

REV. GEORGE MAYO ANDERSON
Served First Church 1823-1824

George M. Anderson was born in Chesterfield County, Virginia August 20, 1799, to Nathan Anderson and Mariana Mayo. "About the age of fourteen, he was deeply convinced of sin, and earnestly sought forgiveness through the blood of atonement."¹ He followed his brother, Peyton Anderson, into the ministry and joined the Virginia Conference in 1818. He was accepted in full connection in 1820, was ordained deacon and subsequently elected elder. From 1818 until 1825, he filled the usual circuits and stations, which included Bertie (1818), Williamsburg (1820), Edenton Street (1822), Richmond (1823) and Norfolk (1824).

Rev. Anderson was appointed to First Church, Richmond, in March 1823, along with Rev. John F. Andrew. "In the autumn of this year he lost his brother, Peyton Anderson, the Presiding Elder of James River District, whose death was the occasion of his removal to Petersburg to take the place of the appointed successor of his brother."² Andrew, evidently, served First Church alone for the remainder of the conference year.

Anderson married Martha Ann Rose of Richmond November 9, 1823. The wedding was performed by Rev. Andrew, with whom he had served at First Church..³

Like his predecessor at First Church, Rev. Caleb Leach, Rev. Anderson served on the committee appointed by the Virginia Conference in 1825 to make recommendations for establishing a seminary in Virginia. This action resulted in the 1830 founding of Randolph-Macon College at its original location at Boydton in Southside Virginia. "The college moved to Ashland in 1868 to escape the ravages of the Civil War."⁴ However, the railroad was a factor also, as it made Ashland more accessible especially to the students from the north. "Randolph-Macon remains the oldest Methodist-related College in continuous operation in the United States."⁵

Starting in 1825, Anderson "was victim of a physical disability."⁶ Thereafter "he sustained a superannuated relation to the Conference, and was a man of much suffering; but in the midst of all his afflictions he found God a present help in time of need."⁷

On February 1, 1827, Anderson was called as a witness before the Virginia General Assembly on an issue related to the separation of Church and State.

The committee [of Privileges and Elections] believing that the object of the 14th section [article] of the [1776 Virginia] Constitution is to prevent those who hold high and

¹ W. D. Keene Jr., ed., *Memoirs - 200 Years! Soldiers of the Cross 1785-1987* (Decorah, Iowa: Amundsen Publishing Co., 1988), p. 96.

² *The Christian Sentinel*, Vol. II, No. 28 (Richmond, Va., December 13, 1833), p. 110.

³ *Virginia Marriage Records 1700-1850*, Ancestry.com.

⁴ Randolph-Macon website, <http://www.rmc.edu/about/history>

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Arthur L. Stevenson, *Native Methodist Preachers of Richmond, Virginia, and Vicinity*, (Brevard, N.C.: Published by author, 1975), p. 8.

⁷ Keene, p. 96.

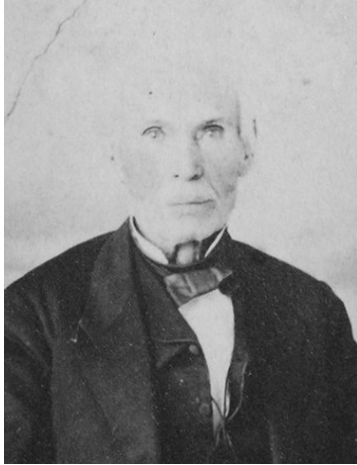
influential stations in the Church being members of the Legislature, have adopted the following resolution: *Resolved, as the opinion of this committee*, That Humphrey Billups, a Delegate returned from the county of Mathews, is a Minister of the Gospel within the true spirit and intent of the 14th Article of the Constitution, and therefore not entitled to a seat in the present House of Delegates."⁸

Anderson was one of three witnesses called, although he did not appear to express any opinion about whether Billups was entitled to be a delegate. He testified that he was not acquainted with Mr. Billups's standing as a member of the Methodist Church. Then he was asked several questions about the distinction between a preacher and a minister. In the end, Billups lost his seat in the General Assembly.

"On the morning of the 7th of December, 1833, [George Anderson's] spirit left this abode of sorrow, as well as the tenderest ties of life, and doubtless took its flight to the paradise of God."⁹

⁸ *Journal of the House of Delegates of the Commonwealth of Virginia*, Richmond, Va., 4 December 1826 (Richmond, Va., Thomas Ritchie, 1826), pp. 132-133.

⁹ Keene, p. 96.



REV. JOSEPH CARSON
Served First Church 1825–1827
Served Trinity 1833-1834

Joseph Carson, described in *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism* as “one of the most eminent revivalists of his day,”¹ served Trinity twice, from 1825 to 1827 when it was First Church and again from 1833 to 1834 after it had become Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church. During his first appointment, church membership almost doubled from 200 to 385 members. “These figures attest more eloquently than any words I could employ, the power and effectiveness at that time of the ministry of Joseph Carson. ... Indeed his ministry here marks a new era of prosperity and power in Richmond Methodism,” wrote Edward Leigh Pell in his authoritative history on Methodism.”²

Rev. Carson was born Feb. 19, 1785 in Winchester, Virginia, to Joseph and Rebecca Curry Carson. Rebecca, who was born in Scotland and was the elder Joseph’s second wife, died when their son was two years old. As a child and youth, Carson was strongly influenced by the godliness of his caregiver, a Mrs. Osborne, and his half-brother Beattie Carson, one of the first stewards of the Methodist Church in Winchester. At age 15, Joseph Carson dedicated his life to Christ. Two years later, in 1802, he was licensed first as an exhorter, then as a local preacher, “in both instances without his knowledge or consent.”³ Despite initial resistance, accompanied by “mental sufferings,” he eventually resolved to follow the call to ministry and “to preach as best he could the unsearchable riches of Christ.”⁴

In 1805, Rev. Carson was admitted on trial in the Baltimore Conference and remained on trial the following year. He was received in full connection and ordained a deacon in 1807 and an elder in 1809.

His early years of itinerant ministry in “rude, rough country”⁵ included adventures such as riding for miles through rattlesnake-infested swamps, waking under blankets of snow, subsisting on bear meat and dodging stones. His first appointment in the Baltimore Conference in 1805, was as junior preacher to the Wyoming Circuit, Pennsylvania, a 400-mile circuit composed of 32 appointments, none of which had a church building. He then served Carlisle (1806); Staunton (1807); Botetourt (1808); Greenbriar (1809); Westmoreland (1810); and last the Hartford Circuit, Monongahela District (1811), where his physical condition deteriorated to the point where he decided to relocate and recover his health.

¹ Edward Leigh Pell, ed., *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism*, (Richmond, Va.: Idea Publishing Co., 1899), p. 32

² Ibid.

