



**PREACHERS' PENSIONS THEN AND NOW**

This month Wisconsin United Methodists begin a campaign to raise capital funds for the purpose of strengthening the conference pension system. United Methodists have always made some provision for this, but in the early years it was pitifully inadequate.

In 1861, the first year of the Civil War, the Wisconsin Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had pension claims amounting to \$2,750 - \$2,300 of it for retired preachers, and \$450 for widows and orphans of ministers. To meet that disciplinary obligation only \$240.55 was collected.

This meager amount was disbursed as follows:

J. M. Snow	\$34.40
W. Schroff	17.20
W. H. Sampson	34.40
Thos. White	25.80
E. Robinson	25.80
W. Spell	17.20
Widow Stansbury	43.00
Widow Whitman	8.60
Widow Ash	12.90
E. Springer's Daughter	4.30
I. M. Maxon's Children	12.90
Tr. to Necessitous Fund	4.05
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	\$240.55

Under "Necessitous Cases" the sum of \$25.16 was collected, largely through offerings at conference sessions. It was paid out in this fashion:

E. Springer's Daughter	\$ 5.00
I. M. Maxon's children	3.00
G. W. Anderson	5.00
Widow Stansbury	9.38
Stationery	2.78
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	\$25.16

At that time the daily wage for most unskilled workers was \$1.00 per day, according to Richard Current (The History of Wisconsin, Vol. 2, p. 385). However on some projects, such as railroad building, it might go a bit higher.

Not until the first decade of the 20th century were serious efforts made to provide more adequate support for retired preachers. At that time the Wisconsin Conference (M. E. ) began requiring apportionments for that purpose, and also launched a drive to provide capital funds which would generate endowment income to supplement the amounts received from the churches. A little later other conferences of United Methodists in the state made similar provisions. Even then pensions were distressingly small when compared with present provisions.

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The retired ministers and their wives are an excellent source of historical information. They have much to tell that is worthy of preserving.

## MICROFILMING OF CHURCH RECORDS BY THE KARRMANN LIBRARY AT PLATTEVILLE

This past summer microfilming of church records in the six county area of Southwestern Wisconsin was a project at the UW-Platteville Karmann Library through the State Historical Society's federally funded CETA program.

A microfilm camera was rented from the State Microfilm Laboratory for a period of four weeks. Two persons were trained to operate it. The university paid the cost of the rental and of the films, the State Historical Society absorbing the cost of the processing.

The actual filming began July 18, 1977, and continued until September 8, 1977. During the thirty-three days of filming records from fifty churches were copied. The negatives are stored in Madison with the positives now at Platteville. While they differ with the various churches, they include early membership lists, baptisms, and marriages, as well as early minutes.

### THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES FILMED

Ash Creek  
Avoca  
Beetown  
Belle Center  
Belmont  
Bloom City  
Bloomington  
Boaz  
Cassville  
Cobb  
Cuba City  
Dodgeville - Plymouth  
Dubuque - Faith  
Gault Hollow  
Gays Mills  
Georgetown  
Gotham  
Hopewell  
Lancaster

Livingston  
Mill Creek  
Mineral Point  
Montfort  
Mt. Sterling  
Muscoda  
North Clayton  
Platteville township - Union  
Platteville township - Whig  
Pleasant Ridge  
Prairie du Chien  
Readstown  
Richland Center - Peace  
Richland Center - Trinity  
Seneca  
Sylvan  
Viola  
West Lima

### HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Where are the photographs that tell the story of your church? Are they identified - Event - Date - Individuals if possible? Are they in a safe place away from light and heat?

While we cannot take care of the photographs as is done in archives with trained personnel, we can do much to preserve them. *THE HISTORIAN'S DIGEST* for August, 1977, carried an excellent article which had been reprinted from *HISTORY NEWS*, Vol. 32, No. 6.

In addition to such general information concerning the environment such as heat, humidity, and light, special care of the various types of pictures is given special consideration: daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, lantern slides, glass plate negatives, cartes de visite, cabinet photos, stereographs, cellulose nitrate base film, polaroid prints, and colored slides.

DON'T

Don't use rubber cement to mount pictures. It contains sulphur and will both stain and chemically attack.

Don't use water absorbing glues and pastes such as white glue, library, or wheat paste.

Don't place newspaper clippings and photographs together. Newsprint is highly acidic, sulphuric, and contains bleaches.

Don't use rubber bands around groups of prints, slides, or negatives. Paper clips will rust.

Don't use white envelopes that contain bleach.

DO

Write on the back of prints with a soft lead pencil instead of with inks.

Use only acid and sulphur free adhesives such as polyvinyl acetate dry mount tissue.

Be careful of negatives. Fingers deposit oil.

The storage area temperature should not be above 70 degrees.

Store photographs away from strong light.

COLLECTION, USE, AND CARE OF HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS by Robert A. Weinstein and Larry Booth can be purchased from the American Association for State and Local History, 1400 Eighth Avenue, South, Nashville, Tennessee, 37203.