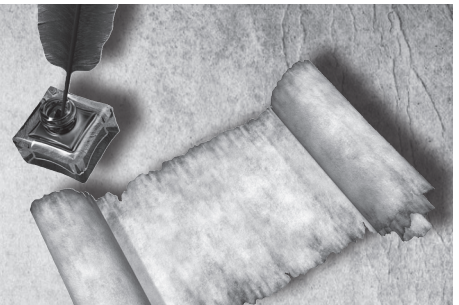


# HISTORIAN'S DIGEST



Volume 51, Number 3

Summer, 2011

## SIZZLING HEAT FAILS TO DAMPEN SPIRITS OF CONVOCATION PARTICIPANTS

Around 80 people gathered in Oklahoma City from July 20-24 for the 7th quadrennial Historical Convocation and the 22nd annual meeting of the Historical Society of the UMC. Despite temperatures that exceeded 100° nearly every day participants were well taken care of in air-conditioned buildings and churches and enthusiasm for the program (and the bountiful food) was evident throughout the meeting.

The Convocation opened with a visit to the beautiful, state-of-the-art, Oklahoma History Center which houses the Oklahoma Museum of History, the administration of the Oklahoma Historical Society and its Research Division. William D. Welge, Director of Research, for the Oklahoma Historical Society (OHS) described the extensive holdings of the Society, especially its large collection of newspapers, including 90.1% of all newspapers published in the state since 1844, as well as many of its resources related to Methodism.

The GCAH Distinguished Service Award Banquet was also held in the Devon Great Hall of the Center directly under a full-sized replica of the "Winnie Mae," the airplane in which well-known Oklahoman, Wiley Post, made the first solo flight around the world. Bill Wilson, Secretary of GCAH, presided over the banquet and made the Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Kenneth E. Rowe, long-time Methodist librarian at Drew University and a leading scholar and bibliographer on Methodist history.

Ken titled his response to the Award, "40 Years in Methodist's Attic," as he described his journey into Methodist history at Drew University and beyond, beginning with a dual appointment at the University to the position of Methodist librarian and professor of of Methodist history and polity. It was clear as Ken talked that his need to truly engage his students in Methodist history led him to add items to the Methodist collection which might otherwise have never been chosen, and thus the collection grew into one which he was able to use to help persuade the denomination to house its Archives Center at the University.

Our Friday morning program opened with an address by Dr. Tash Smith, *"We May Not Be the Same in Color, But We are the Same in Heart: The Indian Roots of Oklahoma's Methodism,"* Dr. Smith led us through the history of the churches which today make up the Oklahoma Indian



Missionary Conference (OIMC). Methodism became the strongest denomination in the area due to the facts that Methodists incorporated more Native pastors into their churches than did other denominations, and they avoided expensive preaching stations, gathering in local churches and Indian boarding schools. Native pastors were less interested in church dogma than personal experience and prayer which they saw as key to how Christianity could speak to individual personal needs; further, they did not require that Natives throw off all elements of their Native culture. Though white leaders chaffed over the control that Native pastors had over their churches, these pastors managed to prevail.

Unfortunately, we were greatly saddened during the Friday morning break to learn of the terrorist attacks in Norway which were made more personal due to the presence of the Rev. Jorunn Wendell, a member of GCAH from Norway. Our prayers went out to Jorunn and her fellow Norwegians during this terrible time.

Following the break Rob Sledge, presented the 2011 Saddlebag Award to Russell Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt, for the publication of the second volume of their two-volume work, *The Methodist Experience in America Volume I*. Ken Rowe accepted the award on behalf of the three authors.

Ken, with his usual humor, explained that the authors had decided from the outset to prepare the second volume – the sourcebook which serves as the documentation for the narrative – first. Then the sources would be woven into the narrative. These two books together will likely be the basis for United Methodist history and polity classes for many years to come.

(cont. on page 5)

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Please send address changes  
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submissions for the next issue is  
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## Letter from the President

In a previous letter I shared that the 1852 General Conference voted to delete what traditionalists called the "landmarks of our Zion" from the *Discipline*. Lining hymns, seating men and women separately, eschewing musical instruments, plain meeting houses, free seating, etc., had been physical markers of what Richey, Rowe, and Miller Schmidt called the Pietist stage of American Methodism. The nurturing stage would replace these with instruments, (rented) pews, family seatings, hymnbooks, and more elaborate architecture, all physical markers appealing to progressive contemporary tastes and more familiar to us.

