personal effects may be seen on display in the museum of St. George's Church, Philadelphia. (Cliffe, *op. cit.*, 177, 182.)

Joseph Pilmoor, official Wesley itinerant, traveled through Currituck County and other eastern counties on an itinerary to Charleston, South Carolina in 1772. (Stahl, *op. cit.*, 6.)

Asbury gave a moment to nature study, not being oblivious to nature as he traveled. On the visit, he lamented not seeing his mother and native land again. He never saw them after departing England.

Thursday, 12. We rode twenty miles to Frinke's.¹⁹

Friday, 13—At Ebenezer:—the house was unfinished and the day windy and uncomfortable. Brother Whatcoat and myself held the people nearly three hours. My text was Gal. vi, 14-16.

A Solomon Reeves let me know that he had seen the *Address*, signed by me; and was quite confident there were no arguments to prove that slavery was repugnant to the spirit of the Gospel: what absurdities will not men defend! If the Gospel will tolerate slavery, what will it not authorize? I am strangely mistaken if this said Mr. Reeves has more grace than is necessary, or more of *Solomon* than the name. We lodged for the night at William Gore's.

From this neighborhood we came to Abraham Bepent's, Brunswick county, North Carolina, fording the Seven-mile Creek, and crossing the Wacamaw River at Loftus's Flat.

¹⁹ Asbury must have entered the state in present Columbus County, then part of Brunswick County.

We have ridden at least five hundred and fifty, if not six hundred miles, over the hills, barrens, swamps, savannahs, rivers, and creeks of South Carolina.

At Gause's Manor, or more properly *town*, we were pleasantly situated. I had a most solemn visit to the sea beach, which to me was a most instructive sight: the sea reminded me of its great Maker, "who stayeth the proud waves thereof": its innumerable productions; the diversified features of its shores—the sandhills, the marsh; the palmetto, tall and slender; the sheep and goats frisking in the shade or browsing in the sun: or the eye, directed to the waters, beholds the rolling porpoise; the seagulls lifting and letting fall from high the clam, which, breaking, furnishes them with food; the eagles with hovering wings watching for their prey; the white sail of the solitary vessel tossed upon the distant wave—how interesting a picture do all these objects make!

We preached at William Gause's, the patriarch of the place: his son stood for scribe, and assisted me in making extracts of letters to add to my manuscript.

We visited Charlotte meeting house, named after the river, vulgarly and improperly called Shalotte. On our return, I prepared a few long letters for the north.

My mind is in great peace. I lament that I have no access to the poor: our way is strangely closed up at present in consequence of the *Address*. I made my last visit to the sea. I thought upon my friends on the other side the great waters; my voyage to this country; the little probability there was of my ever again seeing my dear mother, or my native land.

We have had preaching in three or four places: to wit, at Bepent's, in Brunswick county, and at the Manor.

Sunday, 22. We attended a meeting at Lockwood's Folly. I gave a sermon upon 2 Cor. iv, 5. 1. What the apostles of our Lord did *not* preach. 2. What they did

preach. 3. The relation of ministers to Christ and to souls. The principles of their service. They sought not their own honour, ease, or interest—they did not make disciples for themselves—they had not wisdom, righteousness, redemption, for souls; nor grace to convict, convert, or regenerate. They preached Christ in his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices—in his Gospel; in the sacrifice, once offered, of himself—in his Divinity. “Ourselves your servants for Christ’s sake,”—his saved, his qualified, his commissioned servants (not slaves)—bound by his word, his grace, his love—not for any worldly consideration, but “for Christ’s sake”: warning sinners, hypocrites, Pharisees, and backsliders;—comforting mourners; strengthening believers, and urging and inciting to holiness of heart and life. I observed, “servants,” yet their rulers; according to Scripture testimony—see Heb. xiii, 17; 1 Peter v, 2.

We were kindly entertained at Mr. Bellon’s: the whole family came to the house of public entertainment, eight miles from their dwelling, to make us comfortable.

Monday, 23. Rode to Edward Sullivan’s, at Town Creek—eighteen miles.

Tuesday, 24. I preached: my subject was Luke iv, 18. We had a full house. I baptized three adults, and as many children.

Wednesday, 25. We dined with General Smith—there was abundance of hospitality. We came into town. Jeremiah Norman²⁰ gave us a sermon. Our tabernacle is crowded again: the minds of the people are strangely changed; and the indignation excited against us is overpast: the people see and confess that the slaves are made better by religion; and wonder to hear the poor Africans pray and exhort.

²⁰ Norman was on the Bladen Circuit at this time. (*Minutes.*)

Thursday, 26. I preached, for the first time, in our house, and for the second in Wilmington: my text was found in Acts xxvi, 17, 18. At eleven o'clock we were crowded; and I felt uncommon enlargement. One of the respectables came in the name of some of the *reputables* to request that I would preach in the ancient, venerable brick church: I was weak—had spoken long and loud, and was more than ordinarily unwell; but brother Whatcoat was unwell and not able to go out. At four o'clock we had a large and decent congregation—I lectured upon Romans x, 1-4. In the evening, numbers, both white and black came again to the tabernacle. After Jeremiah Norman had preached, I read, and commented upon two letters respecting the work of God in Delaware, and Cumberland, in the West.

Friday, 27. We came off early and travelled on to Nixon's, through dews, damps, and rain—a great part of the way weary, pained, and sleepy, for want of rest. I gave a discourse on Matt. xi, 28-30.

Saturday, 28. About sunrise we hastened away and came to Lot Ballard's at the Rich Lands, New River, about forty miles; we stopped not on the way. I unfortunately left my famous spectacles behind: I had laid them by, overwhelmed with drowsiness, and failed to take them up to read a chapter, as is my custom, except upon such overdoing journeys. We walked our horses at the rate of four miles an hour: my poor nag limped. I thought it was owing to the bad state of his shoes, when, behold, an oyster shell had wedged itself in the hollow of his hoof, near the heel.

Sunday, March 1. At New River I preached on Luke xix, 10. We had a very serious but unaffected congregation.

Joseph Ballard, and his wife Mary Ballard, are gone to rest, after a respectable profession of religion amongst the Methodists, for seventeen or eighteen

years. John Perry, a pious soul, formerly of the Baptists, and an official character amongst them, is also gone to his reward. He had backslidden; but was restored among the Methodists, and became a preacher and deacon: he died upon the road, going to an appointment: neither he nor Ballard held slaves—hail, happy souls!

Monday, 2. We had to march down upon Trenton, sixteen miles. The appointed meeting had been transferred to Frederick Argate's, occasioned by the death of his venerable mother, the respectable wife of General Frederick Argate, who had been suddenly called away. This lady justly deserved the great and good character she had for forty years preserved, as a wife, mother, a mistress, and a friend; to relieve the poor, and to solace the afflicted, gave her pleasure and occupation almost uninterrupted. *Thursday* week she was at meeting—the following, she was a corpse. My subject on this solemn funeral occasion, was 1 Cor. xv, 22: "As in Adam, all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." First, Our union with Adam, and the unhappy consequences. Secondly, Our union with Christ, and the happy consequences. We have already ridden eighty miles from Wilmington.

Tuesday, 3. We came to Jones court house: we had many women, but few men: my text was 1 Cor. vii, 29-31. I suppose I shall not soon prophesy there again—for good reasons.

We went not to see our wealthy friends, but came down to Thomas Lee's, where we held a meeting on *Wednesday* and *Thursday*. My text was Acts xx, 32. Brother Whatcoat spoke from Isaiah lvii, 1; a portion of Scripture very seasonably chosen.

I began to review for this year the preachers and stations. We may perhaps find one preacher for a circuit in the Virginia Conference. I am shocked to see

how lightly the preachers esteem, and how readily they leave, the travelling plan. O Lord, by whom shall Jacob arise?

Friday, 6. Rode to Newbern. Brother Whatcoat preached in the evening.

Sabbath day, 8. We had a sacrament in the morning, and brother Whatcoat preached. In the afternoon I made an improvement upon Matt. xvii, 5. I have been rather clouded in mind, and have felt no pleasure in my administrations to-day.

Monday, 9. We rode thirty-seven miles to Washington. In our way we crossed Neuse, swiftly and safely, at West's ferry. At twenty-one miles we stopped to feed—high price and poor fare. We have ridden six hundred and fifty miles towards the fourth thousand since the Carolina Conference. Here Ralph Potts, a Northumbrian (Old England), but American-made Methodist, received us as the angels of God.

Tuesday, 10. I gave a serious talk to more persons than I expected, on Rom. x, 16—a subject well fitted to the state of the people of Washington.

Ralph Potts hath begun a handsome chapel, thirty feet square, and, by the blessing of God, he will finish it without any man's help.

Wednesday, 11. We came twelve miles to Josiah Little's. We called upon brother Floyd by the way. He is sickly. I bless God that this family standeth by us yet. I also called at brother Norris's. At Little's we had many people. Two of our friend Little's brothers are gone from our society. O! the slave trade!—when will it be no more?

Thursday, 12. A dreary ride of thirty miles, without food for man or beast, brought us to Joseph Pippin's.²¹ Here we were kindly entertained. Our friend Pippin

²¹ Pippin lived in Edgecombe County.

hath been settled in the **C**onnecta Swamps for twenty years. He hath six children, and about fifteen slaves, and never has had a death in his family. Mercy and miracle! May they praise the Lord!

Friday, 13. At Toole's meeting house, near Tarboro, brother Whatcoat addressed the congregation, upon Zechariah ix, 12. My choice was Isaiah 1, 9. I spoke with great heat and rapidity about half an hour. My text was well chosen, if the comment was not well executed. We lodged at Mr. Toole's.

Saturday, 14. Fifteen miles to Prospect chapel—open to all societies. Brother Whatcoat gave a short discourse upon *justification by faith*. My subject was: The love of God and the love of the world contrasted with, and subversive of, each other: according to the degrees, so the effects and fruits of these opposing systems.

Having fourteen miles to Henry Bradford's (Halifax County), we had no time to dine. We took to horse, and came in with the shadows of evening. This morning we breakfasted at seven o'clock, and we now supped at seven—hard preaching and hard riding occupied the intermediate hours.

We have passed rapidly through Edgecombe into Halifax county. O, the awful state of religion in this circuit!

Sabbath day, 15. At Bradford's meeting house, near Fishing Creek, my portion of the word was from Psalm 1, 2, 3. I discovered some solemnity and a few tears. Brother Whatcoat preached on John iii, 17. We rested this Sabbath. We have ridden one hundred and twenty miles in a few days of the past week.

Monday, 16. We were under the necessity of moving to Northampton. It was very warm: we started, and crossed Roanoke river at Pollock's ferry, and arrived at Richard Whitaker's—twenty miles. I was taken very ill with a bilious affection. I had a high fever, and my head

and back furnished symptoms of a lowland intermittent. I could not eat, and thought of staying in the house. I changed my mind, and went to Rehoboth chapel. I read the letters giving the accounts of the work of God in the State of Delaware, and in Cumberland. At brother Grant's I took a little water—gruel, and rode on eight miles farther, making twelve miles this day. We lodged at Joseph Pinner's (Northampton County).

Wednesday, 18. We had timely intimation of rain. We started nevertheless and had the rain, more or less, to Winton, a distance of twenty-five miles. Here we were glad to stop to dry and dine; but no more—ride we must. Gates court house brought us up in the evening. Our ride to-day is little short of forty miles. I preached in the court house, on Titus ii, 11, 12.

Friday, 20. We went forward to Isaac Hunter's (Gates County). Alas, for this place! Five souls of the whites—some poor Africans are seeking the Lord.

Saturday, 21. We came to Newland Creek, twenty-two miles, and lodged at James Spence's (Pasquotank County). This is a most awful place, and Satan triumphs. *Sabbath day* was cloudy and myself very unwell; but God enabled me to speak with uncommon unction, from John III, 19-21. "The darkness of the world"—in birth, education, dispensation, practice—the contrary *light* of Revelation; the inspiration of the Spirit; the experience and practice of God's people and ministers:—they came to the *light* to try thereby their conviction, conversion, and sanctification; and as the touchstone of their justice, mercy, truth, and love. "Condemnation"—they are condemned by the word of God, their own consciences, by the people of God—they shall be found guilty in the day of judgment, and be *condemned*—according to the Gospel privileges and light they have lived under and rejected; and they shall *condemn* themselves forever in hell.

We came to M'Bride's.²² I had a dumb chill, and a sick night.

Monday, 23. We made twenty-two miles to Samuel Simmon's. Our flight has carried us through Pasquotank, Camden, and Currituck counties, in North Carolina, which we shall leave today. My horse enslaves his rider. I suffer under severe bodily affliction. I am sorrowful; yet without sinning.

Tuesday, 24. At Currituck, Williams's meeting house, brother Whatcoat preached. I gave a short exhortation; after which we proceeded on to James Wilson's. We have done with North Carolina for the present.

FORTY-SECOND VISIT

(April 2-April 5, 1801; age 55)

ASBURY AND WHATCOAT came from and returned to Virginia, visiting primarily in Northampton County. This was one of the briefest visits of the decade, recorded in four entries. He baptized some children. His letters of the time and later period indicated the general poor health and increasing blindness of Whatcoat. (*Letters*, 244.) Usually not given to phrase-making, he did produce "college of saints and society of heaven."

Thomas Dupree may have been a Huguenot. Before 1700, a small group of Huguenots, "French Protestants," left Virginia and settled along the Pamlico River. Soon other Huguenots from Virginia settled further south of Bath, along the Neuse and Trent rivers, where people from Albemarle section were also beginning to settle. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 60, 61.)

²² Elisha McBride lived in Camden County and in 1790 owned ten slaves. (*Heads of Families*, 17.)

After meeting, we came on to Knotty Pine—to the house of mourning for a favourite son. Marmaduke Baker was this day to have gone to Princeton College to finish his education. We hope he is gone to the college of saints and the society of heaven. We have ridden twenty-four miles—faint and feeble.

Thursday, 2. I gave, perhaps, my last talk in Knotty Pine chapel, on 1 Peter iv, 17. We hasted away to Winton; benighted in the swamp, which for two miles was overflowed with water. We arrived at Dr. Laroque's, where we lodged. From Portsmouth hither, we make sixty-five miles. At eleven o'clock brother Whatcoat preached in the court house, from John iii, 16. After preaching, we hasted to Murfreesboro, twelve miles. I preached at N. Vicks's: my text was John iii, 17. Where I laboured I lodged.

Saturday, 4. We came to Edward Sorry's in Northampton county, dined, and hasted along towards Sterling Boykins, twenty-eight miles.

Sabbath day, 5. I preached at Concord meeting house, and lodged with Thomas Dupree, a descendant of a Huguenot who fell a martyr to persecution. I felt dejection of spirits and awful feelings for the state of the people. I preached on Heb. ii, 3. I again preached on "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world": to these exercises were added a sacrament, and the baptism of children. We had a solemn season.

I recollect having read, some years since, Ostervald's Christian Theology: having a wish to transcribe a few sentiments in the work, I met with it, and extracted from chap. 2, page 317, what follows. "Yet it cannot be denied that in the primitive Church there was always a president who presided over others, who were in a state of equality with himself: this is clearly proved from the catalogues of bishops to be found in Eusebius

and others; in them we may see the names of the bishops belonging to the principal Churches, many of whom were ordained whilst the apostles (but especially John) were still living." So far Mr. Ostervald, who, I presume, was a Presbyterian. In Cave's *Lives of the Fathers*, and in the writings of the ancients, it will appear that the Churches of Alexandria, and elsewhere, had large congregations, many elders; that the apostles might appoint and ordain bishops. Mr. Ostervald, who, it appears, is a candid and well-informed man, had gone as far as might be expected for a Presbyterian. For myself, I see but a hair's breadth difference between the sentiments of the respectable and learned author of *Christian Theology*, and the practice of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There is not—nor indeed in my mind, can there be—a perfect equality between a constant president and those over whom he always presides.

FORTY-THIRD VISIT

(October 5-October 15, 1801; age 56)

ASBURY was accompanied by Snethen from Tennessee to South Carolina, through the mountain section, on one of the briefest visits of the decade. He had been in America thirty years. French Broad is one of the larger western rivers (Lemert and Harrelson, *op. cit.*, 10).

Elmer T. Clark's *An Album of Methodist History* (201) contains a picture of the Killian home in which Asbury often visited.

Monday, October 5. We parted in great love. Our company made twelve miles to Isaiah Harrison's, and next day reached the Warm Springs upon French Broad River.²³

²³ Asbury went from Holston to Western North Carolina along the general route taken in 1800. (See note under November 6, 1800.)

Wednesday, 7. We made a push for Buncombe court house:²⁴ man and beast felt the mighty hills. I shall calculate from Baker's to this place one hundred and twenty miles; from Philadelphia, eight hundred and twenty miles.

Friday, 9. Yesterday and to-day we rested at George Swain's.

Sabbath day, 11. Yesterday and to-day held quarterly meeting at Daniel Killian's²⁵ near Buncombe court house. I spoke from Isa. lvii, 6, 7 and 1 Cor. vii, 1. We had some quickenings.

Monday, 12. We came to Murray's²⁶ upon Mud Creek: here we had a sermon from Nicholas Snethen on Acts xiv, 15. Myself and James Douthet²⁷ gave an exhortation. We had very warm weather and a long ride. At Major Brittain's²⁸ near the mouth of Mill's river, we found a lodging.

Tuesday, 13. We came in haste up to elder Davidson's, refreshed man and beast, commended the family to God, and then struck into the mountain. The want of sleep and other inconveniences made me unwell. We came down Saluda River near Saluda Mountain: it tried my lame feet and old feeble joints. French Broad, in its meanderings, is nearly two hundred miles long; the

²⁴ Buncombe court house is now Asheville. Buncombe County then extended to the Tennessee, Georgia, and South Carolina lines and covered most of the mountain area of Western North Carolina.

²⁵ Daniel Killian lived near Asheville, and his home was one of Asbury's famous stopping places. The original log house was torn down in 1901, and many of its logs were used in a tenant house. Asbury frequently preached under a large tree in the yard. Historical markers have been erected there and at a second house built by Daniel Killian not far away. The Asbury Methodist Church continues the society established in the Killian house and contains the chair which Killian made for the use of Asbury.

²⁶ William Murray kept Murray's Inn on the Howard Gap Road near the present Fletcher, North Carolina. (Patton, *op. cit.*, 39.)

²⁷ James Douthet was the presiding elder of the Salisbury District, which embraced Buncombe County. The section was on the Swannanoa Circuit.

²⁸ William Brittain kept a small hotel at the present Flat Rock. (Arthur, *op. cit.*, 493; Patton, *op. cit.*, 101.) Colonel James Brittain, a Revolutionary soldier, was one of a group that bought land in 1852 on which the Methodist church in Hendersonville now stands. Phillip Brittain was among those who bought land in 1826 and erected the Mills River Methodist Church. (Patton, *Ibid.*, 63, 178.)

line of its course is semicircular; its waters are pure, rapid, and its bed generally rocky, except the Blue Ridge; it passes through all the western mountains. We continued at John Douthet's²⁹ on *Wednesday*, and *Thursday* furnished a meeting. Nicholas Snethen spoke upon 1 John v, 10. I spoke also; my subject was Hosea x, 12.

FORTY-FOURTH VISIT

(January 14-February 8, 1802; age 56)

ASBURY AND SNETHEN were traveling from South Carolina through the eastern section. Asbury commented on the growth of New Bern, no longer the state capital. Raleigh had become the capital in 1792. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 196-197.)

He also noted his concern for formation of new circuits in the section. Here is record of a planned itinerary—one extending fourteen months. He noted a collection which produced some sixty dollars for church building purposes (one of his earliest references to the types of American currency still used today); a new church in Tarboro; the presence of judges, counselors, doctors and ministers at service and a congregation's having one day's notice of his intended appearance.

Thursday, 14. Nicholas Snethen came forward in the name of his Master: I followed upon "Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest you be wearied and faint in your minds." After preaching, we rode on to the house of my once dear friend William Gause, senior; but death had

²⁹ John Douthet was the father of the Rev. James Douthet. (See note under February 14, 1800. See also Asbury's *Journal* for October 29, 1813.) Asbury had followed his former route to South Carolina by way of Douthet's Ford at Table Rock into Pendleton County.

stolen a march upon me—the body of my friend was in the dust, his soul is, I hope and trust, with God.