³ W. D. Keene Jr., ed., *Memoirs - 200 Years! Soldiers of the Cross 1785-1987* (Decorah, Iowa: Amundsen Publishing Co., 1998), p. 150.

⁴ Ibid, p. 151.

⁵ William W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia* (Richmond, Va.: published by the author, 1871), p. 556.

In 1812, he married Mary Reid of Lynchburg, settling with her in that city and entering the secular business world. The Carsons had four children, three of whom died in childhood. Mrs. Carson also died in the prime of life. During his years in Lynchburg, business and family obligations restricted Rev. Carson's ministry to assisting local circuits. Ironically, his bereavement made it possible for him to return to full-time itinerant ministry in 1823, when he traveled the Greenville Circuit under the appointment of Rev. John Early, presiding elder of the Meherrin District. Rev. Early would later be named a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. Carson's service in the Virginia Conference began in 1824. Having received an appointment to the Roanoke Circuit, he was also elected a delegate to the General Conference that year. He was next appointed to First Church, Richmond (1825-1827); Norfolk (1827-1828); Roanoke (1828-1829); and then the Neuse District (1830-1832). His second appointment to Richmond (1833-1834) was to the renamed and relocated church, "Trinity." His remaining appointments included: Roanoke (1834-1836), Charlottesville (1837-1841), Madison (1841-1842), Petersburg (1842-1843), Manchester (1844), Petersburg "colored congregation" (1845-1846), Richmond Union Station (1846-1847), Culpeper (1847-1849), Fauquier and Stafford (1849-1850) and Culpeper (1850-1852). For 12 of his 27 years of active ministry in the Virginia Conference, he served as a presiding elder.

In 1839, Rev. Carson married Amanda J. Spindle, of Rappahannock County, Virginia, with whom he had a daughter. Amanda's died in August 1841. His third wife, whom he married in December 1848, was Jane Morgan Payne of Culpeper County.

In 1852 Rev. Carson took a supernumerary appointment and for the remainder of his life, continued to preach whenever and wherever he could despite ill health and deafness. During the Civil War, when he was in his late 70s, he preached to Confederate soldiers as often as twice a day. When local churches were destroyed by Federal armies, he fitted a vacant house with rude seats and held services for his neighbors there. A year before his death, he rode 40 miles on horseback to preach three times. To the end of his life, Rev. Carson followed the call of the Lord.

Rev. Carson died of pneumonia in Culpeper April 15, 1875 at age 90 and is buried in the Lael Cemetery at Lignum, Virginia. He was survived by his wife, Jane, and his daughter from his second marriage.

Rev. George W. Langhorne said of Rev. Carson in 1867 that he was "regarded as the 'Great Heart' of the armies of the Prince of Peace,"⁶ in recognition of his work in bringing souls to Christ and building congregations.

"His name is written in the Journals of history, and shouts have been borne to glory from every place he has visited. More souls have been converted under his ministry than under any other, excepting, perhaps, Bishop Early. He will live as long as the Virginia Conference lives – he will live forever!"⁷

⁶ *Minutes of Virginia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1875* (Richmond, Va.: J. W. Fergusson & Son, Printers, 1876), p. 62.

⁷ *Ibid.*

OTHER SOURCES:

Picture of Rev. Joseph Carson provided by STROUD BOOKSELLERS, 699 Nolen Lane, Williamsburg, WV, e-mail: raretheology@stroudbooks.com or www.stroudbooks.com/?page=shop/flypage&productid=1929#

REV. WILLIAM HENRY HAMMETT
Served First Church 1827-1828
Served Trinity 1828-1829

The Rev. William Henry Hammett was the last minister at First Church and the first minister at the renamed Trinity Church, making him a pivotal figure in Trinity's history. His ministry in Richmond, however, was only one part of a varied pastoral career in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Mississippi, in addition to notable chaplaincies at the University of Virginia, the Virginia House of Delegates and the U.S. House of Representatives. In turn, ministry was only one part of Hammett's diverse professional career. He also practiced medicine and served in Congress. In his later years, as the husband of a wealthy widow, Hammett came to enjoy a fashionable and worldly lifestyle, far removed from his former life as a Methodist preacher. Reportedly, at the last service ever held at Trinity Church on Franklin Street, the congregation prayed for the salvation of their fallen pastor. Thus, to some, Hammett was one of Trinity's brightest stars but also its proverbial "lost sheep."

William Henry Hammett was born March 25, 1799 in Ireland in the town of Donmanway, County Cork. He came to the United States in his youth and became a citizen in 1820. He was converted to Christianity in one of the western counties of Virginia, which was part of the Tennessee Conference. Church historians record that Hammett soon felt called to ministry and gave himself fully to this work. In October 1822, Hammett along with 38 others was admitted on trial at the Tennessee Conference. Ten of these new pastors, including Hammett, were transferred to the Virginia Conference.

Hammett was admitted to the Virginia Conference on trial in 1823 and reappointed for a second year. He was received in full connection in 1825 and was appointed to Petersburg in 1826.

Apparently, Hammett's ministry was highly dynamic and effective. He was said to be a natural orator, and "[h]is person, his face, his voice, his manner, all conspired to make him a favorite."¹ His vivacity, tireless energy, natural fluency and Irish charm all contributed to his effectiveness. One church historian described Hammett's ministry as follows:

With but little mental training, he rose rapidly to a high position as a preacher. Crowds attended his services, and hung upon his words with wonder and delight. Perhaps no man better understood the art of pleasing his hearers, and yet, when the occasion demanded it, no man could excel him in cutting rebuke and withering sarcasm. Many preachers in the Conference were his superiors in theological knowledge, and in the breadth and weight of pulpit thought, but few, if any, equaled him in that persuasive eloquence which charmed while it convinced his audience. Ten years, of eminently successful service, he gave to the work in Virginia. He planned and built churches, conducted revivals, and begged money for every good cause with untiring energy and merited success.²

¹William W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia* (Richmond. Va., published by author, 1871), p. 699.

² Ibid.

The construction of the new Trinity Church building was part of Hammett's dynamic ministry and a "monument of his industry and zeal."³

Hammett was elected and ordained an elder in 1827 and appointed to First Church in Richmond. By this time, the congregation of First Church had grown to around 400 and outgrown its quarters. In 1827 the congregation began erecting a "commodious church edifice on the south side of Franklin Street" between 14th and 15th Streets. The location was considered "a good one, being in the midst of a desirable community and convenient to the congregation."⁴ Construction was completed in 1828 and would have been overseen by the pastor, the Rev. Hammett. The name of the church was changed to Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church, and Hammett's 1828 appointment was the first time any appointment read "to Trinity." Hammett was described as "one of the most eloquent and powerful ministers of his day."⁵

From this pinnacle as a man of God, a "cloud rests on the later life of this man, which reflects scarcely a ray of light."⁶ Although Hammett was highly intelligent, he also craved "popular applause" and became a "spoiled favorite."⁷ After his tenure at Trinity, Hammett's path began to veer toward more worldly pursuits.