But, not everybody got the memo.

The Seventh Historical Convocation of the Commission on Archives and History, also the Twenty-Third Annual Meeting of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church, just met at Oklahoma City University in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The event was ably co-hosted in the South Central Jurisdiction by the Oklahoma Conference and the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference, with the planning committee and OCU doing a superlative job. On the last full day, OIMC led the way in the Native American setting. We visited the Citizen Potowatami Nation Cultural Heritage Center, the Seminole Nation Museum, and the Salt Creek United Methodist Church.

At the Church, we had a magnificent meal (feast, really), and met with the Muscogee (Creek) congregation, along members of nearby Choctaw and Seminole churches. The Salt Creek sanctuary harkened to the 1840's, with a mourner's bench, small communion table and baptistery, center pulpit, preachers' chairs, and small platform railing. The congregation continues separate seatings (women and children on the right, men on the left), and a form of hymn lining. Until a few years back, there were semi-permanent living quarters encircling the Church for members who traveled from a distance, and a cow horn summoned the folk to worship (Pastor Nelson "Scottie" Harjo shared the elders' teaching that, when the horn sounded, you stopped and remained still to "not disturb the air" while people were called to worship).

There is even a shape note hymnal, *Heavenly Highway Hymns*, a "modern" adaptation with a penchant for country Gospel of the 1930's and 1940's. Yet here I found the chorus "Blessed Be the Name" serving to carry Charles Wesley's "O, For A Thousand Tongues to Sing."

*O, for a thousand tongues to sing/blessed be the name of the Lord;  
The glories of our God and King/blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Chorus:

*Blessed be the name, blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord.  
Blessed be the name, blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord.*

*Jesus the name that charms our fears/blessed be the name of the Lord.  
Tis music in the sinner's ears/blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Chorus

As I read this odd, choppy way of rendering Wesley, I realized I was looking at a probable survival of what Ian Straker called "the wandering chorus." In his presentation of the first printed AME hymnals of the early 1800's, made at the Charles Wesley tercentennial in 2007 in Washington, D.C., Straker presented, and Sam Young commented on, the popularity of choruses that could be added to standard hymn (in this case, the first and third lines of most common meter hymns). Talk about the past not even being past.

Over the last twenty-three years, as I have attended most of the convocations and historical society meetings, I have frequently had this experience of traditions surviving not only in honored historical memory but in living form like that of Salt Creek. They are continuing reminders of the rich and vital tradition in which we stand, and the major reason that attendance at the annual meetings remains a priority.

Gettysburg next year, the Archives Center at Drew in 2013, the Southeast Jurisdiction in 2014, and Chicago in 2015 await us all.