Friday, 15. I visited old Ocean: upon my return I made out a plan for fourteen months' travelling.

Saturday, 16. We attended a meeting at Charlotteville³⁰ meeting house: Nicholas Snethen spoke upon "Faith, hope and charity"; I followed on "Let us come therefore boldly, to the throne of grace." We have ridden a solitary, sandy way, about a hundred and ten miles; and in three meetings there were not many more than one hundred souls. O Lord, can these dry bones live? I have been kept in a dependent, praying state of soul. We have the most delightful weather, kind friends, and good entertainment for man and beast. I trust the seed sown in the hearts of some will live and grow to the glory of God, and the good of generations to come to the end of time. I have now filled up two thousand miles of the three thousand I had calculated to be the distance from and back to Philadelphia; hitherto I have been mightily helped. Glory, glory, glory to the Eternal Trinity in Eternal Unity! We lodged at John Gause's:³¹ our host is a local minister, and, I trust, a dear child of God; I hope he never may entail the system of slave-holding upon his posterity.

Sabbath, 17. At Lockwood's Folly meeting house Nicholas Snethen spoke upon a portion of Psalm cxix. I followed from the Epistle General of John iii, 1, 2. It was an exceedingly cold day, and few people. As there were some difficulties in our way, we came off to Town Creek, and housed with Charles Gause: we made our *Sabbath day's* journey thirty miles, and yet had time to dine in the woods.

³⁰ Charlotteville was the present Shallotte.

³¹ There were six branches of the Gause family in Brunswick County, North Carolina—Benjamin, Charles, Susanna, Bryant, John, Nedam, and William. All of them owned slaves. (*Heads of Families, N. C., 1790, 189.*)

Monday, 18. Hearing of an appointment for the circuit preachers, we would not lose time, but rode down to New Hope. We both spoke, and then went on to Rolks's,³² where we lodged for the night.

Tuesday, 19. Could we have crossed the creek to Edward Sullivan's we should have saved ourselves a ride of seven miles round it. Nicholas Snethen went forward upon "Take heed, and beware of covetousness": after him I followed with a warning voice, "Wherefore the Holy Ghost saith, Today, if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts."

Wednesday, 20. At Wilmington, I found matters not altogether as I could wish, neither temporarily nor spiritually; in both these relations and the African church been will to my care; another relation I preserved by the appointment of African stewards. Nicholas Snethen preached on 2 Cor. i, 3, 4. I gave a discourse upon "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk," &c. Nicholas Snethen again held forth: his subject was 1 John iv, 4.

Friday, 22. We came to Topsail, and dined with Mrs. Campbell, a gracious soul, and so also is her daughter. Thence we went forward to the Widow Spicer's³³ and arrived about an hour in the night. The sands were heavy, and our horses began to fail greatly.

Saturday, 23. We rode up to New River, where we found Lot Ballard out among the woods, with his own and his father's old mansion moved together. Want of shoes, rest, and food had almost done over my little mare.

Sabbath, 24. Nicholas Snethen spoke upon Rom. viii, 6, 7. I gave an exhortation upon John v, 39, 40. It was not at all agreeable to me to see nearly a hundred slaves

³² This was probably John Rook, since no Rolks family was listed in Brunswick County or elsewhere. (*Ibid.*)

³³ Elzey and John Spicer lived in Onslow County. (*Heads of Families.*)

standing outside, and peeping in at the door, whilst the house was half empty: they were not worthy to come in because they were black! Farewell, farewell to that house forever!

I have close communion with God. If we spare our lungs, yet must we work our bones and our flesh with riding. We lodged at B. Wilder's.³⁴ Next day we came along through the rain to Mr. Hargate's,³⁵ near the head of Trent River.

Tuesday, 26. We arrived in Newbern. Our evening lecture by Nicholas Snethen was upon Psalm li: "Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." He again spoke on *Thursday*, and on *Friday evening* also: I concluded each meeting with prayer. We were crowded every night. I judged it needful to make some temporal and spiritual arrangements for the society in Newbern—that a travelling preacher shall attend every Sabbath is one. Newbern is a trading, growing town; there are seven hundred or a thousand houses already built, and the number is yearly increased by less or greater additions,—among which are some respectable brick edifices; the new court house, truly so; neat and elegant; another famous house, said to be designed for the masonic and theatrical gentlemen: it might make a most excellent church. The population of the town, citizens, and transient persons, may amount to three thousand five hundred or four thousand souls.

Sabbath day, 31. Cold and cloudy. I gave a sermon upon Rom. ii, 7, 8. Nicholas Snethen spoke from Heb. xiii, 16; and in the evening, on 1 John iv, 10, 11. We made a public collection which amounted to nearly sixty dollars; and parted from our brethren, whom we left full of good resolutions to finish the house of

³⁴ A Hopkins Wilder lived in Onslow County. (*Ibid.*)

³⁵ Daniel Hargate lived in Jones County. (*Ibid.*)

God: the African Methodists also were about to build a place of worship. Truly we are encouraged; our own people are stirred up, and judges, counsellors, doctors, and ministers, attended our preaching, and appeared to be pleased: may they be profited, and finally saved!

We had a severe ride to Washington, thirty-five miles, crossing Neuse and Tar Rivers; near the end of our ride the rain quickened our pace, and drove us in about five o'clock to the hospitable shelter of Ralph Potts (of Alnwick, Northumberland), where we had all things richly to enjoy.

Tuesday, February 2. Considering the inclemency of the day, we had a very respectable congregation to hear us: who can tell what God will do for these people? At our evening meeting many attended: the subject spoken from was Luke xiv, 26.

Wednesday, 3. We came to ——'s, and stopped awhile, and then pushed on to Brother Perry's:³⁶ it was a solitary ride. Our host is one of our local ministry in Pitt county. I judged it highly expedient that Roanoke and Pamlico circuits should be divided, and that Washington should have Sabbath preaching every week: it is a growing town of one hundred houses, and there is a good house for public worship.

Thursday, 4. We came to Garratt Toole's plantation; but the bird was flown—our old friend had removed to Franklin county for his health: we stayed with Mr. Davidson, the steward of his estate.

Friday, 5. At Tarboro we held our meeting in the neat new chapel: Nicholas Snethen spoke upon, "This day is salvation come to this house"; the ground work of my discourse was, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people": I said but few words. We

³⁶ Shadrach Perry lived in Pitt County. (*Ibid.*)

dined with Mr. Isaac Guion, and lodged with Mr. John Bellamy. We rejoiced in hope that Tarboro and Halifax will yet hear and receive the Gospel: Henry Bradford³⁷ hath been preaching in the latter, and brother Bellamy in the former with some success. We attended at Prospect Hill. It was an exceedingly cold day, as need be. I only exhorted after Nicholas Snethen had described the *new creature in Christ Jesus*. We fed our horses, and ourselves ate in the woods, and then went forward to Henry Bradford's. My soul is continually stayed upon and comforted in God: but it is not needful to tell all my outward difficulties and inward sufferings; heaven will make up for all—and then we shall know all we wish and wait to know.

Sabbath, 7. Was a very cold and cloudy day: we held our meeting in the dwelling house, and filled both rooms. Nicholas Snethen spoke on 2 Tim. II, 11-13. My text was 2 Pet. iii, 17, 18.

Monday, 8. We crossed Roanoke at Pollock's ferry, and came to Richard Whitaker's. We had no appointment at Rehoboth, but on Tuesday we called a meeting:—Nicholas Snethen spoke on Philippians II, 5; I followed from Matthew v, 8. At Anthony Moore's (Northampton County), we called a meeting, where each of us delivered our testimony, and then rode on to Mr. People's:³⁸ here the presiding elder made an appointment, by including it with others, but of this there was no notice given, except by our coming into the neighbourhood the evening before: we would not neglect our duty, but at Malone's we faithfully, according to the grace and time given, discharged our task and rode on.

³⁷ Henry Bradford, evidently a local preacher, lived in Halifax County. (*Heads of Families*.)

³⁸ This may have been Drury Peebles, who lived in Halifax County. (*Ibid.*)

FORTY-FIFTH VISIT

(November 3-November 9, 1802; age 57)

ASBURY AND WILLIAM MCKENDREE (1767-1835) traveled from Tennessee to South Carolina, crossing the western portion in about six days. The visit was recorded in three *Journal* entries. McKendree was then presiding elder of the Kentucky District of the Western Conference. (Footnote, *Journal*, II, 367.)

Asbury mentioned Indians on the visit, although references to them in the entire accounts of visits were negligible. There were almost no references to their being hostile. His reference to visiting from house to house is reminiscent of John Wesley's practice of visiting to build up the Evangelical Revival in earlier years in England.

Wednesday, 3. We laboured over the Ridge and the Paint mountain.³⁹ I held on awhile, but grew afraid and dismounted, and with the help of a pine sapling, worked my way down the steepest and roughest part. I could bless God for life and limbs. Eighteen miles this day contented us; and we stopped at William Neilson's,⁴⁰ Warm Springs. About thirty travellers having dropped in, I expounded the Scriptures to them, as found in the third chapter of Romans, as equally applicable to nominal Christians, Indians, Jews, and Gentiles.

Thursday, 4. We came off about the rising of the sun—cold enough. There were six or seven heights to pass over, at the rate of five, two, or one mile an hour—as this ascent or descent would permit: four hours brought us at the end of twelve miles to dinner, at

³⁹ Asbury was proceeding to western North Carolina by his usual route by way of Newport and Hot Springs.

⁴⁰ The William Neilson with whom Asbury stayed at Warm Springs should not be confused with the William Neilson who entertained the bishop near the present Johnson City, Tennessee. Hale Neilson, a son of William Neilson, lived there in the fifties; he was a "Campbellite," though his family were Methodists. (Price, *op. cit.*, I, 399.)

Barnett's station;⁴¹ whence we pushed on to Thomas Foster's,⁴² and after making twenty miles more, came in about the going down of the sun. On *Friday* and *Saturday* we visited from house to house.

Sunday, 7. We had preaching at Killian's. William M'Kendree went forward, upon "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God": my subject was Heb. iii, 12, 13. On *Monday* I parted from dear William M'Kendree.⁴³ I made for Mr. Fletcher's,⁴⁴ upon Mud Creek: he received me with great attention, and the kind offer of everything in the house necessary for the comfort of man and beast. We could not be prevailed on to tarry for the night, so we set off after dinner, and he accompanied us several miles. We housed for the night at the widow Johnson's. I was happy to find that in the space of two years, God had manifested his goodness and power in the hearts of many upon the solitary banks and isolated glades of French Broad: some subjects of grace there were before, amongst Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists. On *Tuesday*, I dined at Benjamin Davidson's,⁴⁵ a house I had lodged and preached at two years ago. We laboured along eighteen mountain miles; eight ascent, on the west side, and as many on the east side of the mountain.

⁴¹ Barnard, or Barnard's Station, is in Madison County, nine miles south of Hot Springs, and is identified by Price as the Barnett's station mentioned by Asbury. (Price, *op. cit.*, I, 396.) Henry Boehm, who accompanied Asbury over this route in 1808, says that Barnett kept a public house; he was an early settler, "quite a character" and "famous as the first man in that part of the country who owned a vehicle with four wheels." (Boehm: *Reminiscences*, 211.) Arthur (*op. cit.*, 46) says Barnett's station "was probably Barnard's old stock stand on the French Broad River, five or six miles below Marshall."

⁴² Asbury had lodged with Thomas Foster on November 9, 1800.

⁴³ M'Kendree had traveled with Asbury from the conference which held was at Strothers meeting house in Sumner County, Tennessee, on October 2. Leaving the bishop at Daniel Killian's near Asheville, M'Kendree returned to his district.

⁴⁴ See note under November 10, 1800.

⁴⁵ See note under November 13, 1800.

FORTY-SIXTH VISIT

(February 1-March 10, 1803; age 57)

ASBURY was accompanied through eastern counties by Snethen from South Carolina to Virginia. They were in the state six weeks. A conference, including a conference love feast, was held with Asbury, McCaine, Lee, Snethen and Hope Hull preaching. Some 2,000 persons were present at the conference. Asbury indicated his interest in establishing a school for the children of the Africans. Jane was the name of his horse.

He preached on "Christian Perfection." John Wesley's sermon #xxxv in *Sermons on Several Occasions* was entitled "Christian Perfection." One congregation had twenty-four hours' notice of his intended appearance.

Asbury noted that about forty families resided in Halifax, site of the Halifax Resolves in 1776, site of the adoption of the first Constitution of the state in 1776 and the site of the election of Richard Caswell as first governor of the independent state of North Carolina. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 141, 142, 157, 509.)

I came off with a very slim breakfast, and then after meeting had to ride on to (*north*) Britain Drake's, Robeson county, North Carolina. Here is a settlement of Scotch, originally; it began in the year 1771; since which time the descendants of these emigrants are chiefly in Cumberland, Richmond, and some in Anson, Robeson, and Bladen counties; and some are over the line south: there is a work of God amongst them, and some living young ministers have been raised up. Perhaps the rebellion of "forty-five" made those people averse to all opposition to *the powers that be*—and they were tories during the American revolution only because they remembered their former failures and sufferings and those of their fathers. The open dwellings,

only calculated for warm weather, occasion the people of South Carolina to suffer more, in cold spells, than those of the east or north: let those who doubt this make the trial for one winter. I have felt great lowness of spirits, but a holy resignation in the midst of cold, hunger, thirst, labour, and temptations.

Tuesday, February 1. I preached upon the glorious subject of Christian perfection: my text I found in Heb. vi, 1. Next day (*Wednesday*), we had a rainy ride of fifteen miles to Lumberton, which I had not visited for some years. I was present at its foundation and nomination: there are now, I suppose, about twenty families, and a hundred buildings; an academy, which serves also as a church; a very good prison, and a court house, it being the county town of Robeson. Its property is much owing to the navigation of Drowning Creek, down which lumber and other articles are conveyed to Georgetown, and thence frequently the merchandise is sent to Charleston. Nicholas Snethen preached; I only exhorted: Presbyterian ministers, Brown and M'Nare, attended; I had a Christian interview with them, and I learned with pleasure that their labours had been owned and blessed among the Scotch Presbyterians. We lodged at Robert Haille's. We have a small society in this town. Drowning Creek (so called from the drowning of some Indians) is the northeast branch of Pee Dee River; it rises in Cumberland county, North Carolina, is fed by Ten Miles and Great Swamp, passes through Robeson county, flowing about one hundred miles before it mingles with the waters of Pee Dee; at Ford's bridge Little Pee Dee unites with Great Pee Dee, twelve miles below Britain's ferry; the north-west branch of the first-mentioned river flows about the same distance as Drowning Creek, but its navigation is not so good.

Thursday, 3. I preached at Riggin's chapel in a power-

ful gale of wind; my subject was Acts xi, 23. Daniel Brown gave an energetic exhortation. I ordained William Glover to the office of deacon. After dining at Joseph Riggins's, we went on to Frederick Miller's at Mine Creek. I was very unwell today; I could not eat, yet I was compelled to labour under great mental dejection.

Friday, 4. A change for colder weather. We had to ride ten miles to Gray's Creek.

It was my day to preach on Saturday, and unwell as I was, I stood up and spoke on 1 Peter iii, 15, to a large congregation of Methodists, Baptists, and people of the world: it was a very cold day. I visited John Newberry, an afflicted man; and his wife, a godly woman.

Sunday, 6. We rode twelve miles to Fayetteville. It was not known whether we were to preach at our own meeting house or in the State house; so we ventured into the Presbyterian meeting house: it was only free for me, as I had been told by Mr. Flinn, the minister, who had received his authority from the magisterial eldership; but it was not my day, so James Jenkins and Nicholas Snethen went into the pulpit, and the latter spoke on 2 Cor. vii, 10. I came off without saying anything well for me, for I had nearly lost my breath in walking to the house. We were kindly and comfortably entertained at Mr. John Lumsden's. The rain came on, but we rode on seven miles, and were compelled to ferry ourselves over Cape Fear River, after being detained nearly half an hour in the rain.

Monday, 7. We had about twenty-two miles to make to reach Purdy's chapel. I preached upon Titus II, 11, 14. We lodged at Samuel Richardson's. I have had a day and night of temptations.

Tuesday, 8. We came down the north side of the river to Elizabethtown: Nicholas Snethen preached in the court house: I was silent. After meeting we rode

on fifteen miles to the widow Clarrida's. Leaving the Brown, next day we came to the White Marsh: I preached at Clark's on 1 Peter v, 10; and afterward rode to the Lake of Wacamaw, and lodged at William Wilkinson's.

I sometimes smile at the simplicity of our friends—they would love us to death, in company and in labours too: they cannot do too much, it would seem, to express their kindness; and in return, we are to be such immortal men as never to be weary, and never to complain. I feel for this circuit, having ridden through it: they have need of three preachers at least. At the Lake Chapel Nicholas Snethen preached: we concluded with prayer. On *Friday* we had a long ride to Livingston Creek, crossing several swamps whose waters supply the Lake. My subject at Union chapel was 1 Peter v, 8: the day was cold; but we had a full house, and a feeling season. We lodged at Mr. Brownings. Next day we rode twelve miles to the ferry, crossing in a storm, and landing where we could on the deep bank, out of which my mare struggled with difficulty: at the town (Wilmington), another ferry, and another storm in crossing made our journey for the day unpleasant enough: we arrived, however, at our own house in proper time. We found the church ceiled, and the dwelling improved. I met the people of colour, leaders and stewards; we have eight hundred and seventy-eight Africans, and a few whites in fellowship. Nicholas Snethen preached on *Saturday night*; I spoke on *Sunday morning* upon 1 Peter v, 7; Nicholas Snethen held forth at eleven o'clock; I preached again at half-past three o'clock on 2 Cor. xiii, 9; and Nicholas Snethen gave another discourse at night: thus ended the public labours of this day. The Africans hire their time of their masters, labour and grow wealthy; they have built houses on the church lots. I hope to be able to establish a school for their children.

Monday, 14. Was so cold we could hardly stand it. At Walter Nicol's I preached a little upon Luke viii, 21. We then rode on to the widow Campbell's, where we held an evening meeting. Next day we must needs ride home with the widow Spicer, living upon the Stump Sound: through hail and wind we went, and little Jane had a shoe on which clogged and made some difficulty. We have been highly favoured hitherto in attending our appointments and having congregations.

Wednesday, 16. Hard necessity compelled us to rest with the widow and the fatherless: we had a mere storm of wind, and hail, and snow.

Thursday, 17. We took a south-west course, through ice, and snow, and frost, and the wind in our faces; and arrived at Lot Ballard's half-past three o'clock; our appointment at the chapel was for twelve o'clock. I conclude I shall have no more appointments between Wilmington and Newbern; there is a description of people we must not preach to; the people of Onslow seem to resemble the ancient Jews—they *please not God, and are contrary to all men.*

Friday, 18. Finding it was but forty-two miles to Newbern, we concluded to push for it. I rose early, ordained J. Wilden to the office of deacon, and started. I had had thoughts of calling at a certain house, but being fearful we had not the time to spare, we stopped and fed on the ground: soon after we met the master of the house, and dropped a hint of our intentions of being his guests had time permitted; he did not say "Will you," or "Do call at my house"—farewell! farewell! O unhappy people of Jones, and Trent, and Onslow! (counties). With a little cake and cheese, and some corn for our horses, we came in fine spirits to Newbern, about six o'clock. On *Saturday*, I rested; and Nicholas Snethen preached upon, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Sabbath day, 20. I preached at seven o'clock upon 2 Peter iii, 14; Nicholas Snethen spoke at eleven o'clock; I held forth at three o'clock on 2 Cor. vi, 2; we were exceedingly crowded. I am grieved for this society; there are more heads than agree well together; want of harmony and want of discipline are too evident: I felt as if I wanted to see them no more until affairs wore a more pleasing aspect.

We set out on *Monday* under some apprehensions that the late rains had swelled the rivers; but we found no difficulties, either at Neuse or Tar rivers. Nicholas Snethen preached at Washington, Beaufort county, on 1 Thess. v, 19, 20; the chapel was crowded. On *Tuesday*, at eleven o'clock, I spoke on Luke viii, 11-15. The want of sleep and other things made me unwell and unpleasant in my feelings. Nicholas Snethen spoke at four o'clock in the evening on Luke xiii, 5.