After his "brilliant ministerial career in Virginia," Hammett asked and obtained permission from the Virginia Conference to visit his native Ireland, where he spent at least two years.⁸

Records indicate that apparently soon after his return to Virginia, Hammett was appointed a member of the first board of trustees of Randolph-Macon College by the General Assembly of Virginia on February 3, 1830. At the sixth meeting of the board held July 4, 1832, "on motion of Rev. William Hammett, Rev. Stephen Olin, of Franklin College, Georgia was unanimously elected President of the College."⁹

The U.S. House of Representatives elected Hammett chaplain in the 22nd Congress (1831 to 1833). In the 23rd Congress (1833 to 1835), however, Hammett lost re-election after two rounds of balloting.

From 1833 to 1834, after three-fourths of the students pledged their own money for the chaplain's support, Hammett became the first paid chaplain at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. In this position, he led Sunday worship and daily morning-prayer meetings in the Rotunda. He subsequently served as chaplain to the Virginia House of Delegates.

Hammett next studied medicine. One source indicates that he studied in Philadelphia¹⁰ while another states that he graduated from the University of Virginia before establishing a medical

³ Bennett, p. 699.

⁴ Edward Leigh Pell, ed., *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism* (Richmond, Va.: The Idea Publishing Co.), p. 35.

⁵ Sue Ould Marmon and Dorothy Wilber Peers, *Reflections of Faith: A Bicentennial History* (Richmond, VA: Trinity United Methodist Church, 1980), p. 9.

⁶ Bennett, p. 699.

⁷ Ibid, p. 700.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Richard Irby (A.B. 1844), *History of Randolph-Macon College* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, undated), p. 34.

¹⁰ Bennett, p. 700.

practice in Vicksburg, Mississippi, in 1836.¹¹ (Sources also differ as to whether there are one or two t's in Hammett.) Hammett's medical ledger shows entries beginning in Vicksburg in 1836, then moving to Lammermoor after his 1837 marriage, and entries continuing through 1851. He was often called upon to treat injured and ailing slaves on neighboring plantations. In his obituary, he was described as a physician of much ability.

Hammett had moved to Mississippi in 1835. There he met a wealthy widow named Evalina Matilda McCaleb Metcalfe. He married the widow Metcalfe in 1837 over the objection of her uncle. The wedding occurred at the cotton plantation, Lammermoor, which Evalina had inherited from her late husband in Washington County, Mississippi. Hammett then took up residence at the plantation.

Hammett's only child died in early life. The loss was described as a great sorrow and disappointment to Hammett. Apparently, however, Hammett was quite fond of his stepson, F. A. Metcalfe, who later penned a flattering obituary of Hammett.

An early Methodist historian notes that Hammett also retained his place as a local minister in the church for several years after moving to Mississippi. Hammett seldom preached, however, and gradually lost the "spirit of his mission."¹² Nevertheless, he opened his home to Methodist preachers, who found a "welcome and pleasant home beneath his roof."¹³ Reportedly, the only shadow that rested upon the hearts of these visiting preachers was the "mournful contrast between the once humble, prayerful, and zealous preacher of the gospel, and the now proud, prayerless, and devoted man of the world."¹⁴

The home, Lammermoor, to which Hammett graciously welcomed visiting clergy and numerous other guests, was indeed "his home." Mississippi property laws of the era gave the husband absolute rights and title to all of his wife's property. Although Hammett made a generous settlement on his stepson, he willed everything else on his death to his own family, leaving his widow "penniless."¹⁵ A family member stated that Hammett was widely despised for disinheriting his wife.

Lammermoor eventually became the possession of Hammett's brother, Edward Hammett. Whether the plantation passed to Edward Hammett upon William Hammett's death or had been purchased by Edward earlier is unclear. Among the family papers is Edward's written offer to purchase Lammermoor and its slaves from William for \$300,000, which was considered an enormous sum at the time. It is clear, however, that the Hammett heirs got possession of Lammermoor.

¹¹ Hidden History at Special Collections: The Hammet Family Papers. <http://vtspecialcollections.word-press.com/2013/04/04/hidden-history-at-special-collections-the-hammet-family-papers/> Hereafter, "Family Papers." Note: The Hammet Family Papers were found among the papers of Virginia Governor J. Hoge Tyler, the Hammets being in-laws of Governor Tyler.

¹² Bennett, p. 700.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ P. E. Metcalfe-Collins, "Sketches of Some of the Pioneers of Washington County, Mississippi," From Papers of the Washington County Historical Society, p.135. Note: Author Metcalfe-Collins appears to be the daughter of the stepson whom Hammett favored – the same stepson who penned the complimentary obituary of Hammett.

William Hammett's appropriation of his wife's social position and financial assets, as well as his apparent injustice in disinheriting her, is one basis for his being considered the "lost sheep" of Trinity's history. Another was his worldly ambition in the political arena.

In the years after his tenure at Trinity, Hammett did indeed become a worldly man – gay, fashionable, and popular – whose interest drifted away from the ministry and toward politics. As a Methodist historian noted,

Politics claimed his attention and excited his ambition. ... Living in the midst of wealth, he dispensed an elegant hospitality, to which his graceful manners, his ready wit, and his agreeable conversation, gave still greater attraction. He quaffed the full chalice of worldly pleasure as if he had never tasted the "cup of salvation."¹⁶

In 1843, Hammett was elected by the Democratic Party as one of Mississippi's at-large representatives to the 28th Congress (1843-45). Hammett's effectiveness as a representative is uncertain. In his obituary, his stepson described Hammett as one who, as a politician, was "liberal in his views, and advocated the great measures of his party with untiring zeal and ability."¹⁷ By other accounts, Hammett was not a particularly notable legislator. One Methodist historian noted that Hammett "served one term without any particular distinction as an orator or a statesman."¹⁸ Hammett did not serve a second term in Congress, a fact which may speak for itself. He is one of only several representatives who also served the House of Representatives as its chaplain.

Hammett suffered a "lingering disease" at the end of his life.¹⁹ During his months of declining health, it appears that Hammett read scriptures daily and re-entered a life of faith. Hammett's return to God may actually have been prompted by an occurrence at Trinity.