Dan Swinson



## Work in Progress: The Poetry of John and Charles Wesley



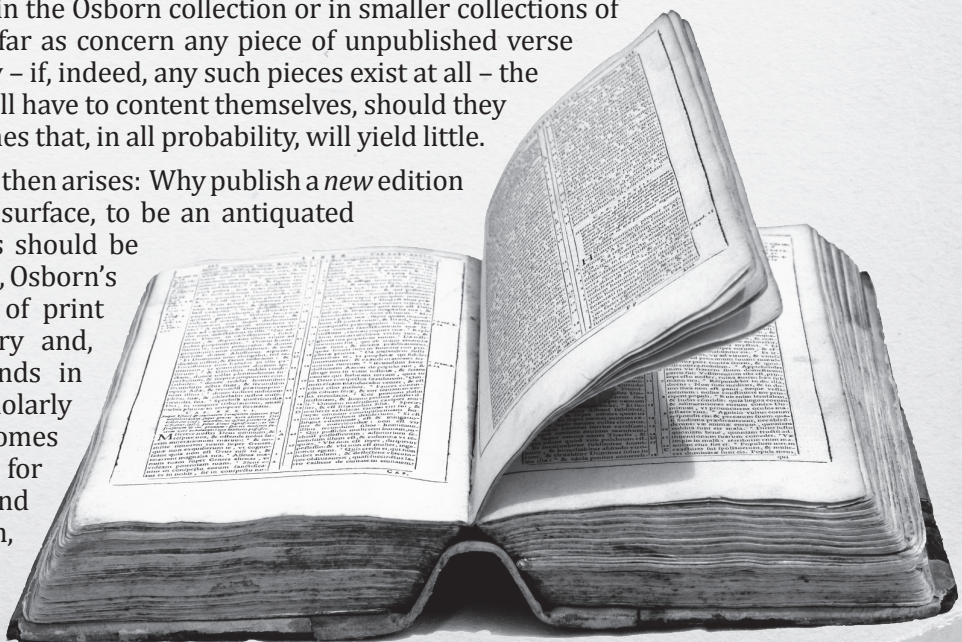
Since January 2009, Samuel J. Rogal, Chair (*emeritus*) of the Division of Humanities and Fine Arts, Illinois Valley Community College, has been “re-editing” George Osborn’s 1868-1872 thirteen-volume edition of *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*. Although, for more than a century, Osborn’s edition loomed impressive in terms of exhibiting sheer quantity of poetic production, his volumes stood far from perfect instruments for the engagement of scholarly research into the purely creative and lyrical niches of the Wesleys’ total literary production. Essentially, Osborn’s edition lacked completeness, nor did that editor fully exercise the application of scholarly apparatus. Students and scholars could easily locate and read the poetic and hymnodic pieces that Osborn offered to them, but they would have to venture outside the bindings of his thirteen volumes in search of biographical, historical, biblical, and critical background information necessary to the understanding and appreciation of the motivation, composition, and substance for and of the various poems. Further, although

Osborn offered to his readers a number of Charles Wesley’s poems that had never before seen the printed page, he did not off all of those like poems available to him; he “selected,” but he never really explained his reasons for or his methods of selection.

Fortunately, between 1957 and 1987, various previously unpublished poems by Charles Wesley, either unknown to or ignored by Osborn, began to be uncovered and then publicly introduced to the scholarly world through such print vehicles as Oliver A. Beckerlegge’s “Charles Wesley’s Politics,” *The London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, 182 (1957)280-291; Frank Baker’s extremely important edition of *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1962); Donald Baker’s essays in the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* on “Charles Wesley and the American War of Independence” and “Charles Wesley and the American Loyalists” - (1964): 159-164, (1965): 5-9, respectively; Donald Baker’s *The American War* (London: The Keepsake Press, 1975); S. T. Kimbrough, Jr.’s *Lost in Wonder: Charles Wesley, the Meaning of His Hymns Today* (Nashville: The Upper Room, 1987); Frank Baker’s *Charles Wesley’s Verse: An Introduction* (London: The Epworth Press, 1988).<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, during 1988-1992 appeared the most significant collection of them all, the three-volume *Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley*, edited by S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and the Rev. Oliver A. Beckerleege. Those volumes, declared the editors (1:12), comprised “the first major collection of unpublished [*Charles*] Wesley verse to be published since 1872” and included “all poems which do not appear in their entirety” in the Osborn collection or in smaller collections of the Wesleys’ verse. Insofar as concern any piece of unpublished verse generated by *John Wesley* – if, indeed, any such pieces exist at all – the literary archaeologists will have to content themselves, should they wish to do so, with searches that, in all probability, will yield little.

The obvious questions then arises: Why publish a *new* edition of what appears, on the surface, to be an antiquated collection? The answers should be equally obvious: To begin, Osborn’s collection has been out of print for more than a century and, as indicated above, stands in need of editorial and scholarly updating so that it becomes a workable instrument for study, investigation, and discussion. In addition, its thirteen volumes continue to remain of value to scholars – even





more so now that Kimbrough and Beckerlegge have provided the necessary mortar to fill the breaches in the Charles Wesley poetical corpus. Essentially, this refurbished version of Osborn's collection, when placed on library shelves beside the three volumes of Kimbrough and Beckerlegge, will allow students and scholars of eighteenth-century verse and hymnology opportunities to view and assess the fullest range possible of the literary contributions of John and Charles Wesley to the social, political, and theological spheres of their day.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, until a *complete* edition of the poetry of John and Charles Wesley comes forth, Osborn's collection remains the best of the lot; as such, it cannot be allowed to disappear from library shelves, with its few remaining sets consigned into the hands of antiquarian book collectors and used book shops.