Wednesday, 23. We rode twenty-two miles, to Williamston, Martin county; I had not been at this place since January, 1792: I find here now about twenty families, and about forty buildings. My subject at the court house was Titus; although greatly outdone by fatigue and heat, I had some openings of mind. I was somewhat surprised to see so many called together, by twenty-four hours' notice; and I admired the patience of the people, many of whom were obliged to stand in the lobby of the court house—a *house and a half*. We want a house of our own. John Watts, a local preacher, still keeps his ground as a minister and a Christian, although the Baptists are very numerous here. On *Wednesday* we rode through a very warm, weather-breeding day, twenty-two miles, to Tarboro, and came in about half-past two o'clock. Many came to the new church, and were attentive to hear, whilst Nicholas Snethen preached upon 2 Cor. v, 18-20. I had strength to sit still to-day. We dined at Mr. Ryley's, and were

kindly invited to lodge at the widow Tool's, the first which was opened to me in Tarboro. There are in this place about thirty-three families: the people have more trade than religion, more wealth than grace. We have about thirty Africans in fellowship; but no whites. I may notice the bridge; it is 540 feet long, and about thirty feet above the water.

Friday, 25. It rained and hailed; and through the night snowed heavily, and continued to fall on us after we set out until we came to Prospect Hill: we fed, and went on to Henry Bradford's, twenty-five miles. The snow in places was from eight to twelve inches deep; and as my horse was newly shod, he clogged, and kept me in continual fear. On *Saturday* I preached at our host's from 2 Peter 1, 4.

Sabbath day, 27. We came to Halifax (County seat of Halifax County). The *rich* had the Gospel preached to them by Nicholas Snethen, from 2 Cor. 16-77; I had to speak a little, and then baptized the children. The respectable sisterhood were very attentive; in short, a more decent, well-bred congregation, need not be. We dined at D. Fisher's, who treated us in a most serious and friendly manner. By guess, I should say there were forty families in Halifax. We were impressed, as if by magic, that the river would rise rapidly; so we crossed at four o'clock and rode twenty miles, to Seth Peeble's, whom we called from his downy bed to take in poor benighted travellers.

Saturday, March 5. Ended our most amicable conference ⁴⁶ which began on *Tuesday*. We had preaching

⁴⁶ The *Minutes* of 1802, show that this session of the Virginia Conference was to be held at Dromgoole's on March 1, 1803. The *Journal* of the conference simply states that it was held at Olive Branch Meeting House. This was the old Wolesey's Barn, later called Dromgoole's, and is presently located at Gasburg in Brunswick County, Virginia. However, the church was moved several miles from its original location to Gasburg. (Bennett, *op. cit.*, 407.) However, if the conference was held in Virginia, Asbury crossed the state line for the sessions and immediately re-entered North Carolina. The night of February 27 was spent with Seth Peebles in Northampton County, North

each day by Alexander McCaine, Hope Hull, Jesse Lee, Nicholas Snethen, and myself on the last day. We ordained the travelling and local deacons upon *Friday*, and the elders upon *Saturday*.

Sabbath, 6. Nicholas Snethen preached upon 2 Cor. iv, 17, 18; and I followed with an exhortation; and Brother Whatcoat after me. Our stand was in the woods; our congregation consisted of about two thousand souls. I was exceedingly pleased with our conference love feasts—with its order, solemnity, and life; the testimonies borne appeared to be all given under the immediate impulse of the Spirit of God, both in ministers and members.

Bishop Whatcoat being ill, the burden of the conference labours fell upon me.

Monday, 7. At Concord meeting house I spoke on 2 Cor. vii, 1. We lodged at Sterling Boykin's. I find the *way of holiness* very narrow to walk in or to preach; and although I do not consider *sanctification*—*Christian perfection*, commonplace subjects, yet I make them the burden, and labour to make them the savour of every sermon. I feel, I fear for my dear lowland brethren—so much of this world's wealth; so much fullness of bread, and idleness, and strong drink. Lord, help!

Tuesday, 8. We rode in the evening to Edward Saurey's. The excessive rains in the morning prevented our attending our appointments, to the sad disappointment of our friends in Murfreesborough—*brethren* we have not, for we have no society there. Next day we had a race of a ride to Winton, twenty-five miles: Brother Snethen preached in the court house at twelve o'clock. We dined at Mr. Bell's, and were generously entertained. Gates court house, twenty miles farther, brought us up for the night.

Carolina, and the day after the conference closed, Asbury was entertained by Sterling Boyakin, who also lived in Northampton County. (*Heads of Families*, 72, 73.)

Thursday, 10. At the court house Nicholas Snethen insisted upon *the one thing needful*. I ordained B. Harrell⁴⁷ to the deacon's office: he is a man of good repute, without slaves.

FORTY-SEVENTH VISIT

(October 25-October 28, 1803; age 58)

ASBURY was traveling from Tennessee through western counties to South Carolina on one of the briefest visits to the state. He referred to camp meetings in figurative language. Camp meetings began about 1800 by Presbyterians and came to be a characteristic institution of the frontier, particularly the Methodists. The camp meeting was never an authorized Methodist institution, though. (Sweet and Lee, *A Short History of Methodism*, 60.) Asbury, nevertheless, participated in numerous meetings, commenting on his preaching and its effects to revive religion on the frontier. A fuller account of the early camp meeting is found in Professor W. W. Sweet's *The American Churches: An Interpretation*, Chap. III.

Tuesday, 25. We reached Buncombe. The road is mending by changing the direction and bridging the Ivy.

Wednesday, 26. We called a meeting at Killian's and a gracious season it was: my subject was I Cor. xv, 38. Sister Killian and sister Smith, sisters in the flesh, and kindred spirits in holiness and humble obedience, are both gone to their reward in glory. On Thursday we came away in haste, crossed Swannanoa at Thomas Foster's, the French Broad at the High Shoals, and

⁴⁷ The Harrell family was prominent in Gates County. Harrell's Methodist Church was located a few miles north of Gatesville. (Harrell.)

afterward again at Beard's bridge, and put up for the night at Andrew Mitchell's: we passed two large encamping places of the Methodists and Presbyterians; it made the country look like the Holy Land.

Friday, 28. We came up Little River, a sister stream of French Broad: it offered some beautiful flats of land. We found a new road, lately cut, which brought us in at the head of Little River, at the old fording place, and within hearing of the falls, a few miles off of the head of Matthews Creek, a branch of the Saluda: the waters foaming down the rocks with a descent of a half a mile, make themselves heard at a great distance.

FORTY-EIGHTH VISIT

(February 6-March 18, 1804; age 58)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina through the coastal region of North Carolina to Virginia, for almost six weeks. His itinerary included stops at Wilmington, New Bern, Washington, Elizabeth City and Edenton. He preached in the historic Edenton Courthouse. He indicated his strong sympathies for the people in the eastern section and showed especial concern for Edenton. Two following visits were made in the same year. The Tar he crossed and recrossed is a major North Carolina river. (Lemert and Harrelson, *op. cit.*, 10.)

He noted progress of the Baptists in the state, ordination of persons, baptisms, shouting at service and a visit to Nags Head on the Outer Banks (probably the only one). He provided a summary of his duties on February 27th and gave main points of a sermon. He secured six hundred dollars for church construction. He had nearly 1,000 persons at a service.

Humphrey Wood became his traveling companion. He was a delegate to the General Conference. (Footnote, *Journal*, II, 430.)

The prominent colonial town of Brunswick is no longer extant. St. Philip's Church (Anglican) may have been the "Wall of a brick church." (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 94, 95.)

Monday, 6. We rode eighteen miles to Ebenezer: there were about thirty souls, to whom I spoke, from Titus II, 13, 14. We came to Pieraway Ferry: I was unwilling to cross: nevertheless, we all got into a small broken flat; and scarcely had we launched, when we upset, and were obliged to back out by wading: had this been in the middle of the river, fifteen feet deep! Lord, thou preservest man and beast! By making three trips of the horses, men, and baggage, our crazy skiff put us safe over. At the widow Cresset's, we were well entertained.

Tuesday, 7. We rode to little John Gainé's, thirty miles; no food from sun to sun.

Wednesday, 8. We rode to Smithville, so called from General Smith: we rode thirty-three miles through the rain. We lodged at the widow Douyer's, and were plagued with our horses breaking away.

Thursday, 9. Our horses were taken and brought to us. I preached at Smithville, and brother Alexander M'Caine also in a house in the town. This is the old fort Johnson, at the mouth of Cape Fear River: it is partially rebuilt.

Friday, 10. We came to Brunswick, an old town; demolished houses, and the noble walls of a brick church: there remain but four houses entire. I preached at Miss Grimshaw's on 2 Cor. iv, 5; and ordained Nathaniel Bell to the office of deacon. At Edward Sullivan's I found that the cold weather, and hard labour of riding and preaching, began to press me down.

Saturday, 11. At Rock's, at Town Creek, brother M'Caine preached; I also spoke, enforcing, "Be thou

faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." A late camp meeting upon Town Creek has given a revival to religion amongst both whites and blacks. I thought I perceived intimations of this in my last visits. About the going down of the sun we came into Wilmington, faint and feeble.

Sunday, 12. We had nearly one thousand souls, to whom I spoke upon Heb. xii, 25.

Monday, 13. I rested, wrote, and regulated some matters of a temporal nature.

Tuesday, 14. I preached on 2 Pet. ii, 10-12.

Wednesday, 15. We set out, and made Nixon's, at Topsail.

Thursday, 16. Lodged with Lot Ballard, New River.

Friday, 17. Reached Thomas Lee's, Trent River.⁴⁸

Saturday, 18. I preached in Lee's church on I Cor. xv, 58; after meeting we had a cold ride to Newbern.

Sunday, 19. I spoke under great heaviness: my subject was Col. III, 12-16; again in the evening on Ezek. xxxv, 2: my load was thrown off, and we had life springing up in the assembly.

Monday, 20. We moved a subscription to raise one thousand dollars to enlarge and finish the chapel: we have obtained six hundred dollars. Brother M'Caine preached, and there was something of a shout.

Tuesday, 21. I spoke from Heb. iii, 15. Our official brethren were called up in the night to attend two gay females; one had run to call the brethren to pray for her distressed companion, and she also was stricken: they both professed to find the Lord.

Wednesday and *Thursday*, 22, 23. We called assemblies in Newbern, and unwieldy congregations came together.

Friday, 24. We took the path to Washington: it was

⁴⁸ Nixon lived in Pender County, Ballard in Onslow County, and Thomas Lee in Jones County.

clear and cold: at Neuse Ferry it blew fresh: at Tar River the gale had subsided, and we crossed in comfort.

Saturday, 25. I felt the effects of my long and very cold ride from Newbern: nevertheless I gave them a sermon.

Sabbath day, 26. I spoke at Washington on 2 Cor. v, 11-15. I collected three propositions from the whole.

I. The Gospel is a universal ministration of grace and truth: "we persuade men"—all men, everywhere. This position is proved by the general love of God; the general commission give the ambassadors of Christ; the general atonement; general offers of grace; the general judgment.

II. That consequently, the Gospel must be, in all administrations, applicable to the cases, consciences, and characters of all; and thus does it behoove the ministers of the Gospel to preach it.

III. It is a ministry of terror: "the terror of the Lord, we persuade men"; it is a ministry of love: the "love of Christ constraineth us."

Monday, 27. At Gardner's bridge I spoke to many hearers, on Luke iv, 18, 19; it was very chilly. In the evening we came to John Watt's; thirty miles to-day, without fire or food, from seven to five o'clock in the evening. On *Tuesday*, being unwell, brother M'Caine officiated for me. "I groan, being burdened": seven conferences to appoint the stations in; to officiate in the General Conference of this year; seventeen States to visit, requiring a ride of five thousand miles at the rate of twenty, thirty, and forty miles a day. O Lord, give me support! for every day, every hour, and every moment is a time of need with me! We rode up to Colonel Samuel William's, twenty miles. At Williams's chapel, Taylor's ferry, truly the *great ones* were present to hear, and I preached to them upon the great salvation;

to little purpose I fear: small fruit of twenty-five years of faithful labours upon the rich lands of Roanoke.

Thursday, March 1. After a lonely ride of fifteen miles in the rain, I preached at the widow Ann Whitmell's, near Edward's ferry: we had twenty females, and half as many males to hear. The Baptists go ahead of the Methodists in this settlement: if it be well done, it matters little who does it. My mind is in peace, but my body is weak and in pain.

Friday, 2. After preaching at Whitaker's chapel, on Rev. II, 10, ordained Henry Bradford, Benjamin Nevell, and William Lindsay, deacons: it was very cold.

Saturday, 3. I rode twenty miles, crossed Roanoke to Bridges Creek, and lodged at Richard Whitakers.

Sabbath day, 4, was extremely cold. I preached at Rehoboth chapel, and ordained Richard Whitaker a deacon; we had many more people than I expected; the house was nearly filled with both colours.

Monday, 5. At J. Pinna's my subject was Rom. x, 12. We had excessive snow on *Tuesday*: I ordained E. Everett a deacon. At Montgomery's old house about two dozen souls met me, to whom I spoke on James ii, 6. Twenty miles to-day in the snow, pitch and drive; it was well my mare had no shoes behind to ball her feet.

Thursday, 8. I preached at Wicocon, where I never expected to be again: the windows were open, and people trembled under the cold, if not under the word. After crossing two ferries, we came to Gates court house, twenty miles: my mind is in peace; but I feel for the people of these low lands: with the exception of a few towns and select places, my ministry amongst them must be near its end. To go around by Norfolk on my route eastward is objectionable for many reasons;

and I may find it expedient to bid this part of the country farewell forever.⁴⁹

Friday, 9. At Gates court house I spoke on I Cor. vii, 29-31. It was a very cold day: we held our meeting in the house of Daniel Southall: the loss of a favourite child has awfully clouded the day of his prosperity. Ah! hair-hung, breeze-shaken worldly bliss, what art thou!

Saturday, 10. We rode to Edenton, and lodged at a tavern. After nineteen or twenty years, I preached in the court house, and many attended. I dined with Mr. Beesly, a printer, and supped with Mr. Constantine Luton, both Baptists. I found out Caleb and William Manning, nephews of my ancient friend Caleb Manning: these young men want preaching established. I now know why I came to Edenton; that I might feel for the people, and make an appointment of a preacher for them: but we must get a house of worship here of our own.

Monday, 12. At Yawpin chapel I preached on Luke xi, 9-13. I had a very serious, attentive people to hear: I believe God is amongst them.

I called upon Mr. Ross, a Baptist minister of the Gospel, much thought of: I found him in a feeble state of body: we prayed and parted in great affection. We had rain, and night came on before we reached brother Sutton's, twenty-eight miles: we crossed Perquimans upon a floating bridge. My mind is in great peace. To-day Humphrey Wood became my companion in travel.

Tuesday, 13. At Mr. Muller's, at Nags Head, I preached upon I Peter v, 10; we had a full house, and the truth was felt; I dined with mother Wood, and lodged with Mr. Samuel Whidbees; were this last family as good as they were kind, they might be perfect.

Wednesday, 14. I spoke on I John iii, 1-3, at Nixon-

⁴⁹ However, Asbury returned to this area on February 6, 1806, and January 21, 1810. (See *Journal* entries for those dates.)

ton Chapel: I had openings, and felt as if God was about to visit this people. In my subject, I showed,

I. The effects manifested by Divine "love" in the fruits produced by it, and the consolations flowing from it.

II. The progress of becoming, and the privileges of being the "sons of God."

III. The evidence furnished by the "sons of God" of their claim to sonship; they "purify themselves" from all sin by humble faith and holy obedience.

IV. The "world"—blind and wretched, "knowing not God," nor the real character of the Eternal Son of God, and mainly ignorant of the hearts, the exercises, the sufferings, the trials, and the heavenly consolations of the "sons of God."

Thursday, 15. At New Begun meeting house I preached, and was filled with my subject: the rich amongst the people came and offered gifts, but we did not receive them: how little do some folks know us! I lodged at Mr. F——'s; a cold night to me in a double sense.

Friday, 16. At the court house in Elizabeth City, Pasquotank county, I preached upon Matt. vii, 7-11: many heard, but few felt. I dined with Mr. Mitchell, a lone Methodist from Cornwall, Great Britain; Lot in Sodom. The site of this place is beautiful for its land and water prospects; and the situation is good for trade. We rode on to Camden, and had to beg a lodging of Mr. Joseph Sandlin, who belongs to the Baptists: these people carry the day here in respectability and numbers.

Saturday, 17. At the widow Capp's we had a small house, but well filled. I enlarged much upon the salvation of the world, including infants and adults of the Christian and heathen world: a Baptist might not think this is a kind return for a night's lodging; but it was

the truth. I lodged with Edward Bunnell, from New Jersey.

Sabbath, 18. I ordained Joshua Gambling and Nathaniel Brook, both of Currituck county, deacons in the local line. I baptized Mary Forbush: she had been brought up a Baptist. At William's chapel I was very unwell; we had a cold house, and cold people. After meeting I retired to Zachariah Morse's. Eight hundred miles from Augusta, Georgia.

FORTY-NINTH VISIT

(November 27-December 10, 1804; age 58)

ASBURY traveled from Virginia through Granville, Chatham, Montgomery and Anson counties to South Carolina. He was in his twentieth year in the episcopacy in December, 1804. He was accompanied by Joel Smith for some six hundred miles, a companion not listed by Tipple in *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road* (171). He baptized three persons and noted camp meetings had been held in the vicinity by one of his preachers.

As *Tuesday* was pleasant, the river low, and the wind moderate, I pushed forward to Edward Taylor's, Granville county, North Carolina—twenty-six miles; here I rested to refit. At this point, Joel Smith being unwell, consented to stop, after travelling with me six hundred miles, frequently afflicted and depressed by some peculiarities of both his constitution and country: I wished him to leave me.

Thursday, 29. We came to Edmund Taylor's senior: the aged people were happy, waiting with cheerful patience for the moment which was to change this mortal for an immortal state. On *Friday* we dined at Jesse Carter's, on the banks of Neuse, and crossed the

river at the Fish-dam Ford, and put up for the night with Lewis Moore (Granville County). Our road led us by the home of John Kinsborough, whom we visited: I was pleased to find that *the like precious faith* entailed upon the children, was now enjoyed by the children's children of those *who first trusted in God* thirty years ago.

Saturday, December 1. We came to Sihon Smith's, accompanied by Nathaniel Moore. I was glad to house here, and escape the rain. It is a cordial to my spirit to reflect, that although we had but one preacher on that circuit and good circuit of Tar, and that one was a young one, and esteemed by some only of moderate abilities, his labours have been signally blessed: it is true that local brethren helped faithfully; and there were some good seasons at camp meetings. My mind has great peace in God.

Sunday, 2. I preached: my subject was John i, 50. I was chilled for an hour after speaking; a fever succeeded this, and I was very ill through the night.

Monday, 3. I baptized three children of Squire Hinton's. I breakfasted with them. We rode on to the Redfield ferry, upon Haw River.⁵⁰ On *Tuesday morning* we breakfasted fourteen miles ahead, with brother Reeves, at the Hickory Mountain. I ordained William Masters a deacon. I dined and lodged with him: God has blest him—his twin sons, converted all the same time, are both called to preach the Gospel. On *Wednesday*, we came away twenty miles, to Bell's house and Mills, to see Alexander M'Caine: we had a night meeting, at which I saw extravagances frequently seen among our people. I believe, nevertheless, that the young people were sincere. On our way to Wiley Harris's, we stopped at Mr. Fuller's to dine. On *Friday*

⁵⁰ The Haw River runs through Chatham County.

I rode eight miles to breakfast with Ethelred Harris, and came on eighteen miles to John Randle's (Montgomery County). On *Saturday* I thought it well to rest. I have ridden, since leaving Baltimore, nine hundred and eighty-eight miles. At Randle's, I preached upon Gal. v, 9. In the evening I visited our former brother, my friend Tomkins: he was expelled for selling a slave. The Lord is amongst the coloured people in this family. On *Monday* we lodged at Thomas Shaw's, thirty-five miles distant: his wife still lamented the loss of a dear child.

FIFTIETH VISIT

(January 14-February 4, 1805; age 59)

ASBURY was accompanied by Bishop Whatcoat who was in increasingly poor health as they journeyed from South Carolina to Virginia. Asbury noted speaking to integrated congregations. He commented on the eastern crop of rice. The Tar is a major eastern river.