A final celebratory service was held at "Old" Trinity Church in 1861 before the congregation moved to another new building at Twentieth and Broad Streets. Everyone in Richmond who had any connection to Trinity or Methodism was invited, and the sanctuary was filled to capacity. The service included an outpouring of testimony about all God had done in the lives of those attending, "many of whom had been converted [to Christianity] at the altar now to be abandoned."²⁰ Near the end of the service, a layman arose and stated:

... they were gathered for the last time in a house built by the labors of a man once highly honored and greatly beloved as a minister of Christ; that for many years that man had cast away the faith he once preached, and while they rejoiced in the gospel of which he was once a flaming herald, he was now without its comfort and under its curse. In conclusion, he proposed that there and then special prayer should be made for his recovery and salvation. With full hearts and tearful eyes the proposal was responded to,

¹⁶ Bennett, p. 700.

¹⁷ Metcalfe-Collins, p. 133.

¹⁸ Bennett, p. 700.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Pell, pp. 42-43.

and before God the company bowed, and on the arms of their faith lifted the fallen pastor to the throne of God for mercy and pardon.²¹

The prayers of the Trinity congregation may indeed have influenced Hammett's return to his religious faith as a later church history indicates that Hammett was returning to his home in Mississippi from Washington and stopped for the night at the Exchange Hotel, next door to Trinity Church. He observed that a service was going on, went into the auditorium and sat unobserved near the door. He heard all that transpired and was deeply moved by the prayers for his soul. He continued his journey home, and then sent for a Methodist minister to whom he confessed his sad story and "expressed a desire to return to Christ and the church. ... He was restored to membership in the church and soon thereafter died in the faith"²² on July 9, 1861 at the age of 62. Hammett was "entombed at Lammere [Lammermoor] Plantation, Washington County, Mississippi."²³

Thus ended the dynamic life of William Henry Hammett, once a shining star in Trinity's history, then a "lost sheep," and finally a child of God, found again. After helping build the church called "Trinity," Hammett strayed far from the ideals he once preached in Trinity's pulpit. In the end, however, he was reunited with Christ by the love and prayers of Trinity.

Editor's Note: At the time this profile was written, an uncondensed version of this biographical sketch was on file in the Archival section of the Trinity Church Library. It may be available upon request.

²¹ Bennett, p. 701.

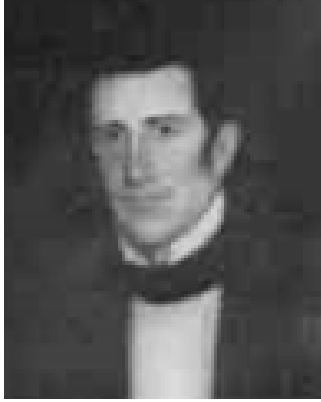
²² Pell, p. 44.

²³ <http://politicalgraveyard.com/bio/hamlet-hammett.html>

OTHER SOURCES:

John B. McFerrin, *History of Methodism in Tennessee*, Vol. III, 1818-1840 (Nashville: Publishing House of Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 1875).

"The Election of House Chaplain William Henry Hammett, US House of Representatives: History, Art & Archives" <https://history.house.gov/Historical-Highlights/1800-1850/The-election-of-House-Chaplain-William-Henry-Hammett/>



REV. SIMON BURR SYKES
Served Trinity 1829-1830

Simon Burr Sykes served as a minister in the Virginia Methodist Episcopal Conference from 1826 until 1830. He was admitted on trial in 1826 and ordained both as a deacon and in full connection in 1828. He served in Bedford (1826), Culpeper (1827), Hanover (1828), and Richmond (Trinity, 1829). Trinity was his final appointment before he located in 1830.

Rev. Sykes was born December 29, 1800. He married Sarah Blount Lundy Turner May 3, 1830 in Greenville, Virginia. The 1850 census shows that Simon and Sarah lived in Monroe County, Mississippi, with their six children, Indiana V. Sykes, Joseph A. Sykes, Walter L. Sykes, Simon Turner Sykes, Lawson W. Sykes and Henry B. Sykes.

In 1842, he reportedly built a beautiful single-story frame residence on the corner of Hickory and Burnett Streets in Aberdeen, Mississippi. One commentator noted that, as attractive as this house was, it was modest for a man who owned 188 slaves. In 1860, Rev. Sykes moved from this house to one on the corner of Meridian and Burnett Streets. He subsequently received a pardon around 1865 from President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, for his part in the Civil War.¹

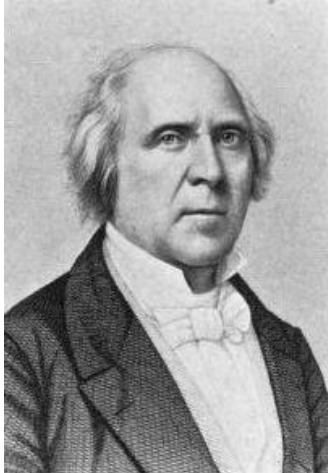
Sykes died April 28, 1866 and is buried in the Odd Fellows Rest Cemetery, in Aberdeen, Monroe County, Mississippi.²

¹ Lanier Sykes Bogen & Tom Locke Mayfield, *The Sykes Homes of Columbus and Aberdeen*. (Winston-Salem, NC: Locke Campbell Publishing Co., 2010), p. 13.

² Find-a-Grave Memorial #113109559, Created by Gail Fisher Walker, Record added: June 30, 2013.

OTHER SOURCES:

Ancestry.com, <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/32133218/person/28129672604/story>, yielded photo, Civil War pardon from President Andrew Johnson, family trees, 1850 U.S. Census Record for Monroe County, and his will.



REV. DR. WILLIAM ANDREW SMITH
Served Trinity 1830-1831; 1836-1838

Out of humble beginnings came one of Virginia Methodism's greatest leaders. William A. Smith was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia, November 29, 1802. Both of his parents died while he was young, and William was raised by Russell Hill, a friend of his father. He joined the Methodist Episcopal Church at the age of 17. Unable to attend college and following his call to ministry, he studied privately at the home of his uncle, Mr. Porter, in Orange County and taught school for three years in Madison.

Smith's official ministry began in 1824 when he rode the Gloucester Circuit under the presiding elder. The following February, he was admitted on trial into the Virginia Conference. He served Amherst in 1826, was accepted into full connection in 1827, then served Lynchburg in 1828 and Petersburg in 1829. In 1829 he was also elected and ordained elder in the Virginia Conference.

He came to Trinity in 1830, serving for one year. That same year he was appointed to the first board of trustees of Randolph-Macon College.

In 1833 Rev. Smith met with a terrible accident. The carriage he was driving turned over and fell on him, "breaking his right thigh and dislocating his left hip, and badly laming him for life."¹ Rev. Smith was serving as an agent of Randolph-Macon College at the time of his accident.

On June 20, 1835, Trinity Church caught fire and burned to the ground. Dr. Leroy Lee, the minister at the time, carried the congregation as it sought to rebuild. Rebuilding was well underway by November, but unfortunately Dr. Lee's failing health prevented him from leading Trinity forward.