For this "New Edition," Rogal has provided general readers, students, and researchers alike with necessary background information relative to each of those poems – details historical, bibliographical, biographical, Biblical, literary, linguistic, and critical that Osborn omitted or of which he had no interest or knowledge. Thus, this "New Edition" becomes an important research tool, rather than simply a polished reissue of a literary antique under fresh paper and new bindings. In addition, when completed, the collection will include indices to the first lines of each piece (Osborn's index extended only to volumes 1-8); to the first line of each verse (which Osborn provided); and, new to the edition, an index to the key items contained in thousands of notes that punctuate the poems. Thus, Rogal's volumes extend, by two to three hundred pages each, the lengths of Osborn's original volumes; in fact, several of the original volumes have been issued in two parts. To date, Rogal has completed (the Edwin Mellen Press has published) "new editions" of volumes 1-8 of Osborn's set.

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<sup>1</sup>See Betty M. Jarboe, *John and Charles Wesley: A Bibliography* (Metuchen, New Jersey and London: The American Theological Library Association and The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1987) – a checklist of 4723 secondary sources; Kenneth E. Rowe (ed.), *United Methodist Studies. Basic Bibliographies*, 3rd ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992); S. T. Kimbrough, Jr., and Oliver Beckerlegge (eds.), *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1988-1992), 1:17-18.

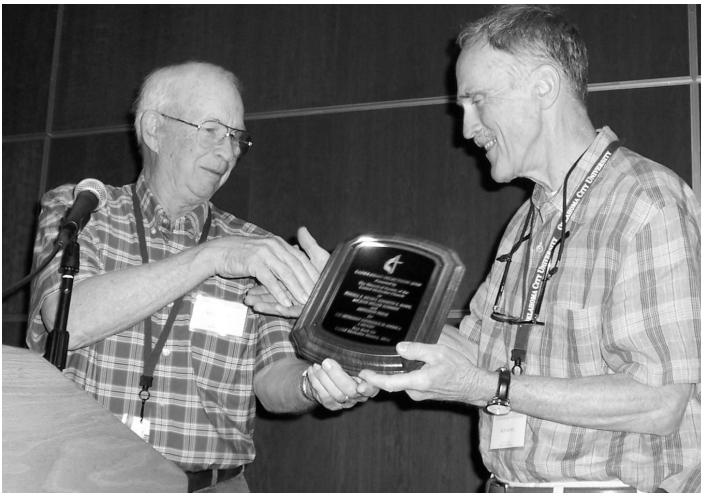
<sup>2</sup>For more on this issue, especially as it relates to the poetry of Charles Wesley, see Oliver A. Beckerlegge, "Charles Wesley's Poetical Corpus," in *Charles Wesley. Poet and Theologian*, ed. S.T. Kimbrough, Jr. (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1992): 30-44.

Submitted By  
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If you are interested in purchasing Rogal's work, see *A New and Critical Edition of George Osborn's The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* (1868-1872), with the Additions of Notes, Annotations, Biographical and Background Information Vols 1-4; 5-6 (two volumes each), 7, 8 (two volumes) (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2009).

**NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:** We hope that many more of you will write a short article (750-1000 words) letting us know about the projects on which you are currently working or the research you are doing.





The afternoon session opened with a lecture by Dr. Paul T. Barton, “*An Alternative Concept of Evangelism: Latina Protestants’ Participation in the Evangelistic Witness.*” Dr. Barton began by noting that since evangelism has traditionally been conceived of as the spoken word – preached from the pulpit - it has been by definition primarily a male enterprise since women have only relatively recently been allowed to preach. Thus the role of women – in this case – Latina women – in the evangelistic process has been overlooked. Though there were a very few women who served as conference evangelists or carried on the work of their pastor husbands after their deaths, the primary way in which Latina women engaged in evangelism was through the way they lived out their traditional gender roles – in Sunday School rooms, in counseling among women, in service to the needy, and in opening one’s homes to neighbors, taking advantage of traditional gender roles to communicate the Gospel to members of their own families, neighbors, children and youth.

HSUMC President, Dan Swinson, then presented the 2011 Ministry of Memory Award to John Gooch from the Missouri Annual Conference. John has been involved in Missouri Archives and History for many years and is long-time editor of *Toward the Rising Sun*, the semi-annual journal of the Missouri United Methodist Historical Society.