North Carolina's famed Plank Road of about 130 miles did not come into being until the middle of the nineteenth century. (*Guide to North Carolina Historical Highway Markers, Fifth Edition*, 29, 43, 44, 49, 55, 60, 61.) There were apparently no references in these accounts of Asbury to his traveling on the "rolling roads" of the 1760's and afterwards. The "rolling roads" was the old method of getting tobacco to market. Tobacco, a chief crop throughout most of North Carolina's history, was placed in hog-heads which were rolled to a dock and thence shipped to distant markets. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 114, 115.)

Monday, 14. We came to Mr. Lee's, dined, and came on, lodging at Lumberton, a town of about twenty families. On *Tuesday* we had another cold ride to Fayetteville. At the African meeting house, I preached

upon Heb. x, 38, 39: it was a time of feeling; but eleven o'clock was no hour for some folks. I was invited to preach in the State house, but it did not suit my mind at all; the object of our visit was a Methodist congregation and society. Home is home: ours is plain, to be sure; but it is our duty to condescend to men of low estate; and therefore I felt justified in declining the polite invitation of the Rev. Mr. Flinn, to officiate in his meeting house. I must take the road again. O, what sweetness I feel as I steal along through the solitary woods! I am sometimes ready to shout aloud, and make all vocal with the praises of his grace who died, and lives, and intercedes for me. Brother Whatcoat preached at night: I added a few words, a sort of gossiping exhortation.

Thursday, 17. We crossed Cape Fear, dined at Simpson's, and after night stopped at the widow Andres's,⁵¹ a stage house. On *Friday* we had a stormy morning; it paid us off for a time, and then cleared away. We came to Moore's creek: we were so near swimming, I dipped my heels: we stopped at Parker's, dined, and continued on to Negro Head: we had swamps and spring-tides; and behold! one of the bridges in Mr. Mellett's rice field was gone. Well for us, the overseer, one of our sheep, brought a ladder for us to walk upon, and by means of two planks laid together lengthwise, our horses passed over. We asked the housekeeper to let us stay; she consented, little thinking who we were, which, when she discovered, the poor thing was surprised and gladdened: we had a room, and prayed and talked with the blacks, and exhorted them. On *Saturday morning* we crossed North East before sunrise: we came to our own house to breakfast. Our chapel in Wilmington is elegant; sixty-six by thirty-six feet. Brother Whatcoat preached this morning.

⁵¹ This may have been the widow of John Andres of Bladen County.

Sabbath, 20. I preached on Titus xi,⁵² Brother Whatcoat spoke in the afternoon. Our enlarged house was filled with both colours.

Monday, 21. Many attended our meeting, though the weather was severe.

Tuesday, 22. We came to Top Sail. Brother Nixon and family preserved in the midst of disease and deaths. Dear Mrs. Campbell is gone home.

Wednesday, 23. We came to Lot Ballard's, forty-one miles. The weather was very cold in the morning, and there was so much ice in the way we could scarcely get along. Brother Whatcoat was afflicted with dysentery and bloody urine. On *Thursday* we rode sixteen miles to the widow Argate's: here is a change; the man is dead: the widow was attentive, and the blacks crowded to prayers.

Friday, 25. We reached Newbern,⁵³ twenty-six miles. On *Saturday* it rained: we have happily escaped it. We have made two thousand nine hundred and eighty miles since General Conference. We lodged at the widow Jones's; her dear James is gone: he appeared to be as healthy as any man in Newbern: he went off after a few days' illness, of a pleurisy in the breast. Lord, and am I yet alive!

Sabbath, 27, was an awful day of cold rain: few attended the worship of God. In my zeal I preached again at night: I exposed myself, and exerted myself.

Monday, 28. We came away through a cold wind to Neuse Ferry: Swift Creek swam us: and the waters of the greater stream floated us across in a tottering canoe, the horses alongside swimming: a twenty-eight miles' rode brought us to the widow Richard's to lodge. Arrived at Tar River we found it was blowing a storm: I was unwilling to cross. The flat was nearly filled with

⁵² There are only three chapters in this book. The context does not indicate what passage this may have been.

⁵³ See letter to Daniel Hitt, January 26, 1805.

water shortly after we put off: a boat came out to take us up: brother Whatcoat stood midleg in water; I had gained a plank and kept my feet dry; and it was well, as I had a touch of pleurisy, and had discharged blood yesterday evening; we came safe, and praised that God who in death oft had delivered us. Brother Whatcoat preaching at Washington in the evening.

Wednesday, 30. I preached to a congregation of very unfeeling people. The blacks have no gallery. The whites look upon us with contempt. O, Washington! Washington!

Thursday, 31. We came to Williamstown. I preached at brother Watt's house; my subject was Rom. v, 1-5. Roanoke was full.

Friday, February 1. We rode up to General Williams's, forty-eight miles from Washington. We must yet go sixty miles out of our way to go by Norfolk; poor men, and weary horses!

Saturday, 2. We stemmed the northwest wind, twenty miles, to cross the awful Roanoke. For a mile and a half from the ferry, the fences were swept away; during the freshet, cattle, and hogs, and some slaves, had been carried off: its proud waves were stayed when we arrived. We rode thirty-two miles to Joseph Penner's, Northampton, without seeing the inside of a house. I was most severely penetrated with cold; and my bowels were disordered. We had snow and cold on the *Sabbath day*, and we were glad to rest. The people came to meeting, and we delivered our testimony.

Monday, 4. The day was excessively cold: the icy, frozen roads endangered limbs and life itself. We kept on. At Murfreesboro we had a meeting at the house of the widow Merideth; I spoke to them from I Cor. v, 13-17.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ There are only thirteen verses in chapter 5. This may have been II Cor. 5:13-17, which passage Asbury often used.

FIFTY-FIRST VISIT

(February 26-March 11, 1805; age 59)

ASBURY came from and returned to Virginia, traveling primarily in Granville County. Granville County was named in honor of Lord Richard Granville, one of the eight Lords Proprietors who held the vast Granville District—the largest area ever held by one man in all North Carolina history until the American Revolution. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 96.)

Asbury presided over the Virginia Conference at Edmund Taylor's which apparently lasted about one week. Asbury noted four preachers located, but registered no complaint about their loss to the itinerant ministry, a major problem of his administration. He noted also the presence of many Baptists at service.

Jefferson began his second term as president in 1805.

Tuesday, 26. We directed our course to Salem, chiefly to see sister Taylor, at Howell Taylor's: (Warren County) she is a true yoke-fellow to Sally Jones: one is gone to rest, the other, confident in God, is suffering on patiently until she is released from her load of painful affliction. On *Wednesday* we crossed Taylor's ferry, and rode twenty miles to Edmund Taylor's, the seat of the Virginia Conference: we had rain part of the way. We felt a little serious—thinking our elder children and strong sons would leave us by location; and that we should have none but old tottering men, and green, unpracticed boys to take care of the plantation: but we have a great husbandman, Jesus, and a good God. On *Thursday* made preparations for conference.

Friday, March 1. We opened our yearly conference for Virginia, at Edmund Taylor's,⁵⁵ Granville county,

⁵⁵ See Asbury's letter to the members of Olive Branch Chapel, March 5, 1805, and his letter to the Virginia Conference, March 8, 1805.

North Carolina. We closed our sitting on *Friday evening* following. I have so frequently noticed the affairs of conference, and they are so common, that I will only observe of this, that we added fourteen preachers, and located four; our business we conducted in great peace, and we had preaching as usual. Our increase is one thousand nine hundred members.

Saturday, 9. We came to John Owen's, and spent an agreeable hour. I was pleased to see sister Owens; she is the daughter of my old friend, Daniel Grant. We took horse again, and hastened on through the warmth of Doctor R. A. Holland's, making thirty-three miles.

Sabbath, 10. I preached upon Isa. xl, 5. We had many Baptists to hear. It was an open time to me, although I was unwell. Brother Mead and Bruce exhorted.

Monday, 11. We came away to brother Pate's; and then to father Chapell's. We lodged with Joel Tucker.

FIFTY-SECOND VISIT

(October 22-October 24, 1805; age 60)

ASBURY AND WHATCOAT were traveling from Tennessee to South Carolina through the western section. They apparently came from Tennessee on October 21st and reached South Carolina on the 25th, a quick crossing. This was the second recorded visit in which there was no account of Asbury preaching a sermon. It was one of the briefest of the series. The leader sought to be on good terms with those affiliated with other denominations.

We came into North Carolina, and lodged with Wm. Neilson at the Hot Springs. Next day we stopped with Wilson, in Buncombe. On *Wednesday* I breakfasted with Rev. Mr. George Newton, Presbyterian minister,

a man after my own mind; we took sweet counsel together. We lodged, this evening, at Mr. William Fletcher's, Mud Creek. At Colonel Thomas's, on *Thursday*, we were kindly received, and comfortable entertained.

FIFTY-THIRD VISIT

(January 12-February 10, 1806; age 60)

ASBURY was accompanied by John Crawford on this visit from South Carolina to Virginia. Crawford was a less well-known companion than several others. He was not listed by Tipple in *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, (171). He included a sermon outline. He was often delayed by ferry schedules and occasionally missed appointments because of them. At times, he and his companions apparently operated ferries themselves.

Wilmington was founded in the late 1720's and early 1730's and had earlier names of New Liverpool, New Town, or Newton (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 94.) Asbury's reputation must have been well established as he had some 1,500 persons at one service. Winter weather was as pleasant as May.

On *Wednesday* we crossed Well's ferry after waiting an hour; a snowstorm kept with us from Pee Dee to Rockingham; here the people would have assembled, but there was a wedding afoot; this is a matter of moment, as some men have but one during life, and some find that one to have been one too many.

On *Thursday* a cold, cold ride of twenty miles without stopping, was as much as we could well bear; after warming we took the road again, and came to Smith's, twelve miles. This week we have had heat for the first of June; and cold and snow for January.

On *Friday* we reached Fayetteville; putting up with John Lumsden, near the African church. I felt that I had taken a deep cold. I was busy on *Saturday* in answering letters. Joseph Crawford, that he might not be idle, preached to the Africans in the evening.

Sabbath day, 12. Unwell; nevertheless, I took the pulpit.

Monday morning, we made a start for Wilmington, and came to the widow Anderson's forty-six miles. Next day we took the round-about way by the bridges, and made forty-five miles: to ride ninety-one miles within day-light, in two days, kept us busy; but we are safe in Wilmington. My affliction upon my breast was great.

Wednesday, 15. We rest. It is very cold; ice in the tubs.

Sabbath day, 19. I preached on that great subject, Coloss. i, 27, 28; we had about fifteen hundred hearers in our house of worship, sixty-six by thirty-three feet, galleried all around. There may be five thousand souls in Wilmington; one fourth of which number, it may be, were present. Joseph Crawford preached in the afternoon and at night. I gave order for the completion of the tabernacle and dwelling-house, according to the charge left me by William Meredith.

Monday, 20. On our way to Newbern we stopped with Mr. Nixon, at Topsail; his house and heart are always open to the faithful ministers of Christ. I have been greatly afflicted with cold, but exceedingly happy in God—I live in love.

On *Tuesday* we had a solitary ride to Lot Ballard's New River. Hail, prosperity! the chapel shaded; a revival amongst white and black: Lot lives in Jerusalem.

Wednesday, 22. A heavy storm of rain. I rode to Eli Perry's, son of John; here is a son of faith and prayer; I walked with his dear good father—now, I trust, in the paradise of God. I met elder Bruce; all our talk

is, What hath God wrought! In Beaufort, the Lord hath put forth his power: the whole town seems disposed to bow to the sceptre of the Lord Jesus, after being left and visited again, with in the last twenty years, by his faithful ministers.

Thursday, 23. We came into Newbern, twenty-three miles. The prospects here are good. The providence of God was manifested in our preservation to-day. Our horses took fright whilst in the wagon, and went off like fire: they happily struck, and locked a wheel on a poplar; the swingle-tree snapped, no more: less damage, if any, could scarcely have been done.

Saturday, 25. I have read the Jewish Antiquities. I have read Mungo Park's Travels in Africa.⁵⁶ Certain parts are so extraordinary, that it appeared like a romance. If true, he experienced astonishing hardships. It would seem by this narrative, that the Africans are in a state so wretched, that any sufferings with the Gospel, would be submitted to in preference. But I have my doubts.

Sabbath day, 26. I preached upon Heb. x, 37-39. It was a time and a testimony that was felt.

Monday, 27. It is as pleasant as May: the rivers are very low. We came with great ease to Washington, and lodged one night. Joseph Crawford did not let that awful town go unwarned.

On *Tuesday* we took the road and came to James Williams's, on Tranter's Creek. Griffith Floyd died in the Lord a few days ago. He was a man of affliction, and a man of God—but not a preacher. At the new chapel, I spoke on Wednesday, on I Peter iii, 14. I was very warm, upon death, the resurrection, judgment,

⁵⁶ Mungo Park (1771-1806), who secured his surgical diploma at Edinburgh and distinguished himself by his application to botanical science, was sent by the Africa Association in 1795 to discover the rise and termination of the River Niger. The story of his African travels was a much-read book and was translated into both French and German a year after its publication in English. (*Dictionary of National Biography*, XV, 218-21.)

and glory. I visited brother Knowis, and saw sister Hinton and the widow Williams,—on their way to glory.

Thursday, 30. We came very pleasantly to Williamstown. I was afflicted with a severe pain in my foot. On *Friday* I was busy planning; but in pain.

Saturday, *February* 1. We came twenty miles to the widow Williams's, near Taylor's ferry. On the *Sabbath* I preached on Acts xvii, 30, 31: "Now he commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

I. The nature of repentance—the whole of religion.

II. The universality of repentance—all orders, stations, characters, must *repent*.

III. The possibility of, and the provision made for repentance,—the gift of Christ—the death of Christ—the agency of the Spirit—the preaching of the Gospel—the means of grace.

IV. Necessity of repentance—from the considerations of the fall and our own actual transgressions, a future state and general judgment.

V. The time for repentance—now—this Gospel day of grace.

Monday, 3. We lodged at B. Pinner's, on the eastside of Roanoke, Northampton county.

Tuesday, 4. We lodged at the widow Meredith's, in Murfreesboro. We crossed Manney's Ferry next day, and came to the widow Bakers, Knotty Pine.

Thursday, 6. I preached at Daniel Southall's, Gates court house: my subject was Rev. iii, 5. I was pleased to see so many come out upon so short a notice; may they overcome! From Camden to Gates court house I compute four hundred and eighty miles.

Friday, 7. We came to Edenton. At Joshua Manning's. *Saturday*, rested, and read, and wrote. I begin to prepare my mind and my papers for the conference. On

the *Sabbath* I preached in the court house, upon 2 Cor. v, 20.

Monday, 10. We started and came rapidly along, calling to see Martin Ross, a Baptist minister, by the way. We lodged with Colonel Hamilton, Elizabeth City.

FIFTY-FOURTH VISIT

(September 24-October 8, 1806; age 61)

ASBURY was traveling from Tennessee to South Carolina, through eastern counties. Bishop Whatcoat had died in the home of Richard Bassett in Dover, Delaware on July 5, 1806, the first bishop in the service of American Methodism to do so. The burdens of episcopacy were again on Asbury's shoulders. On May 3, 1807, in New York, Asbury preached a sermon on the death of Whatcoat. (*Journal*, II, 537.) Potts' *Letters* preserves four Asbury letters to Whatcoat (49, 217, 244, 245).

Asbury ordained Samuel Edney in 1814, according to the record of a later visit, not in 1813. He preached at "a kind of camp meeting." The present Polk County did not come into existence until 1855. (Newsome and Lefler, *op. cit.*, 452.)

Wednesday, 24. We came to Buncombe: we were lost within a few miles of Killian's and were happy to get a school house to shelter us for the night: I had no fire, but a bed wherever I could find a bench; my aid, Moses Lawrence, had a bear skin, and a dirt floor to spread it on.

Friday, 26. My affliction returned: considering the food, the labour, the lodging, the hardships I meet with and endure, it is not wonderful. Thanks be to God! we had a generous rain—may it be general through the continent.

Saturday, 27. I rode twelve miles to Turkey Creek ⁵⁷ to a kind of camp meeting. On the *Sabbath*, I preached to about five hundred souls: it was an open season, and a few souls professed converting grace.

Monday, 29. Raining. We had dry weather during the meeting. There were eleven sermons, and many exhortations. At noon it cleared up, and gave us an opportunity of riding home: my mind enjoyed great peace, but my body felt the effects of riding. On *Tuesday*, I went to a school house to preach: I rode through Swannanoa River and Cane, and Hooper's Creeks.

Wednesday, October 1. I preached at Samuel Edney's.⁵⁸ Next day we had to cope with Little and Great Hunger Mountain. Now I know what Mills Gap is, between Buncombe and Rutherford: one of the descents is like the roof of a house, for nearly a mile: I rode, I walked, I sweated, I trembled, and my old knees failed: here are gullies, and rocks, and precipices; nevertheless, the way is as good as the path over the Table mountain—bad is the best. We came upon Green River,⁵⁹ crossed, and then hobbled and crippled along to Martin Edward's, a local preacher: my host had waited two years; I ordained him to deacon's orders. I feel as if I ought not to preach one sermon without being pointed and very full upon the doctrine of purity.

⁵⁷ The camp meeting on Turkey Creek near Leicester in Buncombe County, was started this year and continued for a hundred years. (Price, *op. cit.*, II, 80.)

⁵⁸ The Rev. Samuel Edney (1768-1844) was one of the founders of Methodism in western North Carolina. He was born in 1768, licensed to preach in 1791, and ordained by Asbury in 1813. In 1793 he was appointed to the Swannanoa Circuit which covered western North Carolina and a part of Tennessee, and it has been said that he was the first preacher definitely appointed west of the Blue Ridge. After his location he lived at the present Edneyville in Henderson County, where a historical marker has been erected. He married Eleanor (called Nellie) Mills, daughter of William Mills who established Mills Chapel and entertained Asbury in South Carolina. (See *Journal* entry for December 16, 1812.) Samuel Edney and others of the family are buried at Edneyville, and numerous descendants still reside in Henderson County and western North Carolina. The Edneyville Methodist Church is the continuation of the early Methodist society which met at the home of Samuel Edney. (Patton, *op. cit.*, 25.)

⁵⁹ Green River flows through present Polk County and into Broad River at the present Rutherford County line.

Saturday, 4. Crossed Green and Broad rivers, to attend a meeting in the woods in Rutherford county.⁶⁰ I preached on the *Sabbath*, on Psalms li, 8-11; and on *Monday* at eight o'clock in the morning, on I John i, 6, 7—it was a moving season. I made my lodging with brother Driskells on *Sunday night* and on *Monday* at Major George Moore's, twenty miles from the ground.

FIFTY-FIFTH VISIT

(January 23-February 12, 1807; age 61)

ASBURY was traveling from South Carolina through western counties to Virginia. Throughout much of his American ministry, he read and studied many of Wesley's works, especially the *Journal* and Sermons, commenting favorably on practically all of them. He derived great benefit from these readings; he could not read on horseback as did Wesley for years in England, mainly because conditions of most roads forbade doing so. (*Journal*, I, 411.)

Stith Mead, a Virginian and one of Asbury's chief supporters, was the traveling companion, on their only visit together. (Footnote, *Letters*, 192.)

Friday brought us through Lumberton, in North Carolina, lodging with Peter Gautier. We found ourselves obliged to ride on the Lord's day, through the cold, to Wilmington, crossing two rivers in a snow and hail storm. I have ridden four hundred and twenty miles in ten days and a half—cold, sick, and faint: it was as much as I could well bear up under.

Monday, 19. Busy making extracts from letters, and planning for conferences. *Tuesday*, occupied as yester-

⁶⁰ This meeting was probably held near the present town of Rutherford.

day; in the evening I preached. I feel that God is here. On *Wednesday* brother Kendrick preached. *Thursday*, reading and writing; Joshua Wells preached.

Friday, 23. I preached in the tabernacle, upon Matt. xi, 28-30. It was a time of some quickening. On *Saturday*, reading Wesley's Sermons, first volume; those who feel disposed to complain of the brevity of his notes, should recollect the wonderful amount and variety of his literary labours, practical and polemical, besides the care of all the Churches in three kingdoms.