Following Dr. Lee's departure, Rev. Smith returned to Trinity in January 1836 and oversaw the dedication of the new church building August 28, 1836. "His powerful and eloquent preaching drew large congregations and greatly edified, comforted and encouraged his people"² known as Trinity. The church grew and multiplied under his leadership, especially in material and spiritual strength. He was reappointed to Trinity in 1837.

Rev. Smith was a delegate to General Conference in the Methodist Episcopal Church every session from 1832 to 1844 and held positions at General Conference as esteemed adviser and debater. In the memorable appeal case of Rev. Francis Harding and the judicial trial of Bishop James Osgood Andrew, both over the issue of slaveholding, which led to the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two conferences, Rev. Smith gained a winsome reputation by his "deliberative and forensic eloquence."³ He was then a member of every General Conference

¹ Richard Irby (A.B. 1844), *History of Randolph-Macon College* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, undated), p. 105.

² Edward Leigh Pell, ed., *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism* (Richmond, Va.: Idea Publishing Co., 1899), p. 37.

³ Irby, p. 106.

of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South from its founding in 1846 until 1866. His lasting influence remains on the legislation and institutions of Southern Methodism.

From 1837 to 1839, Rev. Smith served as the editor of *Old Richmond*, a newspaper of the Virginia Annual Conference that was a precursor to today's *Virginia Advocate*. During this time, he married Laura Anna Brooking on July 18, 1838. She was the daughter of Thomas V. Brooking of Richmond.

Randolph-Macon College conferred the doctor of divinity degree on Smith in June 1843. In 1846, following his appointment to Lynchburg, Dr. Smith was called from the pastorate to the presidency of Randolph-Macon College. He would serve in that capacity for almost 20 years, until 1865. He was chosen for this position because people knew he had the leadership skills needed to help save this institution. When he arrived at Randolph-Macon, the college was in the worst financial condition in its history. Dr. Smith traveled extensively through North Carolina and Virginia to collect money and to cultivate interest in the college. His tenure was successful – the number of students steadily increased, the standard of scholarship was raised, and with the efforts of both Dr. Smith and the trustees of the college, an endowment fund of \$100,000 was raised. In addition, a great number of ministers were molded by Dr. Smith's teaching and leadership, answering their call to ministry and serving the church upon graduation from Randolph-Macon College.

The 1866 General Conference took place in New Orleans from April 4 to May 3, and approved several major changes. Dr. Smith was one of the 11 delegates to this significant conference from the Virginia Annual Conference. The principal changes were:

The removal of the six months probationary membership, the lengthening of the pastoral term from two years to four years, and . . . the admission of lay representation in all of the conferences. The plan provided for equal lay and clerical representation in the General Conference and for four lay delegates from each district in the Annual Conferences . . . All of these changes were due to the recognition of the fact that the Methodist laity were now capable of full participation in the management of the Church.⁴

As a preacher and pastor, Dr. Smith's "zeal for the cause of religion was pure, steady, consuming. ...His sermons were 'logic on fire' – grand and solid discussions of the leading truths of the gospel, animated with deep emotion."⁵ Others have said he was an intellectual, earnest and laborious preacher. Thousands were converted under his ministry, many of them becoming preachers in the Methodist Church as well as in other denominations. He was known also for his "tender, sympathetic heart, and . . . child-like spirit"⁶ – a spirit that was simple, unselfish and trusting.

As a man, he was of esteemed character. His convictions were such that "he was ever ready to avow and maintain."⁷

⁴ William Warren Sweet, *Virginia Methodism, A History* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, 1955), pp. 294-295.

⁵ Irby, p. 107.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Irby, p. 107.

On her deathbed William's mother had prayed that "her son might live to preach the glorious gospel."⁸ Her prayer was answered as William preached not only with words, but also by the way he lived.

He was a phenomenal leader in Virginia Methodism – leading local churches, leading a college to fiscal re-birth, representing the annual conference to many General Conferences and editing the conference paper. How fortunate we are that he answered the call to ministry.

Dr. Smith claimed the promise of resurrection in Richmond, Virginia, March 1, 1870 at age 67. He is buried in Hollywood Cemetery.

⁸ Ibid, p. 105.

OTHER SOURCES:

Find A Grave Memorial #7802113 by PL, record added. August 28, 2003.



REV. GEORGE WASHINGTON NOLLEY

Served Trinity 1831-1832

Having a natural facility with words can only be a further blessing to one who has been called to serve God in a leadership role. George Washington Nolley was a preacher known for his great love of language as well as for his energetic and dedicated service in the ministry. Throughout his long career, Rev. Nolley traversed most of the state of Virginia as well as North Carolina, eloquently spreading the word of God. Earlier, at about the age of 12, Nolley accompanied his father on a visit to a distant boarding school. The teacher there quizzed him on many aspects of his education thus far. One of the questions asked was, "What is religion?" to which Nolley replied, "It is the love of God in the heart of men."¹ Years later, at the age of 77, and after having been a preacher for almost 60 years, he said he doubted that he could top that definition.

George Washington Nolley was born Christmas Day in 1803 in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. His father, James Nolley, was a travelling preacher from Greensville County and his mother, whom Nolley remembered as "one of the best women that ever lived," was a Miss Seward from Brunswick County, Virginia.² Nolley has been described as tall, robust and brusque, yet positive and tireless.

Although Rev. Nolley came to Methodism as a young teenager, he did not seek to become a minister right away. He began his career as a schoolteacher, having focused on history and classics during his education. In 1825, at the age of 21, he was received on trial into the Virginia Conference and became an itinerant preacher like his father before him. His first circuit was the Banister Circuit, which covered Halifax County and part of Pittsylvania County. Rev. Nolley's fervent trust in God is illustrated in an incident that occurred while serving on this circuit. He had made an appointment to preach at an old church eight miles out of his usual route. He arrived and preached to the very best of his ability to a large congregation of what appeared to him to be respectable-looking folk. Yet at the end of the service, no one asked him to come home with them, neither for a meal nor lodging for the night as was customary at the time. Downtrodden, Nolley returned to the home of the family that had hosted him the night before. He retreated to his room to take comfort in prayer and Scripture. He opened his Bible at random and immediately his eye fell upon the sixth verse of Psalm 126, "He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him." He took heart in this reading and vowed to return again to that congregation. The next time he visited, the wealthiest man in town invited him home and had him preach to his servants that night.³

¹ John J. Lafferty, *Sketches of the Virginia Conference Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, (Richmond, Va.: Christian Advocate Office, 1880), p. 10.

² Ibid.

³ Lafferty, p. 11.