We then traveled to Hillcrest-Fuente De Vida UMC where we were treated to a wonderful Mexican dinner. After opening music and a welcome from the pastor, Tino Espinoza, Bishop Joel Martinez presented an overview of the Oral History Project of Hispanic/Latino United Methodism. This project grew out of conversations with many in the church of the need to preserve the faith stories of Hispanic/Latino leaders in the church while they were still living. Prior to World War II, most Hispanic/Latinos’ lives were confined to their local communities and barrios. All of a sudden they were involved in the War, were sent around the world and came back a different people, aware of a wider world. Some began to go to school under the GI Bill and pastors began to go to Seminary. Many of these people are no longer living or are incapacitated and no longer able to share their faith stories. Thus, this project was begun. Many stories have now been videotaped and Bishop Martinez shared with the group parts of a number of the interviews.

On Saturday morning Dr. Michelene E. Pesantubbee (Choctaw) made a moving presentation, “The Way of the Ghost Bird – Not,” describing her search for evidence of



“beloved women,” among the Choctaw. She noted that it was sometimes like searching for a ghost; yet, there were glimpses now and then among the stories she gathered. She described how the roles of Choctaw men and women have changed due to the elimination of the “green corn ceremony,” where women were respected as farmers and equal to males who were the hunters. With the loss of the green corn ceremony came the loss of the tradition of matrilineal clans; and with this loss has often come racism, violence and physical/emotional abuse. Choctaw women are often able to survive, however, through their involvement in the church where they can create a safe space for themselves and their children.

The HSUMC 2011 annual meeting was held following this presentation. The Treasurer’s Report and the 2012 proposed budget were passed. These will be printed in the Winter issue of the Digest. It was reported that since our membership continues to drop, we no longer have enough income from membership to support our expenses so that we are now drawing down on our reserves. Thus, the Society voted to establish the Albea Godbold Development Fund to receive gifts, bequests, and other funds to support the work of the HSUMC. See page six for more information about this new fund.

We voted to expand the Historical Society e-list to as many names as possible as the first step in the 5-year plan being developed by the Board. Bob Williams will manage this list. Following this expansion smaller “interest group” lists will be developed to facilitate communication on subjects of like interest – such as genealogy, museums and historic sites, local church history, etc.

The 2012 annual meeting will be held in Gettysburg, PA, May 14-17, hosted by the NEJCAH.

On Saturday afternoon we visited the Citizen Potawatomi National Cultural Heritage Center and the Seminole Nation Museum, where Lewis Johnson gave a lively presentation on the history of the Seminoles. See the President’s letter (p. 2) for Saturday evening’s program.

The Convocation concluded with early morning worship at St. Luke’s UMC in downtown Oklahoma City where Bishop Hayes reminded us that “Our Ending is God’s Beginning.” All in all a most worthwhile Convocation and annual meeting.

## THE ALBEA GODBOLD DEVELOPMENT FUND

At the 2011 Annual Meeting the Historical Society established a new fund, named for the predecessor of the General Secretaries of GCAH, to receive gifts, bequests, and other funds to support the work of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church.

At the session establishing the new fund, Jim Morris of Iowa presented a check for one thousand dollars as the first gift to the Fund. Rob Sledge also gave one thousand dollars to establish the Fund. We hope many others will follow.

If you would like to donate, you may send your gift, or establish your bequest, to the Albea Godbold Development Fund, c/o the General Commission on Archives and History, PO Box 127, Madison, NJ 0940.

The Fund will be administered by the Society Treasurer Chuck Yrigoyen, who may also receive donations at 950 Willow Valley Lake Dr 1-106, Willow Street, PA 17584.



## NAMES FOR PROGRAM COMMITTEE BEING SOUGHT

HSUMC By-laws call for Program Committee members to be elected to the Board during the third year of every quadrennium. The Program Committee works with the Vice-President to establish the various programs of the Society. The Board meets once a year prior to the annual meeting and travel expenses are paid. We are currently seeking names of persons to be considered for this committee. If you are interested or would like to submit a name, please contact Dan Swinson at [djswinson@wowway.com](mailto:djswinson@wowway.com) or [t.methodist@sbcglobal.net](mailto:t.methodist@sbcglobal.net).

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