Sabbath, 25. A *high day* on Mount Zion. At the rising of the sun, John Charles began the worship of the day; he chose for his subject Rom. viii, 1. At eleven o'clock I held forth on Heb. iii, 12-15. I spoke again at three o'clock on Isaiah lv, 6, 7. Stith Mead preached at six o'clock in the evening. O that by any means we may save some! On *Monday* and *Tuesday* still reading Wesley's Sermons: I have completed thirty nearly. On *Tuesday* evening I preached, and it was a serious time.

Wednesday, 28. We took our flight from Wilmington: what I felt and suffered there, from preachers and people, is known to God. At Nixon's, Topsail, I preached on 2 Pet. iii, 14. On *Thursday* I rode forty miles to the Richlands, and preached at Lot Ballard's. *Friday* evening found us at Perry's. *Saturday* brought us to Newbern: we had an awful storm of rain.

February 1. I preached on *Sunday* at eleven o'clock.

Wednesday, 4. We have used diligence in our conference labours⁶¹ and have been faithful to the pulpit. I preached to-day on 1 Cor. ii, 5. On the *Sabbath* I preached to the whites, on John iii, 16; and to the

⁶¹ It was at this conference that the resolution, begun by the Baltimore Conference, was presented in favor of calling a General Conference of seven delegates from each annual conference to meet in Baltimore in 1807 for the purpose of strengthening the episcopacy. The plan was vigorously opposed by Jesse Lee in the Virginia Conference and it received only fourteen votes. Since the plan required the vote of all of the conferences it was defeated by Virginia's vote. All the other conferences reported in favor. (Bennett, *op. cit.*, 505-9.)

Africans, on Eph. vi, 5-8. Much might be said; I will only observe that we have sixty-seven preachers, and have added three thousand one hundred and fifty-nine to this conference bounds; we have, since our sitting here, known that there are twenty whites converted, and as many blacks: these blessings on our labours pay all expenses, reward all toils on the midst of suffering and excessively cold weather.

Monday, 9. I gave them my last discourse on Psalms xxxiv, 15, 16; and next day came away to the widow Williams's. On *Wednesday* at Pinner's. The Roanoke had broken away with its ice. *Thursday* brought us to Murfreesboro: I preached upon 1 John iii, 10, 11. It was the day after the celebration of Washington's funeral: many of the *respectables* had come to town on this occasion, and still remained; these attended. I lodged at Doctor Key's.

FIFTY-SIXTH VISIT

(October 17-October 22, 1807; age 62)

ASBURY AND DANIEL HITT crossed the state from Tennessee to South Carolina, by way of Saluda Gap. They were again at the home of Daniel Killian on one of the shortest accounts of a visit to the state.

Daniel Hitt (1770-1825), the presiding elder of the Baltimore District in 1806, had been appointed as Asbury's riding companion. He was book agent from 1808 to 1816. (Footnotes, *Journal*, II, 521, 558.)

On *Saturday*, we rode to Killian's.

Sabbath, 18. At Buncombe court house I spoke from 2 Kings vii, 13-15. The people were all attention. I spent a night under the roof of my very dear brother in Christ,

George Newton, a Presbyterian minister, an Israelite indeed. On *Monday* we made Fletcher's; next day dined at Terry's,⁶² and lodged at Edward's. Saluda ferry brought us up on *Wednesday* evening.

FIFTY-SEVENTH VISIT

(January 13-January 24, 1808; age 62)

ASBURY AND MCKENDREE were traveling from South Carolina to Virginia. McKendree was elected bishop in 1808 as the first native-born American bishop. He was instrumental in initiating the "cabinet" of American Methodism. The presiding elder became so valuable in giving advice to bishops that Asbury invited their opinions as to appointments. (Garber, *The Romance of American Methodism*, 125.) This was especially true when the ranks of preacher increased and Asbury knew some of them less intimately.

Note his balancing life's experience in philosophical moments of writing. While in Ohio and elsewhere, he worked on a hymnbook for American Methodists. (*Journal*, II, 556, 558, 559.) Tipple in *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road* (105) stated that Asbury himself was a fine singer. He addressed a crowd that had had only three hours' notice of his appearance.

Wednesday, 13. We reached Mecklenburg, and stayed with our friend McKamie Wilson, a Presbyterian minister,⁶³ where we were comfortably and kindly ac-

⁶² Terry lived in the upper part of Greenville County near Marietta; he is shown on the old maps and is not to be confused with the Terry at Fork Shoals twenty miles below Greenville.

⁶³ The Rev. John McKamie Wilson was pastor of the Philadelphia and Rocky River Presbyterian churches, 1801-31. Both churches survive. The Philadelphia Church dates from 1770 and is at Mint Hill, about twelve miles east of Charlotte. Rocky River Church is a few years older and is in Cabarrus County, fifteen miles northeast of Charlotte and a few miles south of Con-

commodated. On *Thursday* we found the main branch of Rocky River unfordable. We stopped at Squire M'Curdey's.⁶⁴ Friday brought us through Concord to Savage's. Yesterday was very damp and cold; to-day there is ice, probably an inch thick. On *Saturday* we set to breakfast with the Rev. John Brown, a Presbyterian minister in Salisbury: thence we came away to John Hitt's. I have preached to his father and mother, who have now fallen asleep: the grandson, Jacob, son of John, feeleth as if he had a call to preach. In this journey, on the one side I may put down cold, hunger, rain, floods, frost, bad roads, and a lame horse; on the other, prayer, patience, peace, love; the balance is greatly in my favour.

Sabbath, 17. At Hitt's, I gave them a sermon, from Heb. iv, 9. Next day we pushed away, thirty miles, to Charles Clayton's. My spirit is greatly grieved with the ungodly children of this family, particularly one who has fallen from grace. On *Tuesday*, I preached at Joshua Clayton's, on Heb. iii, 7, 8. Joshua Clayton has no children to grieve me. The loving old souls in this

cord. Wilson lived in Cabarrus County near the Mecklenburg County line between the two churches.

Two plaques have been placed in historic Philadelphia Presbyterian Church within the last decade. In 1954, a plaque with the following inscription was placed inside the building:

"In memory of Adam Alexander, John Ford, John Queary, Signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, May 20, 1775, Charlotte, North Carolina. Placed by the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, January, 1954. Three of the organizing elders of the Philadelphia Presbyterian Church. 1770."

In 1961, a plaque with the following inscription was placed at the entrance of the same church:

"Philadelphia Presbyterian Church. Originally Clerk Creek Church. Fifth Colonial Church in Mecklenburg County. Organized 1770. First Pastor Rev. David Barr. Erected by National Society Colonial Dames of America in the State of North Carolina. 1961."

Earlier, a memorial window to Mr. Wilson, with whom Bishop Asbury was acquainted, was placed in the church containing this inscription:

"To the Glory of God and in Grateful Memory of Rev. McKamie Wilson, D.D. Born 1769. Died 1831. For 31 years the Faithful and Devoted Pastor of this church. 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and they that turn many unto righteousness as the stars forever and ever.'"

(Correspondence, Rev. Russell M. Kerr, Philadelphia Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, May 15, 1964.) (Carroll)

⁶⁴ This was Captain Archibald McCurdey, who lived in Mecklenburg County. (*Heads of Families*, 162.)

house are early Methodists from Maryland. I ordained E. Breyer and Robert Field. We went over to father Douls's, on *Wednesday*. My ride over hard roads, on my poor, lame mare, was a trial for me. We crossed the Yadkin, at Clement's bridge—well-constructed and well-secured. In three hours' notice at Daub's we had a large congregation, to whom I spoke a few words on Rom. xii, 2. We came through Haverstown (having my lame mare shod), to Germantown. Both these villages are small; the first may have thirty families in it, the other about half the number. We lodged at Mr. Ennall's, where we have a small society; the grandfather left us, but the grandson is a preacher in the Connexion. On *Friday* we rode through the rain ten miles to breakfast at Brooks's. Amidst all my little difficulties my soul is very happy in the Lord. The prospects in the highland circuits are very good. On *Saturday* we were water-bound by the Mayo branches. We called a congregation at night. We set out on *Sabbath* morning, and had a most severe ride, cross—the first, second, and third branches of the Mayo river.

FIFTY-EIGHTH VISIT

(October 25-November 14, 1808; age 63)

ASBURY was accompanied by McKendree and Boehm. The party traveled from Tennessee through western counties to South Carolina. Asbury knew of camp meetings in Georgia and the Carolinas. At this stage of his ministry, he was still practicing fasting, dating from his first visit. He was also working on a hymnbook. Asbury crossed the mountains by way of Cooper's Gap, one of the major mountain passes used as early as 1788 in visiting Tennessee.

Here is a touch of Asbury's gentle humor: "We rode to Rivanna County (Virginia): I have seen the hot, warm,

sweet, yellow, red, and now have passed the green springs.”
(*Journal*, II, 249.)

On *Tuesday* we rode twenty miles to the Warm Springs; and next day reached Buncombe, thirty-two miles.⁶⁵ The right way to improve a short day is to stop only to feed the horses, and let the riders, meanwhile, take a bite of what they may have been provident enough to put into their pockets. It has been serious October to me. I have laboured and suffered; but I have lived to God.

Saturday, 29. We have rested for three days past. We fell in with Jesse Richardson: he could not bear to see the field of Buncombe deserted by militia men, who fire a shot and fly, and wheel and fire, and run again: he is a veteran who has learned to “endure hardness like a good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ.” On *Sunday* I preached in Buncombe court house, upon I Thess. i, 7-10. I lodged with a chief man, a Mr. Erwin.⁶⁶ Henry Boehm went to Pigeon Creek to preach to the Dutch.⁶⁷ On *Monday* I went to David Jay’s; I thought I was unknown, but the woman of the house, the mother of seven children, quickly told me I had joined her in matrimony to her present husband. Here we met with Daniel Asbury; great news from Georgia, South and North Carolina! Thirty, or forty, or fifty souls converted at camp meetings; but in Old Virginia the work is still

⁶⁵ Warm, or Hot, Springs was then in Buncombe County. Asbury’s references to Buncombe meant the Buncombe courthouse, or Asheville.

⁶⁶ This was Henry Erwin.

⁶⁷ Henry Boehm had left the two bishops at John O’Haver’s campground in Cooke County, Tennessee, and had made a detour to preach to the German-speaking people on the Pigeon River of western North Carolina. He preached six times and then hastened to overtake the bishops at the Buncombe courthouse. He spent a night at Barnard’s public house in the present Madison County near Marshall (see note under November 2, 1802) where he preached to the family. He failed to overtake the bishops at Asheville but found them at the Rev. Samuel Edney’s on Monday, November 2. This date, however, does not agree with Asbury’s *Journal*. (Boehm: *Reminiscences*, 210, 211.)

greater, and brother Bruce's labour's have been blessed in an extraordinary manner.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, November, 1, 2, 3. I rested, read, and preached but once. On *Friday* we descended the heights of Cooper's Gap, to our friend David Dickey's;⁶⁸ fasting, and the labour of lowering ourselves down from the mountain top, have made us feeble. Bishop M'Kendree preached upon, "Cast not away your confidence." On the *Sabbath* brother Boehm spoke in the morning at eight o'clock; I preached from Matt. xvii, 5; exhortations followed, and brother Boehm ended our Sabbath labours by preaching at night, when there was a considerable move. We came away on Monday by Rutherford court house to G. Moore's. At Moore's chapel on *Tuesday* I preached from Colossians ii, 6. Henry Boehm spoke at night: verily we had a shout! Bishop M'Kendree preached at Lucas's chapel upon Little Broad, and we lodged at Lucas's. A ride of forty miles brought us next day to William's, in Lincoln. I preached on *Friday*. My mind hath great peace, but my body is weak. The prospects are reviving and cheering in the South Carolina Conference, and they will grow every year. On *Saturday* I preached. I ordained Samuel Smith and Enoch Spinks. The *Sabbath day* was windy and cold; I had taken an emetic, and kept the house.

Monday, 14. Rode thirty-three miles, hungry, cold, and sick, to Harrison's,⁶⁹ Mecklenburg county.

⁶⁸ Dr. David Dickey, physician and representative in the General Assembly, lived on Maple Creek a few miles west of Rutherfordton. The house is still standing. (Griffin: *op. cit.*, 78.)

⁶⁹ Harrison Chapel is located five miles south of Pineville in Mecklenburg County, near the South Carolina border.

FIFTY-NINTH VISIT

(January 11-February 8, 1809; age 63)

HENRY BOEHM and McKendree were escorting Asbury through western counties from South Carolina to Virginia. Asbury baptized several and showed concern for the "Africans." He noted only three married preachers in the Virginia Conference. He left few comments on the reactions of preachers to their new stations. In this instance, "general contentment" prevailed over assignments.

Interestingly, Asbury was showing concern for the welfare of "Africans" at the time of Abraham Lincoln's birth. He had been in Kentucky a few days before the birth of the "Great Emancipator." One scholar has conjectured that his mother, Nancy Hanks, must have heard Asbury preach at one time.

His February 1st entry was unusually lengthy, inasmuch as most entries were becoming shorter in latter years.

James Madison took office as fourth American president in 1809.

Wednesday, 11, was cloudy and very cold; but we took horse and made it thirty-three miles to Lumberton, and stopped at the widow Thompson's: I am most at home when I am housed with the widow and the orphan. We reached Fayetteville on *Thursday*.⁷⁰ My limbs, my patience, and my faith, have been put to severe trial.

I preached in the morning on the *Sabbath*, and Bishop M'Kendree and brother Boehm after. Since *Friday morning*, I have been occupied with writing, forming plans, and occasionally reading. I baptized a daughter for Mr. Newby. Eli Perry came fifty-six miles for deacon's orders: I advised him to tell his father, a back-slidden Baptist preacher, that he (Eli) would set

⁷⁰ See letter to Zachary Myles, January 5, 1809.

apart once a month a day of fasting and prayer for his father's restoration.

We set out on *Monday* the solitary path on the north side of Cape Fear, to the widow Andrew's, forty-five miles: we were in the night, and I was very much disordered. *Tuesday* brought us to Wilmington, forty-five miles; again in the night, and by pain extreme. I was compelled to preach on *Wednesday* at eleven o'clock. I gave them a sermon also on *Thursday*. My body is in better health, and my mind enjoys great sweetness and peace. We had morning preaching on *Friday* at five o'clock, to about two hundred souls. We came away afterwards, and a ride of twenty miles brought us to the widow Nixon's: the dear old man, her husband, died in Georgia—died in prayer. I gave those present an exhortation and my evening prayers. *Saturday* brought us to New River; and next day, the *Sabbath*, I preached in our enlarged chapel, on Tim. ii, 3, 4. It was unusually warm, and so great a wind at night that it frequently waked me. We were most kindly and comfortably entertained at *Gaius Rowe's*: God is worshipped in this house: O! what a change is here!—the poor Africans, once oppressed, have now great privileges allowed them. We came to Adonijah Perry's⁷¹ on *Monday*: may he follow his father, who followed Christ! Newbern brought us up on *Tuesday*. I preached on *Wednesday*, and it was an open season: God will visit Newbern again. A cold ride brought us to Washington—a disagreeable place to me; but there are souls here, and God can convert and save them. We have a neatly finished house, in which I preached on *Friday* in great heaviness of body—it is a day of abstinence. I spent my *Saturday* at Williams's—a secluded house, and social family.

⁷¹ Adonijah Perry lived in Jones County. (*Heads of Families*, 144.)

Sabbath, 29. I preached at Williams's chapel on Habakkuk iii, 2. I felt myself in the spirit of the work. In the evening we had snow and hail. We set out on *Monday* and had a very disagreeable ride through deep swamps and snow. At Williamston I preached to a few people. A ride of thirty-two miles brought us to Tarboro on *Tuesday*.

Wednesday, February 1. Opened the Virginia Conference.⁷² We had eighty-four preachers present, sixty of them the most pleasing, promising young men; seventeen preachers were admitted; in all the conference there are but three married men. The high taste of these southern folks will not permit their families to be degraded by an alliance with a Methodist travelling preacher; and thus, involuntary celibacy is imposed upon us: all the better; anxiety about worldly possessions does not stop our course, and we are saved from pollution of Negro slavery and oppression.

Bishop M'Kendree preached an ordination sermon on *Friday*. On the *Sabbath* I gave them a discourse on *humiliation before God*. M'Kendree ordained eight elders, and I thirteen deacons. I suppose we have two thousand souls to hear us in the two churches, and our friends are very attentive to entertain us in their houses, abundantly better than we deserve. Our increase in members, unless we allow for a great waste by death, and loss by removals, is not very encouraging; the west and south have given more than three thousand each, whereas here it is not three hundred. We are defrauded of great numbers by the pains that are taken to keep the blacks from us; their masters are afraid of the influence of our principles. Would not an *amelioration* in the condition and treatment of slaves have produced more practical good to the poor Africans, than any at-

⁷² This session of the Virginia Conference, held in Tarboro, received a fraternal message from the prisoners in the penitentiary in Richmond. Stith Mead had been working among them. (Bennett, *op. cit.*, 546-54.)

tempt at their *emancipation*? The state of society, unhappily, does not admit of this: besides, the blacks are deprived of the means of instruction; who will take the pains to lead them into the way of salvation, and watch over them that they may not stray, but the Methodists? Well; now their masters will not let them come to hear us. What is the personal liberty of the African which he may abuse, to the salvation of his soul; how may it be compared?

We adjourned on *Wednesday*, to hold our next session in Petersburg, in Virginia. A general contentment appeared in the preachers with regard to stations. I came away instantly, and had a rapid ride of twenty-eight miles to Mr. Lisiomes, near Edward's ferry, upon Roanoke.

SIXTIETH VISIT

(c. October 28-October 31, 1809; age 64)

ASBURY had been westward to Ohio and came from Tennessee. He continued through western counties to South Carolina, across the "Alps." This was one of the briefest visits of the decade. He commented on the crowded living conditions in cabins and homes in which he was often entertained for several days. Elsewhere he commented on how this hampered his devotional life, rest, preparations and smooth ordering of his labors. He indicated inability to record a sermon.

Mr. Erwine was Henry Erwin. He was born in Virginia in 1773 and died in Bedford County, Tennessee, in 1833. He went to North Carolina in 1790 and was a merchant and innkeeper in Wilkesboro. He was a member of the House of Commons from Wilkes County and in 1800 was the first postmaster of Asheville. (Footnotes, *Journal*, II, 581, 582.)

The original North Carolina Constitution, written and adopted in 1776 and in effect without changes until 1835, provided for the North Carolina General Assembly to have two houses—a Senate and House of Commons. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 172.)

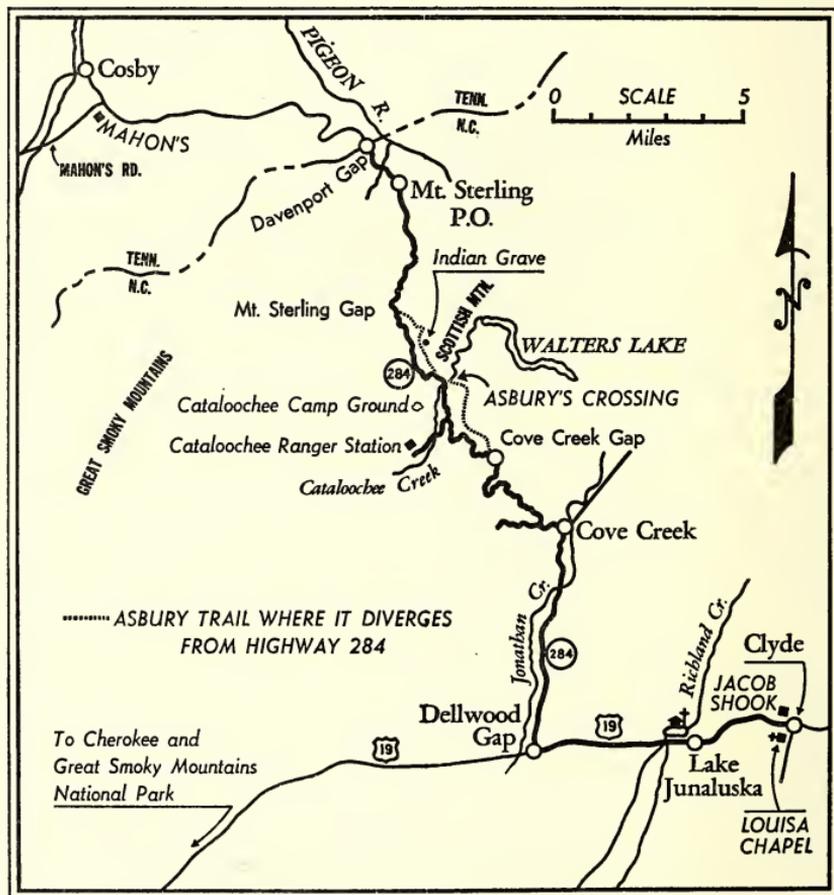
We crossed the French Broad, and fed our horses at the gate of Mr. Hoodenpile:⁷³ he would accept no pay but prayer; as I had never called before, he may have thought me too proud to stop. Our way now lay over dreadful roads. I found Mr. Barnard sick:⁷⁴ the case was a desperate one, and I gave him a grain of tartar and a few composing drops, which procured him a sound sleep. The patient was very thankful, and would charge us nothing. Here are martyrs to Whiskey! I delivered my own soul. *Saturday* brought us to Killian's. Eight times within nine years have I crossed these Alps. If my journal is transcribed it will be as well to give the subject as the chapter and verse of the text I preached from. Nothing like a sermon can I record. Here now am I, and have been for twenty nights, crowded by people; and the whole family striving to get round me.