For most of the next 55 years, Rev. Nolley served tirelessly on many circuits. In 1826, he worked on the Granville Circuit in North Carolina. In 1827, he returned to Virginia for the Amelia Circuit, and in that year was accepted in full connection to the Virginia Conference and was ordained as a minister. In 1828 he was stationed in Norfolk; 1829 in Raleigh and then back to Norfolk for 1830. In 1831 Rev. Nolley was sent to Trinity Church in Richmond, where his ministry was noted for a successful revival. In 1832, he resumed his travels, serving the Princess Anne Circuit. In 1833, he traveled on the Caroline Circuit, 1834 on the Gates Circuit, 1835 on the Cumberland Circuit, and 1836 on the Buckingham Circuit. Between 1838 and 1842, he served as presiding elder of the Norfolk District.

In 1842 he returned to Richmond to minister to Shockoe Hill Church and assisted in their effort to build a new house of worship, which became Centenary Methodist Church. Around this time, Nolley met and married his second wife and would later become the father of seven children.⁴

He was made presiding elder of the Charlottesville District in 1843 and of the Lynchburg District from 1846 to 1850. In 1850 and 1851, he was stationed on the Chesterfield Circuit. In 1852 he was appointed to the Louisa Circuit. In all of these places, with the exception of Lynchburg, Nolley purchased and maintained comfortable parsonages for him and his family. In 1853, upon being stationed on the Hanover Circuit, he, likewise, built and furnished a parsonage in Ashland. However, at the close of this appointment, Rev. Nolley purchased a house in Ashland, Virginia, at 312 North Center Street, for his family to settle into permanently. It was with great trepidation that he attended the Annual Conference in Petersburg that year because he was unsure of what presiding Bishop Andrew would think of his audacity at permanently settling his family without prior permission. His mind was soon put at ease when Bishop Andrew said, "Nolley, you have done exactly right, when a man has travelled as long as you have, and has as large a family as you have, he ought to provide a home for them and settle them in it."⁵ A great weight was lifted from Nolley's mind, and from then on, although his family remained in Ashland, Rev. Nolley continued to answer God's call and travel wherever he was needed, no matter how far from home.

From 1854 and continuing throughout the Civil War, Nolley was stationed in Richmond at Third Street Methodist Episcopal Church, which would become Third Street Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1867. When he began, the congregation consisted of 175 people and when he left, it had grown to a membership of 500.⁶ After the war, he continued once again on the travelling circuit and saw the destruction and postwar destitution of so many churches. In true devoted form, Nolley ventured to the prosperous cities of the North and procured, through donations, enough money to rebuild and repair many of the churches of his former circuits.⁷

Until well into his 60s, Nolley continued to serve area churches. His last position was in Gordonsville, Virginia, where he oversaw the construction of one of the largest churches in the Virginia Conference at that time. On his retirement in 1870, Rev. Nolley moved permanently into

⁴ Edward Leigh Pell, ed., *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism* (Richmond, Va.: Idea Publishing Co., 1899), pp. 57-58.

⁵ Lafferty, p. 12.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

his family home in Ashland. He continued to preach to his neighbors and to students of Randolph-Macon College, of which he had been a trustee and donor for many years.

For 55 consecutive years, George Washington Nolley was present for roll call on the first day of the Annual Virginia Methodist Conference. In 1883, a few weeks shy of his 80th birthday, Nolley attended the final session of that year's Conference. He asked to preach that day and spoke for half an hour with "great clearness of thought and his accustomed precision of language," as remembered in *Memoirs: 200 Years*. He knew that would be his last sermon, and two weeks later, on December 8, 1883, Rev. Nolley died.

In Nolley's obituary, a story was told of how he led a charge of the Confederate troops at Brook Creek near Richmond during the Civil War. The story goes that just before the battle, a voice was heard from the trees shouting, "Where's my boy? I am looking for my boy!" Nolley came running onto the battlefield dressed in long coat and top hat and carrying a large walking stick. The troops tried to warn him away and turn him back shouting that he would get hurt if he stayed there. He replied, "I can go anywhere my boy has to go, and the Lord is here!" When the order was heard for the troops to make one more forward charge, George Washington Nolley is reported to have rushed ahead of the troops shouting, "Come on, boys, come on!" This obituary was picked up and printed by newspapers across the country and, as far away as *The Signs of the Times* in Oakland California, and *The Columbian* of St. Helen's, Oregon. It is no surprise that a man of such large personality and strong character should have echoes of his life travel further than even he did in his lifetime.



REV. ABRAM PENN
Served Trinity 1832-1833

A native of Patrick County, Virginia, Abram Penn was born March 16, 1803 to Gabriel and Jane Penn. In 1824 he married Caroline Reed of Bedford County; however she died months later while he was in medical training. Her death altered his plans for his life in medicine. "Deeply concerned in respect to his immortal interests, he found peace and hope at a

Camp-meeting...in 1826."¹ That experience convinced him to enter the ministry. He enrolled in theological studies, and, upon travelling under a presiding elder, he was received on trial in 1828 and was sent to Caswell Circuit. He was accepted into full connection and ordained deacon in 1830 and elder in 1832.

Rev. Penn served Halifax in 1829; Raleigh in 1830; Shockoe Hill (which had become its own station in 1810) in Richmond in 1831; Trinity in Richmond in 1832; Petersburg in 1834; and as presiding elder to the Salisbury District from 1835 to 1836. He was appointed to the board of trustees at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland in 1835. In 1836 Penn married Mary E. Thomas of Louisburg, North Carolina.

Rev. Penn was a delegate to the General Conference in 1836. From 1837 to 1839, he was presiding elder to the Lynchburg District and from 1840 to 1844, the Petersburg District. Then he was placed on the Richmond District until 1847. In 1845, he was a member of the General Convention for the purpose of organizing the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and was a delegate to its first General Conference in Petersburg in 1846.

Rev. Penn's health declined in 1841 with "a severe attack of bilious fever," and later "a slight hemorrhage of his lungs."² In addition, his heart became enlarged, which later led to his death.

William W. Bennett wrote that from the time Rev. Penn was accepted into the conference until his health failed:

He exhibited constancy, zeal, and a uniformity and depth of piety seldom manifested. He was eminently successful as a preacher, and enjoyed a popularity almost unbounded. His talents were not of the highest order, yet he possessed a clear, vigorous and comprehensive mind, well stored with valuable information. With a graceful diction, rich imagination, and great zeal and earnestness of manner, he took a high position among the ministers of the church. He was a devoted son of Methodism, an unflinching advocate of her doctrines and rights, of her polity and discipline.

The leading feature of his character was a dauntless, straightforward honesty that needed no disguise for itself, and was impatient of dissimulation and disguise in other men. There

¹ William B. Sprague, ed., *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, (Robert Carter and Brothers, 1859), p. 748.

² Ibid.

was in Dr.³ Penn a fountain of geniality that made his society peculiarly agreeable, and secured him the ardent attachment of many warm and admiring friends. He suffered much in the later years of life with a most distressing [affliction] of the heart. Many times it brought him to the very gates of death, but he would rally again and go on in the path of duty and toil. At length disease gained the master over his noble frame. His work was done, well done, and he lay down to die. His last hours were peaceful and full of hope. In reply to inquiries about his spiritual welfare, he said, "that though his sufferings were almost too great to be borne, yet he hoped God in His mercy would enable him to bear them, and that he believed His grace would sustain him in the hour of his greatest trial."

According to his faith, so was it unto him. His sun went down in a cloudless sky, not a fear nor doubt marred the calmness of the closing scene. Peacefully, joyfully, he resigned his soul into the hands of his great Creator.⁴

In April 1848, having spent the winter with Mrs. Penn's family in Louisburg, North Carolina, Rev. Penn relocated to his brother's home in Patrick County, Virginia, where he resided until his death December 15, 1848. Dr. William A. Smith, then president of Randolph-Macon College, preached his funeral sermon. Burial was in Penn Cemetery, Patrick County, Virginia.

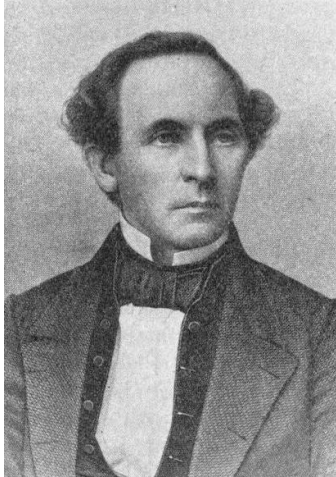
³ There is no indication of Reverend Penn having been awarded a doctorate degree. The author's use of "Dr." apparently stems from his earlier medical training.

⁴ William W. Bennett, *Memorials of Methodism in Virginia* (Richmond, Va.: published by the author, 1871), pp. 732-733.

OTHER SOURCES:

Find A Grave Memorial #83058641, created by David Eanes and Elizabeth Reed-Eanes, January 6, 2012.

W. D. Keene Jr., ed., *Memoirs – 200 Years! Soldiers of the Cross 1785-1987* (Decorah, Iowa: Amundsen Publishing Co., 1998), pp. 112-113.



REV. DR. DAVID SETH DOGGETT
Served Trinity 1834-1835

At some point in his early life, David Seth Doggett's father wanted his son to become a lawyer. As can be the case, plans set forth by loving fathers don't always work out, and in this instance, the early Methodist church benefitted from David Doggett's lifetime commitments to teaching and leading churches.

Born in the family homestead in Lancaster County, Virginia, January 23, 1810, Doggett received his early elementary education from the local schools. After the death of his father, he attended Northumberland Academy. At the age of 17, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church and shortly thereafter committed his life to the Christian ministry.

Doggett's membership into the church was held at the old White Marsh church on the Lancaster Circuit. Since the law profession was not his goal, he left Northumberland Academy and spent a year teaching in Orange County, Virginia. In this setting, Doggett also prepared for the ministry, and he was admitted on trial to the Virginia Conference in 1829 as a junior preacher on the Roanoke Circuit. His first appointment occurred in 1830 when he was sent as the preacher in charge to the Mattamuskeet Circuit in North Carolina.

His next appointment was to Petersburg for two years followed by an appointment to Lynchburg in 1833. Doggett was then appointed to Trinity in Richmond for one year. While at Trinity, he married Martha Ann Gwathmey of Lynchburg on June 19, 1834. They eventually had six children – three sons and three daughters.

From 1835 to 1838, he served appointments in Petersburg, Norfolk and a return to Lynchburg. In these short tenures, Rev. Doggett developed a reputation for a "wonderful eloquence [that] captivated people."¹

From 1839 through 1846, Rev. Doggett experienced life in college settings when he was appointed chaplain to the University of Virginia, where he also served as pastor for a Methodist church in town. He was then appointed chaplain at Randolph-Macon College in 1840. While at Randolph-Macon, he also accepted the opportunity to serve as a professor.

In 1847, Rev. Doggett was called back to the pulpit where he served several churches while also becoming editor of the *Southern Methodist Quarterly*. During the Civil War, from 1861 to 1865, Doggett had several assignments as preacher and presiding elder in Richmond. Again, Doggett demonstrated skill as a powerful and eloquent preacher with his sermons.

Fasting days, designed "to cleanse the new nation from sin and show God humility to win his favor,"² were held during the Civil War. Jefferson Davis proclaimed September 18, 1862, as a fast

¹ Samuel Bradlee Doggett, *A History of the Doggett-Doggett Family* (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill, 1894). <https://archives.org/details/historyofdoggett00ingogg>

² *Putting on the Armor of the Lord: The Role of Virginia Methodism during the Civil War*, Margaret T. Kidd, M.A. Thesis, University of Richmond, 2007, p. 67. <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/masters-thesis/>

day. Initially intended to thank God for victories at Richmond, in Kentucky and Manassas, this fast day happened to follow the Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest in American history. Still, Rev. Doggett, like most ministers in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, believed that God was on the side of the Confederates and his sermon on that fast day reflected his belief. His sermon included these words in support of the war:

According to a self-evident maxim, recognized by the word of God, acknowledged by the civilized world, and embodied in the Declaration of Independence of the United States, all nations are entitled to their own forms of government, since they alone are the judges and the subjects of those forms which suit them; and are responsible to no being but God, for their political constitutions. This inalienable right was boldly asserted by the Confederate States of America before the outbreak of hostilities. It was resisted by an armed force; and a bloody war, of three years' duration, has been the fearful consequence. This resistance was the product of the passions of our enemies; not of their reason, nor of their rights; for of neither is there the shadow of a pretext...

It proceeds upon the assumption, that the institution of domestic slavery, in the South, is contrary to the will of God; that it is an oppression and an injustice to a part of the human family, and that it is the duty of the Government of the United States to extinguish it by force of arms. This assumption is positively contradicted by the Holy Scriptures. On no human institution have they spoken more explicitly, both in the Old and New Testaments...³

His sermon was so well received it was printed and distributed in pamphlet form."⁴

After the Civil War, the General Conference was held in New Orleans in May of 1866, and Doggett was elected bishop. Another chapter in his service to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South started, and Bishop Doggett continued his diligence and dedication with constant travel to his charges, vigorous sermons and more writing.

His devotion to Randolph-Macon College continued as a member of the board of trustees. The college awarded him an honorary doctor of divinity degree. In the last two years of his life, Dr. Doggett served as the president of the Virginia Bible Society.