Sabbath, 29. At Buncombe I spoke on Luke xiv, 10. It was a season of attention and feeling. We dined with

⁷³ Philip Hoodenpile lived on what was known as Hoodenpile Road, which ran from Hot Springs to the Tennessee line, and he had a contract to maintain a section of this road from Hopewell Hill to Tennessee. In 1796 he had represented Buncombe County in the North Carolina House of Commons, defeating Colonel Thomas Love, founder of Waynesville, largely because of his ability to play the fiddle. In the second race Love charged Hoodenpile was left-handed and could not play with his right, but the charge aroused class feeling, and he was defeated and did not again appear in public life. (Arthur, *op. cit.*, 128, 129, 134.)

⁷⁴ (For Barnard see note under November 4, 1802.) Henry Boehm, who again traveled with Asbury, says, "The old landlord was very sick and like to die. The bishop, who was a physician when necessary, always carrying medicine with him, gave Mr. Barnett a dose that almost instantly relieved him and he fell asleep. He was so thankful he would receive nothing for our entertainment." He adds that they passed over "mountains, rocks, stumps, trees, streams, awful roads, and dangerous passes" and "crossed to Buncombe, North Carolina, preaching every day." (Boehm, *op. cit.*, 265.) The present Highway 25-70 from Hot Springs to Asheville crosses a range of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Mr. Erwine, and lodged with James Patton:⁷⁵ how rich, how plain, how humble, and how kind! There was a sudden change in the weather on *Monday*; we went as far as D. Jay's. *Tuesday*, we crossed in haste to Mud Creek, Green River Cove, on the other side of Saluda.



⁷⁵ James Patton was a leading citizen but not a Methodist. He and his sons, James W. and John E., were large property owners in Asheville and ran the Eagle Hotel. Patton Avenue is named for them. (Arthur, *op. cit.*, 148, 149.)

CHAPTER FOUR

Francis Asbury's Sixtieth through Seventy-Second Visits: 1810-1816

Some Principal Events in North Carolina History: 1810-1816

- 1810 At third official United States Census, North Carolina had population of 555,500 (fourth in rank among states)
Centennial of founding of New Bern
Charter granted for State Bank of North Carolina, Raleigh
- 1812 June 18; United States Congress declared war on Great Britain
Otway Burns, Captain Blakeley and Colonel Benjamin Forsythe won fame in War of 1812
- 1813 July; British fleet landed at Ocracoke Island and Portsmouth
Sesquicentennial of Granting of Carolina to Lords Proprietors
- 1814 Close of War of 1812
December 24; Treaty of Ghent signed
- 1816 Archibald D. Murphey presented plan for better education for all white children to General Assembly

SIXTY-FIRST VISIT

(January 5-January 21, 1810; age 64)

ASBURY and MCKENDREE were traveling from South Carolina to Virginia through western counties. He manifested his deep, persisting interest in the welfare of Negroes and spoke at a new chapel.

Asbury's account of his initial visit was almost as lengthy as his accounts of the visits for the final five years. Elsewhere in the *Journal*, he occasionally addressed himself. He had almost ceased to record his sermon texts; only six specific texts were recorded from the visits from 1810 onward.

As to acquisition of a horse, he noted in a letter to John Dickins on June 18, 1798: "When I have wanted a horse or carriage my friends have provided for me." (*Letters*, 171.) This was not always the case with the bishop. On several earlier occasions, as here, he borrowed a horse and saddle. He gladly paid tribute to their usefulness. The first *Discipline* of the Church made mention of a circuit rider's horse. The rule laid down for preachers was this: "Be merciful to your beast. Not only ride moderately but see with your eyes that your horse be rubbed and fed." (Gross, *The Beginnings of American Methodism*, 66, 67.)

We have had a drop of rain now and then; but there has fallen much all around us. At Fayetteville on Friday I was very unwell; but I laboured through five letters.

Sabbath, 7. I preached in our enlarged house in the morning, and Bishop M'Kendree in the evening. We came rapidly next day forty-five miles to the widow Anderson's. At Wilmington I spoke in the new chapel on *Wednesday*: I find the work of God is going on here. We are well in temporals, and a most correct account has

been furnished us of all expenditures. I met the African elders, and gave command concerning the parsonage, the painting of the new fences, and the alteration and increase of the benches in the chapel. I recommended the purchase of a grave-yard, and gave a special charge concerning the poor: O, let me ever remember these! A general fast day for the African Churches was appointed. *Thursday* we rode forty-two miles to George Shepherd's. On *Friday* we stopped at Lot Ballard's, for refreshment and prayer, and fled away to Adonijah Penn's: we were an hour in the night. We reached Newbern on *Saturday evening*. I am in unceasing prayer. Erasmus Hill may possibly sell the Gospel for a rich wife, as three or four others have done. Should I say here, And thou, Francis, take heed? Not of this sin.

Sabbath, 14. I preached in the morning: my mind enjoys great peace. Bishop M'Kendree spoke in the afternoon. Our prospects here are not very encouraging. On *Monday* we hasted away across Neuse, at Street's ferry, to Mr. Allen's: we dined and put off again, crossing Swift Creek, and came in after night to the widow Carman's. A hard ride next day, of about fifty miles, brought us to the widow Williams's in the night; rain in plenty. Rose at five o'clock to our day's work; and Joseph Peppins received us, and sheltered us for the night. *Thursday*, up again at five o'clock, and passed through Murfreesborough to Jesse Battle's. Are we riding for life? Nay; but we must not disappoint people; we are men of our words. I feel for others in bad travelling; but little for myself. Our horses are always well fed, and never fail: Lord! thou preservest man and beast, I may truly say. My soul is strong in faith, and constantly engaged in prayer. On *Friday*, we crossed Knotty Pine at Manney's ferry; stopped a few minutes at Judith Baker's to talk and pray, and came to D. Southall's, at Gates court house. It is pleasant, but cold, cold!

We proceeded with borrowed horses to Edenton. It is still excessively cold. Lodged with William Hankins.

Sabbath, 21. Snow storm. We had twelve women and six men at the new chapel, and about one hundred Africans. I preached in the evening at Hankins's to about forty women; my subject was a comment on our Lord's conversation with Martha. E. Jones, by providence, has built us a house, and laid the foundation for an African chapel. *Monday* brought cold, and ice, and snow; it was well the horses were rough. We came in safety to Gates. We had dangerous travelling on *Wednesday*: lodged with D. Duke.

SIXTY-SECOND VISIT

(November 30-December 4, 1810; age 65)

MCKENDREE AND HENRY BOEHM were with Asbury on this visit, one of the shortest of the decade. They went from Tennessee to South Carolina, traveling in the vicinity of what is now the Lake Junaluska Assembly Grounds. The *Journal* accounts became shorter in general in latter years, as Asbury increased in age and responsibilities and his health declined. He thought this might be his final visit to Buncombe.

In recent years, an Asbury Trail Award has been established for Boy Scouts who follow the trail he took, in addition to other requirements.

Friday, our troubles ¹ began at the foaming, roaring

¹ The stream was Cataloochee Creek. On its bank the party gave oats to their horses and asked a blessing on their own meal of bread. John McGee drove the horses through the water and Asbury, McKendree, and Henry Boehm crossed on the log. On the North Carolina side they passed through a gate and came to the settlements on Jonathan and Richland creeks. (Boehm, *op. cit.*, 328.) The former was at or near the present Cove Creek in Haywood County, and the latter was probably at the mouth of Richland Creek and Pigeon River a few miles away. They may have followed Pigeon River or gone from Cove Creek up Jonathan Creek through Dellwood Gap and along Richland Creek where it now forms Lake Junaluska, since a better-known trail led that way.

stream, which hid the rocks. At Cataloochee I walked over a log. But O, the mountain—height after height, and five miles over! After crossing other streams, and losing ourselves in the woods, we came in, about nine o'clock at night, to Vater Shuck's.² What an awful day! *Saturday, December 1.* Last night I was strongly afflicted with pain. We rode, twenty-five miles, to Buncombe.

Sabbath, December 2. Bishop M'Kendree and John M'Gee rose at five o'clock, and left us to fill an appointment about twenty-five miles off.³ Myself and Henry Boehm went to Newton's academy.⁴ where I preached. Brother Boehm spoke after me: and Mr. Newton, in exhortation, confirmed what was said. Had I known and studied my congregation for a year, I could not have spoken more appropriately to their particular cases; this I learn from those who know them well. We dined with Mr. Newton: he is almost a Methodist, and reminds me of dear Whatcoat—the same placidness and solemnity. We visited James Patton;⁵ this is, perhaps, the last visit to Buncombe. *Monday.* It was my province to-day to speak faithfully to a certain person: may she feel the force of, and profit by the

² "Vater Shuck" was Father Shook, who lived on Pigeon River at the present town of Clyde, North Carolina. He was the son of a Dutch immigrant, George Shook (or Shuk), who came to America in 1740. Jacob was born in Northampton County, Pennsylvania, in 1749 and went with his father to Burke County, North Carolina, a few years later. After serving in the Revolutionary War he married Isabella Weitzell and in 1749 settled at the present town of Clyde. Jacob Shook is said to have built the first frame house in the county, and it was a preaching place. The house still stands, considerably enlarged, and the attic room has been preserved with chair and pulpit. Here was formed the first Methodist society in the county, which still survives. A road marker has been erected by the Methodist Historical Society. Jacob Shook died about 1832, and numerous descendants now reside in and near Clyde. At his death he bequeathed a tract of land for a camp-meeting site, and the appointment was long known as Camp Ground. It is now Louise Chapel, so named for Shook's unmarried granddaughter. It stands on the original camp-meeting property, and its gateway bears the date 1798. (Allen, *History of Haywood County*, 217-27, 593-96.)

³ McKendree and McGee preached at the home of the Rev. Samuel Edney, at the present Edneyville in Henderson County. The society here is still active. (See note under October 1, 1806.) Asbury and Boehm probably stayed in the home of Daniel Killian. (See note under October 11, 1801.)

⁴ For the Rev. George Newton and Newton's Academy see note under November 10, 1800. Asbury loved Newton "not only for his catholic spirit, but his strong resemblance to Bishop Whatcoat." (Boehm, *op. cit.*, 329.)

⁵ For James Patton see note under October 29, 1809.

truth. *Tuesday*, came thirty-three miles to Murray's at Green River.⁶

SIXTY-THIRD VISIT

(January 18-February 19, 1811; age 65)

ASBURY AND HENRY BOEHM came from South Carolina and journeyed to Virginia. He had been in America forty years. This was his last recorded visit to Raleigh. He made his only visit to Canada, the only one outside of the United States in July, 1811. He baptized children on the visit.

A conference was held in Raleigh with some 2,000 in attendance. Asbury wrote to Bishop Coke who was in England, on May 1811, while himself in New Jersey, concerning the visit to Raleigh: He wrote, in part: "In a line or two I can inform you the Virginia Conference sat in the State house at Raleigh, North Carolina (where you once preached.) At Conference there was a great time, citizens rich and poor, attended, day after day, night after night. Possibly 100 souls, subjects of awakening or converting grace, publick as well as private houses, all devotion and solemnity, rich and poor." (*Letters*, 449.)

Friday, came to John Martin's, Lumberton, and here I was willing to stay awhile, for the rain and cold had chilled me to the heart. *Saturday*, I am very unwell.

Sabbath, 20. I preached here, possibly for the last time; I spoke in great weakness of body; and having offered my service and sacrifice, I must change my course, and go to Wilmington. I have but a few days to make the one hundred and eighty miles in. I am happy

⁶ Green River is between Hendersonville and Rutherfordton. Asbury entered Spartanburg County, South Carolina, about where Chesnee is now located.

—my heart is pure, and my eye is single—but I am sick, and weak, and in heaviness by reason of suffering and labour. Sometimes I am ready to cry out, *Lord, take me home to rest!* Courage, my soul!

Monday, 21. We began our march, and my suffering from pain in the foot was sore indeed. Came into Amos Richardson's in the evening. The parents of this man died in peace. *Tuesday*, a ride of thirty miles brought us on to Alexander King's. I baptized this family, of whom the greater part are in society. The old people gave satisfactory evidence of a peaceful end. *Wednesday* we brought a storm into town with us. Wilmington is alive with commerce, and there is no small stir in religion. *Thursday*, brother Boehm preached. *Friday*, it was my duty to preach today. I am applied to for the plan of a new meeting house: this is a business of small difficulty; but who is to execute?

Sabbath, 27. I preached in the morning and afternoon. The congregations were large, and I felt my heart greatly enlarged towards them. *Monday*, rose at five o'clock, and moved off pretty soon; we cautioned the ferryman, who had placed his flat so as to be upset; he was obstinate, and would not alter her position: in jumped the horses, over went the skiff; our lives were endangered: the horses reached the opposite shore by swimming, and plunging through the mud got on dry land: our clothes and some of our books and papers were wetted, but not spoiled. We mounted and rode forward to Mount Misery, stopping to dry at Alexander King's: here we dined, and baptized some children. The evening shades closed upon us as we entered under the hospital roof of pious mother Turner, who lodged and fed us at the Wakkamaw Lake twenty-six years ago. *Tuesday*, we pushed on to Amos Richardson's, and thence after dinner to James Purdy's (Bladen County): I preached in the evening. I have been deeply afflicted

with an influenza; but God is with me, and supports me. *Wednesday* we had a cold ride to Newberry's: preached to a few people.

Friday, February 1. We reached this place this morning. Fayetteville; preaching at night. *Saturday*, I preached.

Sabbath, 3. Preached; our house is too small: preached in the afternoon; we must enlarge our house. I had a rude fall to-day, and it was a mercy that my back was not broken. *Monday*, we came over Cape Fear, lodging at Morgan's, on a solitary road. *Tuesday*, we came into Raleigh.⁷ *Wednesday*, I enjoyed some very agreeable interviews with my brethren. *Thursday*, Conference begins this morning.

Sabbath, 10. I preached in the State house to about two thousand souls, I presume. We have had, and mean to have, whilst conference is in session preaching three times a day: meeting sometimes holds till midnight. *Saturday*, at ten o'clock we mounted our horses in the rain, and pushed on to Powell's bridge on the Neuse River: we stopped at the house of our friend Samuel Alston, (Warren County) who married the daughter of General Williams: this will hereafter be my stopping place. I believe there was much good done in Raleigh; and we, the preachers, are much indebted to the people for their kindness to us.

Sabbath, 17. I started on my journey this morning, contrary to my usual practice. At Benjamin Sherwood's we stopped a minute, and called the family to prayer. Came at night to Major Taylor's. *Monday*, my kind en-

⁷ Asbury, Thomas L. Douglas, and Henry Boehm stayed with William Glendenning in Raleigh during the sessions of this conference. Glendenning had gone off with O'Kelly and later became a Unitarian. Asbury and McKendree presided over this conference, which had fifty members present. Philip Bruce, Thomas L. Douglas and John Buxton were appointed a committee to prepare rules to regulate the conference. They again took a collection for the brethren in New England. There were forty six circuits, and eighty-two preachers received appointments. (Bennett, *op. cit.*, 563-64.)

tertainer and his family made me promises to be henceforth for God; I left them with strong feelings of interest for their welfare. *Tuesday*, we reached Warrington: I must needs preach in William Ruffin's large tavern room.

SIXTY-FOURTH VISIT

(January 14-February 5, 1812; age 66)

ASBURY was escorted by Henry Boehm from South Carolina through western counties to Virginia. He baptized on the visit and showed sign of weariness. He noted a winter hail-storm and ferries an obstacle to travels.

The War of 1812, termed by some historians the "Second War for Independence," began in June. There were few references to the hostilities in the bishop's declining years. North Carolina's direct involvement in the war was limited, apart from being called on for 14,000 troops. On July 13, 1813, the British fleet under the command of Admiral Cockburn landed at Ocracoke Inlet and destroyed some property before it sailed away. (Lefler, *op. cit.*, 200.)

Tuesday. We dined at Lumberton, and went forward to Mark Russell's, where I spoke to a few people. *Wednesday*, came to Fayetteville. We have had a rude ride of great bodily suffering from Georgetown: but my mind enjoyed perfect peace, and constant prayer.

Thursday, 16. We made this a sacramental day. What will not perseverance and management do! Here we have built a neat little chapel, costing but twelve hundred dollars, one thousand and fifty of which is paid. *Friday* we had a cold ride to Amos Richardson's. *Saturday*, thirty miles' riding brought us to King's.

Sabbath, 19. We crossed the river in a storm: at the

second ferry it was worse, and we hardly escaped the deep, as it would seem; we arrived, nevertheless, time enough at Mount Zion chapel to bear our testimony from Ephes. v, 14-16: it was open vision. I had, after meeting, a word with the whites and Africans of the society—*plain talk*: Boehm preached in the evening. We for two; this is no novelty to us. I gave our sister were cribbed in our quarters at night—a narrow bed Richards a grant of a lot thirty feet square, in the churchyard. Baptized Captain Cameron's son Alexander. A ride of twenty miles in excessive cold brought us to Adonijah Perry's. Our host was sick, and I prescribed for him. *Friday*, a day of abstinence: wrote letters. *Saturday*, we came into New Bern in the rain.

Sabbath, 26. I preached morning and evening, and met the whites and Africans of the society. *Monday*. A powerful rain accompanied us to Guilford,⁸ twenty-six miles. Here I baptized a Mr. Murphy and his three children. I feel the effects of our damp ride. We called a meeting at Greenville on Tuesday, at our sister Brook's: as there were few men present, I adapted text and sermon to the women. We have no chapel here, although we have had a society thirty years. At Mr. Freeman's we dined, talked, and prayed. It began to rain at one o'clock, and we started away to Edward Hall's; we dare not loiter or wait for fair weather. *Thursday*, we halted, concluding to give up Edenton for Tarboro. There are great freshets in the rivers, as we hear. Ah! the ferries! we shall have them, sink or swim. *Friday*, reading, writing, and taking medicine.

Saturday, February 1. I passed the day in prayer, peace, love and joy.

⁸ The present Guilford in North Carolina is about two hundred miles from New Bern, the section in which Asbury was traveling at this time. Greenville is about forty-three miles from New Bern, but there is no indication as to the actual place to which Asbury referred as "Guildford."

Sabbath, 2. At Tarboro I preached to a serious, attentive congregation. I preached in the afternoon also at brother Hall's. *Monday*, I breakfasted with Mr. Austin, an English Baptist; his wife with us; my business with him was to charge him most solemnly to hold a perpetual prayer meeting every Wednesday evening in his house. The lowlands about Tarboro bridge are under water. We came thirty miles to Colonel John Whitaker's: here I had occasion to give a solemn and personal testimony, and it was *publicly* given. On *Tuesday* we had a meeting of a few neighbours in Pinner's family. We have made seven hundred miles since we left Camden, through frost, floods, cold, and hunger; poor men, and poor horses! Well, this life is not eternal. *Wednesday*, came to Murfreesboro, dined with the respectable widow Meredith and her children, prayed, and continued forward to Jesse Battle's; a hailstorm overtook us on the way. This house is in affliction.

SIXTY-FIFTH VISIT

(December 2-December 6, 1812; age 67)

ASBURY was traveling from Tennessee to South Carolina. This was one of the briefest visits of the decade. "Little Fox" was the name of his horse on the visit—others that we know were "Jane" and "Spark." (Tipple, *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 286.) Daniels in *History of Methodism* (519), apparently unaware of these names, lamented that none of the early church historians recorded names and fame of the horses of the servants of the Church.

Tipple in *Francis Asbury* (113) stated that during the War of 1812, when the presence of the British not far distant, was referred to, Asbury said with great emotion: "They have no business here. Let them go home from whence they came. I shall pray against them with my might; that is all I can do."

We came on *Tuesday* a straight course to Barnard's, dining in the woods on our way.

Wednesday, December 2. We went over the mountain, twenty-two miles, to Killian's.

Thursday, 3. Came on through Buncombe to Samuel Edney's; I preached in the evening. We have had plenty of rain lately. *Friday*, I rest. Occupied in reading and writing. I have great communion with God. I preached at father Mills's.⁹

Saturday, 5. We scaled the mountain—the rise may be a quarter of a mile, the descent much more gradual, and about a mile in length. We had a keen, cold wind, mingled with snow. Green River was full and rapid, but little Fox darted like a fish up the stream: we stopped at Marvill Mills's,¹⁰ chilled indeed.

Sabbath, 6. I preached at Mill's Chapel, after meeting we went home with John Mills, White Oak Creek. Ah, John, thy pious, praying mother! think often of her.¹¹

⁹ William Mills (1746-1834) was one of the leading Methodists of the area. He lived in Henderson County, North Carolina, and Mills River, Mills Gap, Mills Spring, and other places bear his name. He was the son of Ambrose Mills, who was born in England around 1722 and who lived on Green River in Rutherford County during the Revolutionary War. The father was hanged as a Tory with others in October, 1780, at Biggerstaff's Fields near Rutherford after being captured at Kings Mountain. William Mills served as a major under his father in that engagement. William married Eleanor Morris and had two sons, John and Marvill, and five daughters. His daughter Eleanor, or "Nellie," married the Rev. Samuel Edney, pioneer Methodist preacher in the Blue Ridge region. William Mills and other members of his family are buried at Edneyville, and the Methodist church there is the continuation of Mills Chapel which he founded. Members of the Mills family became prominent in North Carolina history and still live in the area. (See note under October 1, 1806; Patton, *op. cit.*, 25; Griffin: *History of Old Tryon and Rutherford Counties*, 37, 38, 69, 70.)

¹⁰ Marvill Mills was a son of William Mills, brother of John and "Nellie," wife of the Rev. Samuel Edney. He lived in Rutherford County, and he and his descendants had a large share in developing Mill Springs in Polk County. (Patton, *op. cit.*, 25.)

¹¹ John Mills was the son of William Mills and brother of Mrs. Samuel Edney. (See notes under October 1, 1806, and December 3, 1812.)

SIXTY-SIXTH VISIT

(January 12-February 22, 1813; age 67)

HENRY BOEHM was Asbury's traveling companion through eastern counties from South Carolina to Virginia. Boehm traveled with Asbury a total of more than 40,000 miles on the American scene, a greater distance than any other companion. (Tipple, *Francis Asbury: The Prophet of the Long Road*, 14, 237.)

Later in 1813, in New Hampshire, Asbury prepared his will and Testament and appointed executors. He continued to baptize and ordained three men. There were scant references to the War of 1812. He became more and more feeble and was delighted to be able to wear his leather shoes again. He had to be carried into church twice to preach.

William Capers was born in Carbondale, Pennsylvania on January 26, 1790; received into the South Carolina Conference in 1808; ordained bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1846. He died in Anderson, South Carolina on January 29, 1855. (Daniels, *op. cit.*, 630.) (H. T. Hudson in *The Methodist Armor* (271) stated that William Capers was born in South Carolina.)

Asbury had ambitions for authorship which he was not always able to fulfill; he noted editing Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest* on the visit. (See Tipple, *op. cit.*, 91-103.) He was engaged in reading it during his initial and fourth visits.

The office of presiding elder had first official recognition in 1792. (Wheeler, *op. cit.*, 30.) The term was still in use in the Western North Carolina Conference in the author's lifetime.

James Madison began his second term as president in 1813.

Tuesday, I was glad to stay at M'Neil's, in Lumberton. Applied a blister to my foot: Henry Boehm preached. *Wednesday*, came in great pain, and very

unwell, to B. Russell's. I went to bed in a high fever and a mild medicine. *Thursday*, came on to Fayetteville through a cold, heavy rain. I blistered my foot again. The Lord blesses me with patience.

Sabbath, 17. They carried me into the church. I ordained two deacons and one elder. I failed in strength after preaching, and Rev. Mr. Turner, a Presbyterian, concluded our meeting by prayer. I came home, applied three blisters, and retired in a high fever in bed. A fourth blister completed the work. *Tuesday* and *Wednesday*, closely confined.

Thursday, 21. A bitter cold ride of thirty miles brought us to James Purdy's. I have a high fever, and am in great pain. *Friday*, a heavy ride of thirty-six miles brought us to King's. I anticipated a night of fever and pain. *Saturday*, to Wilmington: there is little trade here, and fewer people; of course there is less sin.

Sabbath, 24. I was carried into the church, preached, and met the society. I preached again in the evening. A bread poultice has procured me a mitigation of pain. Lord, be merciful to me in temporals and spirituals! William Capers is married—he twenty-three, his wife, eighteen.

Tuesday, 26. We made a journey of twenty-two miles to the widow Nixon's—a widow of Sarepta, and a mother of Israel. I have a fever, and swelled feet. We had a small congregation. *Thursday*, we took the road in the rain.

Friday, 29. Called a meeting at Mr. Shepherd's. Blessed be God! I have lived to see the third generation of father Ballard. He was the first man that joined us at New River: now his grandson is in the Church, and in Christ. My trials have lately been great. We stemmed the cold wind to Lot Ballard's, eighteen miles. I suffer violent pain in my right foot.

Sabbath, 31. It rained heavily; nevertheless, we held meeting at Richland chapel. I rested above an hour, on my knees, preaching, and in the ordination of Lot Ballard a deacon, and in prayer. We retired from the meeting to G. Rowe's, a son of affliction and consolation in God. We are in a palace—peace, and rich accommodation. Was it with us as in former times, we should be flying north; but we are fast bound by lameness, I have filled all my appointments, and answered the letters received. I neglect not all opportunities of instruction and prayer.

Monday, February 1. Lowering, cold day. *Tuesday,* I preached at Rowe's to about sixty souls. What a land of this of widows; and men sick, dying, and drunken! We came to John Shine's on Wednesday; we found his wife ill, and prescribed for her as well as we might. After dinner and prayer, came away to the widow Bryan's. Her husband is dead, and her son sick: we prayed, ventured to prescribe for the diseased subject, and continued onward to Adonijah Perry's.

Thursday, 4. Once more I put on my leather shoes. O, the sufferings I have endured—patiently, I hope! One more warning I gave these people, on Heb. ii, 1-4; it is perhaps the last. I am occupied in marking for reprint about three hundred pages of Baxter. *Friday,* we rode round to Thomas Lee's. *Saturday,* at rest.

Sabbath, 7. We had about two hundred souls, white and black, to hear us. I was two hours preaching, meeting the society, baptizing and ordaining Roscoe Lipsey. I gained a fever and a clear conscience by my labours. Alas! it is the time of Jacob's trouble. *Monday.* I am in Newbern on crutches. *Tuesday,* reading, receiving the visits of presiding elders, and writing letters.

Wednesday, 10. We opened our conference in sister Tenkard's elegant schoolroom: we had great order, great union, and great dispatch of business. The in-

crease here in membership this year is seven hundred; but ah! deaths and locations—then the preachers!

Sabbath, 14. I was called upon to preach. *Thursday*, conference rose and we came away, twenty-six miles, to Murphy's. *Friday*, excessively cold. A ride of fifty miles brought us to Edward Hall's. *Saturday*, we started in the rain, crossing Tar River, and driving in our faces: we were glad to stop at James Hunter's; my feet begin to swell again.

Sabbath, 21. Came in to Halifax, calling upon the widow Jones, mother of the Shaker of that name. I preached to a few whom the weather could not keep back. After meeting, and taking food, we directed our course to brother Barratt's. We wished to cross the river whilst the weather would permit: I fly, and a strange flight it is for a sick cripple.

Monday, 22. I halted at James Barratt's, and ordained John Moore, Edward Price, and Edward Drumgoole, one after the other, as they happened to drop in; I lectured in the evening.

SIXTY-SEVENTH VISIT

(c. October 23-October 24, 1813; age 68)

ASBURY traveled from Tennessee to South Carolina through western counties. This was one of the briefest visits of the entire series and one of the shortest accounts of a visit. There are scant references to the War of 1812. He gave an interesting resume of his life work in a letter written at Fayetteville on January 16, 1813, in part: "In the 68th year of my age, 52nd year of my ministry, 42nd year of my American mission, I have lived to see above 200,000 Methodist fellowship, 3000 local laborers, 700 travelling laborers. Ohio, Tennessee, South Carolina Conferences, these three, held in the last of the year 1812, to be returned

1813 (members), increase 18,000! beyond all calculation." (*Letters*, 468.)

We visited the Bolings, the Nelsons, and the Barnets. I feel pleuritic pains in the breast; but they must wear themselves away.

Sabbath, 24. I preached in great weakness. I am at Daniel Killian's once more.

SIXTY-EIGHTH VISIT

(c. January 3-January 23, 1814; age 68)

ASBURY was accompanied by Bishop McKendree. They attended the South Carolina conference at Fayetteville. Asbury had learned of the sailing of Bishop Thomas Coke on a missionary journey to Ceylon, Java and the Cape of Good Hope.

Wheeler, writing of Coke's service to American Methodism in *1,000 Questions and Answers Concerning the Methodist Episcopal Church* (199), stated: "Coke's last exercise of episcopal authority was at the General Conference of 1804. He never afterward visited the United States. From 1784 to 1804 he made nine voyages to this country, remaining about two years and ten months in all. During these twenty years he retained his connection with the British Conference, taking part in its affairs and receiving appointments therefrom; but his residence abroad was with the understanding that he would return to the United States whenever requested to do so. In 1808 his name was dropped from the list of bishops in the American Minutes."

Of Bishop Coke's service to American Methodism, Professor Sweet wrote in *The American Churches: An Interpretation* (44): "It is a revealing fact that Dr. Coke, even

though his presence in America was appreciated by both preachers and people was never permitted to preside independently at any conference in America, nor did he ever assign the preachers to their circuits."

Professor Sweet was in error about Bishop Coke's presiding at conferences. Coke did preside at a conference when friction was developing over episcopal powers, in connection with the beginning of the James O'Kelly schism, when Asbury refused to preside. (See introductory note to Asbury's letter to the General Conference of November 8, 1792.)

On *Monday* we came away, in company with Myers and Norton,¹² to Fayetteville, one hundred and forty miles, visiting many families in our route.

Friday, 7. I received seven letters: the contents of some of them make me feel serious. We learn that Bishop Coke, with seven young preachers, have sailed for the East Indies.¹³ The British Society is poor as well as ourselves, it would appear: this is a good sign. In less than one hundred years, Methodism has spread over three quarters of the globe; and it is now about to carry the Gospel of salvation into Asia. Amen. I am divinely impressed with a charge to preach sanctification in every sermon.

Sunday, 9. We had rain. Bishop M'Kendree preached. I preached on Isaiah lxiv, 7. We had a spiritual, heavenly, and united conference.¹⁴ There were twenty deacons ordained, eighty-five preachers stationed: twelve have located, and one has died, suddenly; and fifteen are added.

¹² Lewis Myers was presiding elder of the Ogeechee District, and James Norton was Bishop McKendree's traveling companion this year. (*Minutes.*)

¹³ Dr. Coke and his party had set sail for Ceylon on December 30, 1813. On May 3, 1814, before the voyage was completed, he died, leaving his missionary band without a leader. He was buried in the Indian Ocean. (*Wesley and His Successors*, 45, 46.)

¹⁴ This was the South Carolina Conference which convened at Fayetteville, North Carolina, on January 12, 1814.

Sunday, 16. I preached. *Thursday* we came away. On our way we called on Hughes, Shaw and Saunderson, exhorting and praying with their families. I enjoy great peace of mind.

Sunday, 23. I preached in our chapel, fifty by sixty feet, to a small congregation. Am I not a child, to have been looking for summer? William Glendenning and I met, and embraced each other in peace. I visited sister Perry, the former wife of John King, one of the first Methodist preachers. After all reasonable allowances for drawbacks, we cannot yet tell all the good that was done by our conference in Raleigh, 1811. We started away northward. Not half a mile from Samuel Alston's (Warren County) we got entangled in the woods. We left the gig in the woods till morning, and found our way by torch to the house. I preached at my host's. On my way to Doctor Brodie's, in Louisburg, we called to dine with our friend Thomas Alston, junior.

SIXTY-NINTH VISIT

(October 18-November 3, 1814; age 68)

ASBURY had John Wesley Bond as his traveling companion. They went from Tennessee to South Carolina. His affection for Bond is noted in his calling him "son." They traveled by "Jersey wagon." He noted camp meetings and his brief seclusion in the early days of the American Revolution in Delaware. He held his final ordinations in the state while on the visit. In December, 1814, he completed his third decade in the episcopacy. A copy of the "Mite Subscription" is preserved in *Letters* (526ff.). His stopping at Nelson's was an infrequent reference to staying at an inn.

Asbury occasionally gave summaries of his work and duties, as in January, 1813. Such is found in a letter to

Zachary Miles written in North Carolina on February 9, 1814: "I have nearly finished my mission, having traveled annually a circuit of 3,000 miles for forty-two years and four months; and if young again, I would cheerfully go upon another. We are well kept, if the Lord keepeth us." (*Letters*, 499.)

Newsome and Lefler in *The Growth of North Carolina* (451) indicate Haywood County was formed in 1808, not in 1809.

Tuesday, 18. Our ride brought us to Jarratt's, on Pigeon River. O my excellent son, John Bond! A tree had fallen across our way—what was to be done? Brother Bond sprung to the axe fastened under our carriage, mounted upon the large limbs, chewing and hacking, stroke after stroke, without intermission, until he had cut away five of them, hauling them on one side as he severed them, so that we passed without difficulty. Is there his equal to be found in the United States? He drives me along with the utmost care and tenderness, he fills my appointments by preaching for me when I am disabled, he watches over me at night after the fatigue of driving all day, and if, when he is in bed and asleep, I call, he is awake and up in the instant to give me medicine, or to perform any other services his sick father may require of him; and this is done so readily, and with so much patience, when my constant infirmities and ill health require so many and oft-repeated attentions! We have had a great drought—I think I never saw the rivers so low. The asthma presses sorely upon my panting breast: Lord, sanctify all my afflictions! The work of God groweth in the neighborhood; there is a house thirty-five by forty feet built in the fork of Pigeon River. Ought we not to have a Holston Conference, and unite with the circuit west of the Blue Ridge, Botte-

tourt and New River, the circuits in North Carolina?

Wednesday, 19. Rode to Bollen's.¹⁵ Behold! Richard Bird came one hundred miles to hasten us to camp meeting away on the bleak hills of Haywood.¹⁶ I was forced by misery to retire to my room and bed at Bollen's; but son John held a meeting and preached.

Thursday, 20. We came by Nelson Spring's¹⁷ to Barnett's gate, for, poor man! some wicked people had burnt his barn; his house escaped. Does Hootenpile pray? I asked. You called upon him; and God did bless the word and prayer to his soul: this was the answer in remembrance he sent me by Richard Bird. We came on the camp ground, *Friday*, 21. *Saturday*, I preached and ordained W. Span and J. Evans deacons.

Sabbath, 23. Ordained two elders, Thomas Bird and Samuel Edney, after preaching. In our tent we contrived a hearth, and had a fire. *Monday*, we visited Richard Bird's.

Tuesday, 25. I preached in the house of the father, Benjamin Bird;¹⁸ there was much feeling manifested. We collected liberally on the mite subscription, to help the suffering ministry. I had for twenty years past wished to visit the cove; it is done, and I have seen my old, tried friends, dear Richard and Jonah Bird, and William Fulwood, who sheltered me when, during the war of independence, I was compelled to retire to the swamps and thickets for safety.

Wednesday, 26. Our ride brought us to Rutherford's. I paid them as well as I could, for their kindness and attentions, by exhortation and prayer.

¹⁵ Asbury had stopped at Michael Bollen's on December 30, 1812.

¹⁶ Haywood County was formed from Buncombe in 1809. It extended westward across the Great Smoky Mountains to the Georgia and Tennessee lines.

¹⁷ William Nelson, or Neilson, lived at Hot Springs and conducted an inn there. Asbury stopped with him on other occasions. (See note under November 3, 1802.)

¹⁸ The Birds were prominent Methodists in western North Carolina. Benjamin Bird lived near Old Fort. His son, Jonathan Bird (1764-1848), was admitted to the conference in 1789 and served circuits in North Carolina and Holston until 1797, when he located and settled near his father in McDowell County. (Grissom: *op. cit.*, 218.)

Thursday, 27. To M'Hathings, forty-one miles. Daniel Asbury¹⁹ wished me to take Catawba, above Ladies's Ford, and crossed at the Horse Ford, where a former journal will show my life to have been in danger some years ago. I preached in the evening at Daniel Asbury's, Lincoln county, near Sherwell's Ford. These are kind spirits, who say, "You make your rides too long"; yet they will scarcely be denied when invited to their houses, making my rides longer still; here am I, ten miles out of my way, to see these dear people. And now that limbs, lungs, strength, and teeth fail, I must still go my round of six thousand miles within the year.

Sabbath, 30. I passed a restless, feverish night; yet as I was expected to preach on the camp ground, I discoursed to a large, simple-hearted congregation, on Acts xxx, 32.²⁰ I sat in the end of my little Jersey wagon, screened by the drawn curtain behind me. It was no common time to either speaker or hearers. We retired after meeting to Jonathan Jackson's.²¹ What a rich table was provided! not for me; I retired to bed with a high fever. My spiritual consolations flow from God in rich abundance; my soul rejoices exceedingly in God.

Monday, 31. To Robey's, near Catawba springs.

Tuesday, November 1. I preached to a very attentive people: surely the speaker and hearers felt the power of the word of God. After a hasty dinner, we rode on to Nathan Sadler's, steward of the Lincoln circuit.

Wednesday, 2. I spoke with very unpleasant feelings on Luke xi, 13. We hasted to Featherstone Wells's.²²

¹⁹ Daniel Asbury, who lived in Lincoln County, was presiding elder of the Catawba District of the South Carolina Conference, which included the circuits of Western North Carolina. (*Minutes*, 1814.)

²⁰ This book has only twenty-eight chapters. There is no indication as to what the passage may have been.

²¹ Jonathan Jackson, a well-known preacher in North Carolina, was serving the Lincoln Circuit. (*Minutes*, 1814.)

²² Featherstone Wells (1769-1853) lived near present Belmont. His grave is in Featherstone-Fite-Wells cemetery near the Catawba River bridge there. (See *Journal* entry for March 8, 1797.)

Here were all comforts for a sick man; good food, beds, and nursing. This family is blest. Sister Wells²³ is the granddaughter of my ancient friend, Father May, of Amelia, and her children are in the way to heaven: here is the fruit of my labours. What a comfort it is to see the fourth generation growing up under our eyes, living in the fear of God, and following in the same path those who are gone to glory!

Thursday, 3. Crossed the north fork of Catawba to Bethesda chapel:²⁴ the day was damp, and there was a damp upon preacher and people. We went forward to John Dameron's,²⁵ where I was expected to preach, and I did try, but the people were so wonderfully taken up with the novel sight of the little carriage, and still more of the strange-looking old man who was addressing them, that the speaker made little impression on his hearer. Who neglects me? Not the kind, loving Damerons.

SEVENTIETH VISIT

(January 18-February 8, 1815; age 70)

ASBURY traveled from South Carolina to Virginia through eastern counties with John Wesley Bond. He referred to his age and himself as "the old clay house." He had offered to retire years earlier, because of increasing infirmities.