In the fall of 1880, the bishop's health had been in decline, and even though he rallied through this decline at times, he died October 28 at age 71 in Richmond. He is buried in Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery.

³*The War and Its Close. A Discourse, Delivered in Centenary Church, Richmond; Va., Friday, April 8th, 1864, Rev. D.S. Doggett, D.D., Pastor On the Occasion of the National Fast.* (Published by the Soldiers' Tract Association, M.E. Church, South, MacFarlane & Fergusson, 1864) pp 6-8

⁴ Kidd, pp. 67-69.

OTHER SOURCES:

Edward Leigh Pell, ed., *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism* (Richmond, Va.: Idea Publishing Co., 1899).

Find A Grave Memorial #6376093, created by PL, record added April 28, 2002.

Matthew Simpson, *Cyclopaedia of Methodism* (Philadelphia: Everts & Stewart, 1878).



REV. DR. LEROY MADISON LEE
Served Trinity 1835

Leroy M. Lee was born in Petersburg, Virginia, April 30, 1808. His family would be highly influential in the growth of the Methodist Church. His paternal grandparents were among the first Virginians to join the "Methodist societies." His parents, Abraham Lee and Elizabeth Wheless Lee, were among the first to welcome Methodist preachers to Virginia. His uncles, Jesse and John, were among the earliest Methodist preachers in America, with Jesse serving First Church in Richmond from 1812 to 1813.

Leroy Lee was first married in 1834 to Nancy Mosely Butler of Elizabeth City, North Carolina. She died shortly after their marriage. Lee wed again in 1836 to Virginia Addington of Norfolk, Virginia; they had nine children – six sons and three daughters. On April 1, 1827, he was converted under the ministry of Rev. William A. Smith. He was recommended to be received on trial by the Virginia Annual Conference held in Raleigh in February of 1828. The Campbell Circuit was his first appointment with Rev. Joshua Leigh as preacher in charge. He quickly served a number of different charges: Washington and Plymouth, North Carolina (1829); Newbern, North Carolina (1830); Prince Edward, Virginia (1831); Brunswick Circuit, Virginia (1832); Elizabeth City, North Carolina (1833); Portsmouth, Virginia (1834), and Trinity in Richmond (1835).

A prayer service was held at Trinity Church on the evening of June 20, 1835, with Lee as preacher. About 3 a.m., a fire was detected and the church was totally destroyed. "He remained among his people, preaching as he could, and arranging to rebuild the church."¹ In November of 1835, with the new building under construction, but his health failing, he sought relief and went by sea to Charleston, South Carolina, intending to spend the winter in St. Augustine, Florida. Upon returning to Virginia in January, just as the conference was ending, Lee was surprised to learn that he had been appointed editor of *The Christian Sentinel*, a religious paper recently purchased by the conference. As the conference lacked power to make that appointment, "his name appears in the minutes that year as colleague of the Rev. Wm. A. Smith, D. D., his successor at Trinity."² With the exception of a two-year period, Lee would remain editor for 22 years.

As editor of *The Christian Sentinel*, Lee became recognized as one of the four primary leaders of Methodism in the Virginia Conference. While Lee served as editor, the paper's name was changed twice — first, the *Journal of the North Carolina and Virginia Conferences* and then, the *Richmond Christian Advocate*. The editor's desk provided Lee a platform of influence over both secular and church news. "Political matters, including the annual message of the President of

¹ John J. Lafferty, *Sketches of the Virginia Conference Methodist Episcopal Church, South* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, 1880). P. 14.

² Edward Leigh Pell, ed., *A Hundred Years of Richmond Methodism* (Richmond, Va.: Idea Publishing Co., 1899), p. 36.

the United States and the governors of both North Carolina and Virginia, were included.”³ In addition, *The Christian Sentinel* contained theological discourses that sometimes led to disputes with the editors of other conference papers.

The rebuilding of Trinity Church was completed in June of 1836 and Rev. Lee was invited to participate in the dedication services. The building was later sold and turned into a theater. “[Lee] thinks himself peculiar, that, as a Methodist preacher, he built a theatre.”⁴

Rev. Lee was active as the Methodist Church splintered before the American Civil War. He was a delegate to the General Conference of 1844 in New York, when the church divided. He was a member of the General Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, in 1845 when the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized. He was a member of its first General Conference in 1846 and all subsequent conferences until his death and was chairman of many important committees.

He remained editor of the *Richmond Christian Advocate* until 1858 when he resigned to return to pastoral work. His first appointment was to Norfolk as Presiding Elder. Later appointments included Centenary Church (Lynchburg), Granby Street Church (Norfolk), and Union Station Church (Richmond). He next served as Presiding Elder to the Petersburg District and then to the Richmond District. His last appointment, in 1880, was to the church at Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, Virginia.

Rev. Lee was known for his writing abilities as well as the skills he developed as an editor. In 1834, a book entitled *Advice to a Young Convert*, including Lee’s contributions to the *Sentinels*, was published on the recommendation of the Virginia Conference. In 1847 he published a biography of his uncle entitled *The Life and Times of Jesse Lee*. In 1854-1855 his work entitled *The Great Supper Not Calvinistic* was published. He authored numerous other essays and articles.

Leroy Madison Lee died April 20, 1882 in Ashland and is buried in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond. “He was a man of fine abilities, of genial temper, and of much versatility.”⁵ “His name is known throughout the Wesleyan world, by prominence in the great councils of the church, and by contributions to the permanent and the periodical literature of his denomination.”⁶

³ W. Hewlett Smith, “Attic browsing yields portrait of Advocate and its ancestors,” *Virginia Advocate*, (Richmond, VA, June 10, 1982), p. 10.

⁴ Lafferty, p. 14.

⁵ “Obituary Notice – Leroy M. Lee,” T. DeWitt Talmage, ed., *Frank Leslie’s Sunday Magazine*, Vol., XII – July to December, 1882 (New York: Frank Leslie’s Publishing House, undated), July 1882, p. 10. (Google – digitized)

⁶ Lafferty, p. 13.

OTHER SOURCES:

Arthur L. Stevenson, *Natives of Petersburg, Virginia and Vicinity in The Methodist Ministry* (Brevard, N.C.: published by the author, 1973).

Putting on the Armor of the Lord: The Role of Virginia Methodism during the Civil War, Margaret T. Kidd, M.A. Thesis, University of Richmond, 2007. <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/masters-thesis/>

W. D. Keene Jr., ed., *Memoirs – 200 Years! Soldiers of the Cross 1785-1987* (Decorah, Iowa: Amundsen Publishing Co., 1998).

William Warren Sweet, *Virginia Methodism, A History* (Richmond, Va.: Whittet & Shepperson, 1955).