The biographical nature of the *Journal* coupled with his extremely demanding schedule of appointments may account in part for his limited references to and discussion of

²³ Mrs. Willmuth Wells (1765-1818) is buried with her husband at Belmont.

²⁴ Asbury must have crossed the south fork of the Catawba instead of the north fork. Bethesda Chapel is in Mecklenburg County, about six miles southeast of Gastonia on the New Hope Road. It is still a preaching place. The bishop had gone from the Buncombe area to the Old Ford section of McDowell County and into present Rutherford, Cleveland, Lincoln, and Catawba counties, then turned southward at Sherril's Ford into Mecklenburg County.

²⁵ John Dameron lived near the Bethesda Chapel and is buried in the cemetery there. He was one of the trustees of the chapel.

prominent personalities and current events in these accounts of visits. Missing—with rare exceptions—are references to the evangelical singing like that which accompanied the Evangelical Revival in England; comments on stationing of preachers and their reactions, especially when some were married; comments on the work and results of George Whitefield's in the colony in previous decades; costs of lodgings in inns and taverns and ferry rides; sermon preparation; the large-scale emigrations from the state during his decades of itineracy; naval stores and tobacco as important North Carolina industries; comments on fellow-countryman Lord Charles Cornwallis in Revolutionary days and comments on the reactions of listeners of non-English backgrounds, as Moravians, Presbyterians and others to his speech and preaching. There are only negligible references to raising of funds for construction of new churches and chapels in the state.

Wednesday, 18. Crossed the lakes and Waccamaw ²⁶ and got in after eight o'clock to brother Frink's. At William Guse's, I saw my kind mothers in Israel, Guse and Rogers. I continued to expectorate blood. It is possible that the children of the French Protestant martyrs to the tyranny of Louis XIV, and his bloody priesthood, can ever forget the God of their fathers? Noble, Holy men, may God gather in your children to the latest generations.

Friday, 20. A dash of rain stopped us awhile, but we went forward thirty miles to Wilmington. I feel the effect of the damps.

Sabbath, 22. I preached in the chapel. O, wretched appearance of broken windows! It was a sacramental day. Were I a young man, I should not wish to be stationed in Washington. Our funds are low here, and our house a wreck.

²⁶ After crossing Waccamaw the bishop proceeded by way of Little River to Wilmington.

Monday, 23. We came away to widow Nixon's. *Tuesday,* to Shepherd's. Doctor Lomas has been suddenly called away by death. *Wednesday,* to Lot Ballard's. Shall the Gospel be taken from Goshen? *Thursday,* dined at Joseph Bryan's; lodged at Hardy's. We dashed through Mussel Shell Creek in a swim—it was serious work.

Friday, 27. Dined at Hatch's: our reception kind; and our host is in bed with a broken leg. We reached Newbern in the evening. Here is weeping and lamentations for poor me—the leading characters of the society cannot speak to each other, or of each other, without bringing heavy accusations—yet all very glad to see the bishop.

Saturday, 28. My trust is in a faithful God—he hath never deceived me nor forsaken me. I am scarcely an hour free from pain, and all that I do is in the strength of Jesus.

Sabbath, 29. I preached, and there was a trembling from first to last under the word—but it was with cold. Ah! people hard and dull! John Bond preached three times: possibly in my short exhortation to the society I talked down the tempers of some of the members: Ah! wretched use of liquid fire!

Monday, 30. Cold indeed; my feet suffer. We made twenty-six miles to a house—no wood at the door, and none to cut wood.

Tuesday, 31. A heavy storm took us at Greenville. We put the remains of a poor, pious slave in the ground who had reached one hundred years. Brandy in a cold is like laudanum.

Wednesday, February 1. We came twenty-two miles; I was nearly done. Had we followed our first plan, and gone by Norfolk, it would have probably cost me my life. It was time to lower our sails and drop anchor at Edward Hall's, near Tarboro: it is paradise regained for a few days. The weather has been excessively cold,

and keenly felt by an old man of seventy, deeply wounded in the limbs, breast, and lungs.

Sabbath, 5. I spoke to a gathering of serious people at Edward Hall's large dining room: the speaker was led to some awful truths. I am occupied in reading, writing, and patching and propping up the old clay house as well as I may: God be gracious to us still!

Monday, 6. We breakfasted with Mrs. Austin. O! the look expressive of the workings of her soul she gave, when in the trying hour she said, "Pray for me!" Shall a Methodist conference assemble, a society be gathered, and a chapel be built in Tarboro? Dined with Exum Lewis and wife: this favoured pair have been renewed and quickened. The house of their father was amongst the first in former days to receive the Methodists, and the children now open their house, and hearts, and hands to them: may the Lord convert, and own, and bless their children's children to the latest generations! Amen! amen!

Came to James Hunter's at Fishing Creek—a cold ride. I sent for dear Henry Bradford and his wife, and we renewed our covenant with God. *Tuesday*, to Halifax; mother Long would by no means take a nay: honourable woman! I gave an evening lecture to some serious souls, and John Wesley Bond exhorted after me with energy.

Wednesday, 8. Crossed Black's ferry to sister Sarah Weaver's.

SEVENTY-FIRST VISIT

(November 10-November 19, 1815; age 70)

IN HIS FINAL YEAR, Bishop Asbury made an itinerary that included Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, the present West Virginia, Ken-

tucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia.

On the final recorded visit, Asbury traveled from Tennessee to South Carolina. There were only three entries in the *Journal* until December 7, 1816, when it ended at Granby, South Carolina. On the visit he stopped at Samuel Edney's, providing his last recorded sermon text. He had made a total of thirty-one visits to South Carolina (Footnote, *Journal*, II, 796). Apparently his last recorded quarterly conference was held in North Carolina.

Asbury presided at his last Conference at Lebanon, Tennessee in October, 1815. While in the state, in addition to preaching, he preached a funeral sermon, baptized and performed a wedding. He also visited Dr. James McKendree, Bishop McKendree's brother, who also lived there. He died shortly after Asbury's visit. Frances McKendree, their sister, was married by Asbury. She was born in 1763 and died in 1835 near Columbia, Tennessee. Descendants of the family reside in the section today. (Footnotes, *Journal*, II, 793.)

Asbury's phrase "I die daily" indicated his awareness of the approaching end. When he died in 1816, his horse, books and some clothing were left to Bishop McKendree. (Lee and Sweet, *op. cit.*, 52.)

Friday, at Barnett's, there was a dance—such fiddling and drinking! I delivered my testimony: I am clear from Barnett's blood. A rapid ride brought us to Mill's on *Saturday*.

Sabbath, 12. I attended the quarterly meeting at Samuel Edney's, and bore a feeble, but a faithful testimony to the truth. I have read, with dim eyes, Joseph Moore's dialogue; it is not elegant, but argumentative; it seems to have silenced the Baptists.

Sabbath, 19. I preached upon Acts xxvi, 17, 18. Many were the instances of deliverance; they bound him and scourged him, yet had the Jews no power over his

life, which they so often sought. And the Gentiles, to whom he was especially sent by the Son of God, what a description is given of their deplorable state! what blindness of mind, ignorance, idolatry, superstition, complicated and unaccountable wickedness! "The power of Satan"—completely in his possession, body, soul, and spirit, in all their powers and passions—in infidelity and impertinence, and under the guilt of actual transgression. Thus Gospel truth and Gospel ministers find sinners; and they must be preached to with energy. And these ministers must be *sent*; and to be qualified for this mission, they must, like Paul, be convinced, convicted, and converted, and sanctified. Like him they must be preserved from the violence of the people; but especially from their indulgences and flatteries. "Turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." A faithful minister will have these signs to follow him.

I die daily—am made perfect by labour and suffering, and fill up still what is behind. There is no time or opportunity to take medicine in the daytime, I must do it at night. I am wasting away with a constant dysentery and cough.

FRANCIS ASBURY'S LAST VISIT TO NORTH CAROLINA

(February, 1816; age 71)

THE AGING BISHOP had John Wesley Bond as his traveling companion for his last three years. His last journey northward from South Carolina by chaise has been recounted in cognate documents. He left South Carolina intending to attend the Virginia Conference meeting in Raleigh on January 24, 1816. He was unable to arrive on time. He spoke to the society in the home of the eldest son of Dr.

John King. He then went to the home of William Williams near Louisburg, near the Green Hill home. Soon thereafter, about the end of the month, he departed from the state for the last time and hoped to reach the General Conference to assemble in Baltimore in May. It seemed possible such an aim could be achieved.

Asbury, "The Wesley of the Western World," was drawing to the end of his 270,000 miles on the American scene, completing 16,425 sermons, presiding over 224 conferences, reaching the last mile on "the Long Road." "The Morning Star" of North Carolina Methodism was departing the scene, leaving it under the care of lesser luminaries. His lengthening shadow had extended for thirty-six years. The *Journal* covered all but four months of his entire odyssey of forty-five years on the American scene.

Asbury reached Richmond and preached his final sermon there. He pressed on northward and reached the home of a friend George Arnold, near Fredericksburg, Virginia. He died there on Sunday, March 31, with John Wesley Bond in attendance, in the state in which he had spent more time than any other in his American ministry. He was buried at Arnold's home. He was brought to Baltimore on May 9th and interred there. In 1854, the body was removed to the God's Acre of Mount Olivet Cemetery in Baltimore. (Based on Francis Hollingsworth's article "A Short Account of His Death" and Dr. Elmer T. Clark's article "Asbury's Last Journey," both in the *Journal* (II, 801-807) and Dr. Elmer T. Clark's article "Francis Asbury's Last Journey," reprinted by the *North Carolina Christian Advocate*, Greensboro, North Carolina, c. 1960).

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blest.

“Alleluia! Alleluia!”

Thou wast their Rock, their Fortress, and their Might;
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
Thou, in the darkness drear, their one true Light.

“Alleluia! Alleluia!”

O may Thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.

“Alleluia! Alleluia!”

O blest communion, fellowship divine!
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.

“Alleluia! Alleluia!”

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.

“Alleluia! Alleluia!”

From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,

“Alleluia! Alleluia!” Amen.

(*The Methodist Hymnal*, No. 527)

A CHRONOLOGY FOR THE LIFE OF FRANCIS ASBURY

The following chronological outline is provided as an aid to the foregoing chapters. Selected significant events have been included rather than a comprehensive list of events.

- 1745 August 20/21; Birth of Francis Asbury in Handsworth, near Birmingham, Staffordshire, England
- 1759 Converted at age of thirteen and one half
Began apprenticeship to a blacksmith
- 1767 Admitted on trial in the Wesleyan Connection in London
Appointed to Bedfordshire
- 1768 Appointed to Colchester
- 1769 Appointed to Bedfordshire Circuit
- 1770 Traveled Wiltshire Circuit
- 1771 Attended Conference in Bristol
Received call to America
Set sail for America; began famous *Journal* on shipboard
October 27; Arrived in Philadelphia
October 28; Preached first sermon in New World
- 1772 Received Wesley letter appointing him to "act as assistant" in America
- 1773 Superseded by Thomas Rankin as assistant
- 1774 Appointed to New York with Rankin
- 1775 Stationed in Norfolk
Made initial visit to Virginia
Planned initial visit to North Carolina
- 1776 Stationed in Baltimore
- 1777 Received no appointment
Reached decision to remain in America during hostilities of Revolution
- 1778 Semi-retirement at Judge White's home in Delaware
- 1779 Continued in semi-retirement
- 1780 Became citizen of Delaware
June 16-August 9; Made initial visit to North Carolina, visiting twelve counties
- 1781 Continued travels and preaching
- 1782 Approved as "general assistant" and continued itineraries
- 1783 Continued travels and preaching
- 1784 Attended Christmas Conference at Lovely Lane Chapel, Baltimore
December 25; Elected deacon
December 26; Elected elder
December 27; Consecrated Superintendent, first bishop of any denomination in America

- 1785 Presided at First Annual Conference at Louisburg, North Carolina
Made initial visit to South Carolina
Visited General Washington with Bishop Thomas Coke
- 1786 Continued travels and projected work in Kentucky
Conclusion of first volume of *Journal*
- 1787 Continued administration of all churches
- 1788 Made initial visit to Georgia and Tennessee
March 29; Death of Charles Wesley in England
- 1789 Presided at Eleven Conferences
Launched *Arminian Magazine*
Presented Resolutions of Methodist Episcopal Church in America to President Washington
Beginning of Methodist Publishing House
- 1790 Visited Kentucky
- 1791 Extended work in New England
March 2; Death of John Wesley in London at age 88
- 1792 Met First General Conference in Baltimore
First schism of church begun by James O'Kelly
- 1793 Loss of membership by O'Kelly schism
- 1794 Undertook work in Maine and New Hampshire
- 1795 Loss of Cokesbury College by fire
- 1796 Met Second General Conference in Baltimore
- 1797 Organization of New England Conference
- 1798 Visited Maine and New Hampshire
Death of Joseph Asbury, his father, in England
Death of John Dickins, first American Methodist book agent, in Philadelphia
Visited Whitefield's tomb, Newburyport, Massachusetts
- 1799 Inauguration of Camp Meetings by Presbyterians
Tobias Gibson sent to Mississippi
- 1800 Met Third General Conference in Baltimore
Richard Whatcoat elected third Methodist bishop
Conclusion of second volume of *Journal*
- 1801 Continued travels and preaching
- 1802 Great growth of the church
Death of Elizabeth Asbury, his mother, in England
- 1803 Continued growth of the church
- 1804 Met Fourth General Conference in Baltimore
- 1805 Continued episcopal visits
- 1806 July 6; Death of Bishop Whatcoat
- 1807 Traveled from New England to South
Began preparation of hymnbook for American Methodists

- 1808 Met Fifth General Conference in Baltimore
William McKendree elected first American-born Methodist bishop
Helped prepare hymnbook for American Methodists
- 1809 Continued episcopal visits
- 1810 Continued Episcopal visits
- 1811 C. July 2-14; First visit to Canada
- 1812 Met First Delegated Conference in New York
- 1813 June 6; Prepared Last Will and Testament
- 1814 May 3; Death of Bishop Thomas Coke on board ship to Ceylon
- 1815 Made final visit to Western Conferences
Conclusion of *Journal* (third volume) in South Carolina
Recorded last visit to North Carolina and last quarterly meeting in the state
- 1816 March 31; Death of Francis Asbury at home of George Arnold near Fredericksburg, Virginia
Buried in the family burial ground of George Arnold
May; Removal to Eutaw Street Methodist Church, Baltimore
Enoch George and Robert R. Roberts elected bishops
- 1836 Original *Journal* destroyed in fire in New York City publishing house
- 1854 Francis Asbury removed to Mount Olivet Cemetery, 2930 Frederick Avenue, Baltimore

ROSTER OF ORDINATIONS BY FRANCIS ASBURY IN NORTH CAROLINA

Name of Candidate	Date of Ordination	Office of Ordination		
		Deacon	Elder	Unspecified
Anderson, Thomas ¹	Jan. 22, 1790		x	
Lowe, Isaac ²	June 7, 1790		x	
Five elders	June 12, 1790			
Whitefield, John	Nov. 11, 1798	x		
Five deacons ³	Oct. 4, 1799			
Two deacons	Feb. 26, 1800			
Glover, William	Feb. 3, 1803	x		
Wilden, J.	Feb. 18, 1803	x		
Travelling and local deacons and elders	Mar. 4, 5, 1803			
Harrell, B.	Mar. 10, 1803	x		
Bell, Nathaniel	Feb. 10, 1804	x		
Bradford, Henry	Mar. 2, 1804	x		
Lindsay, William	Mar. 2, 1804	x		
Nevell, Benjamin	Mar. 2, 1804	x		
Whitaker, Richard	Mar. 4, 1804	x		
Everett, E.	Mar. 5, 1804	x		
Brooks, Nathaniel	Mar. 18, 1804	(local) x		
Gambling, Joshua	Mar. 18, 1804	(local) x		
Masters, William	Dec. 3, 1804	x		
Edwards, Martin	Oct. 1, 1806	x		
Breyer, E.	Jan. 19, 1808			x
Field, Robert	Jan. 19, 1808			x
Smith, Samuel	Nov. 12, 1808			x
Spinks, Enoch	Nov. 12, 1808			x
Perry, Eli ⁴	Jan. 13, 1809	x		
Thirteen men (by Asbury)	c. Feb. 3, 1809	x		
Eight men (by McKendree)	c. Feb. 3, 1809		x	
Two deacons and one elder	Jan. 17, 1813			
Ballard, Lot	Jan. 31, 1813	x		
Lipsey, Roscoe	Feb. 7, 1813			x
Drumgoole, Edward	Feb. 22, 1813			x
Moore, John	Feb. 22, 1813			x
Prince, Edward	Feb. 22, 1813			x
Twenty Deacons	Jan. 9, 1814			
Evans, J.	Oct. 21, 1814	x		
Span, W.	Oct. 21, 1814	x		
Bird, Thomas	Oct. 23, 1814		x	
Edney, Samuel	Oct. 23, 1814		x	

¹ Edwin Schell in "Methodist Traveling Preachers in America: 1773-1799" listed one Thomas Anderson: Received on Trial in 1783; Received into Full Connection in 1785; Ordained to Office of Deacon in 1787 and Office of Elder in 1790; Appointed Presiding Elder in 1793; Located in 1796. (*Methodist History*, New Series, Vol. II, No. 2, Jan. 1964, p. 53.)

² Schell, in the same article, lists for one Isaac Low: Received on Trial in 1787; Received into Full Connection in 1789; Ordained Deacon in 1789; Ordained Elder in 1790; Presiding Elder in 1791 and Located in 1795.

³ One of the deacons was John Coe. (Footnote, *Journal*, II, 207.)

⁴ Bishop Asbury indicated that Eli Perry came fifty-six miles for deacon's orders.

NORTH CAROLINA'S MONETARY SYSTEM BEFORE AND AFTER STATEHOOD

In colonial days, English coins were theoretically real money in North Carolina (as in all the colonies), although few coins were to be found there. After 1728, Spain issued milled dollars in place of "pieces of eight" and these became the best known coins in the colony. There were also Portuguese johannes or joe and the French pistole. For several decades, most debts were paid in barter commodities, as butter, cheese, feathers, tallow, pitch and Indian corn, as the colony seemed always to be in debt to the mother country.

The first bills were issued by the colony in 1712 to help pay debts arising from the Tuscarora War of the previous year. More were issued later, but there was distrust of the value of the money. There were several kinds of money available—varying in value from locality to locality daily.

In 1748, the old currency known as "old proc" (old proclamation) was replaced by a new issue of money, designated as "new proc." Even this did not assure improvement in stability of the monetary system, as counterfeiting undermined it.

With the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775, notes were issued to pay military expenses. Taxation itself was almost suspended until 1780. Paper money issued soon became worthless. 1780, \$725 in paper was worth about \$1. in silver. Soon creditors refused to even accept this money at all.

Three years later, the state witnessed the disappearance of the old paper currency and it went on specie basis. When North Carolina joined the Union in 1789, the inflated currency was a demoralizing influence in the state. Many business transactions were permeated with fraud. Soon arose the problem of making the state's monetary matters conform to those of the Union. Notes were issued in 1783 and 1785; also prevalent were some old "State dollars."

State currency in ensuing years continued to depreciate and efforts were made to redeem the currency by taxation. This was retired eventually. By 1816, enough state currency had been retired to make it possible to calculate business matters in terms of dollars and cents—replacing pounds and shillings. Some state notes, however, were still found as late as 1835.

From 1712 to 1786, the list of paper currency issues in the

state included: bills of credit, treasury notes, debenture bills, treasurer's notes and treasurer's certificates. Practically all money transactions were accompanied by criminal abuses.

Interestingly there is a scarcity of reference to monetary matters by Francis Asbury in the accounts of his visits to the state. During his initial visit to Virginia in 1775, at which time he wrote of his proposed initial visit to North Carolina, he noted the prevalence of "pounds" in the state. In Virginia in 1785, he noted the terms "shillings and six-pence." He did refer to "silver shilling" on the initial visit to North Carolina, "high prices" on the forty-second visit to North Carolina and "expenditures" on the sixty-first visit. He used the term "dollars" on the forty-eighth visit in 1804 and "twelve hundred dollars" on the sixty-fourth visit in 1812. There are occasional references to collections being made in the state, without specific mention of denominations of currency.

(Based on Mattie Erma Parker's
Money Problems of Early Tar Heels)

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