

## **Camp Meetings in New England**

**From Centers of Fiery “Red-hot Methodists” to Interesting Institutes**



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**Presented to the Oxford Institute**

**August 2007**

### *The Practice of Camp Meeting*

Imagine traveling to a lovely three-acre grove of trees, cleared of all underbrush, where tents for sleeping are standing in an oblong square, or a circle. Behind the tents are carriages, wagons and tethered horses. Cooking fires are placed just outside the tent flaps. In the center of the tents, there is stage in front of a semicircle of benches, one section for the women and another for the men. At night this tent ground is illuminated by candles. This is the setting for a typical nineteenth century American camp meeting as described by American Methodist preacher, Jesse Lee. He wrote,

We proceed in our religious exercises as follows: soon after the first dawn of day a person walks all round the ground in front of the tents blowing a trumpet as he passes; which is to give the people notice to arise; about ten minutes after the trumpet is blown again with only one long blast; upon which, the people in all their tents begin to sing, and then to pray, either in their tents or at the door of them, as is most convenient. At the rising of the sun a sermon is preached, after which we eat breakfast. We have preaching again at 10 o'clock, and dine about one. We preach again at 3 o'clock, eat supper about the setting of the sun, and have preaching again at candle light. We generally begin these meetings on Friday and continue them until the Monday following about the middle of the day. I have known these meetings to continue without any intermission for two nights and a day, or longer. The people being continuously engaged in singing, praying, preaching or exhorting without any cessation...I have known some Camp Meetings to continue eight or ten days.<sup>1</sup>

This practice of camp meeting revivals seemed to be an answered prayer for Methodist bishop Francis Asbury who called them a “new work of God.”<sup>2</sup> By Lee’s estimation the number of American Methodists grew by 250% between the beginning of these revivals and 1809.<sup>3</sup> Camp meeting expert, Kenneth Brown, agrees that they became a “major vehicle” of expansion for Methodism in nineteenth century America.<sup>4</sup>

It has been argued that such meetings were unique to the American frontier, but when one begins to scratch the surface of the archival materials scattered throughout New England, it is clear that camp meetings were also a dynamic force in the development of Methodism in the North East. In 1789 Jesse Lee first ventured to New England and by

1900 there were approximately 94,000 probationary and full members of the Methodist societies and 334 local preachers serving them.<sup>5</sup>

In stark contrast Methodism in New England in this present age is losing membership vision and morale.<sup>6</sup> For this reason I invite us to look back and reflect on the story of how New England Methodism first prospered and the role of camp meetings in that growth. My primary sources are the reports of camp meetings from the 1824, 1827 and 1926 *Zion's Herald* (ZH).<sup>7</sup> I'm especially interested in those aspects of worship that were part of the early camp meetings, but dropped out along the way. My hope is that when these become evident we can consider picking them up, dusting them off, and discovering whether they are still useful for the "work of God" and our work as worship leaders in the present age.

***Centers of Fiery "Red-hot Methodists"  
New England Camp Meetings in 1824 and 1827***

The Religious Climate when Jesse Lee Arrived

In 1789 Jesse Lee was commissioned to evangelize New England starting in Connecticut and moving northward into Massachusetts and beyond – a territory where Congregationalists already dominated. Unlike the circuit riders of the frontier, Lee faced a great deal of competition with these established congregations which met in prominent buildings in every settled town along the coast.

At this time the Congregationalists were in conflict over older Calvinist notions of predestination and more contemporary Unitarian and Universalist views.<sup>8</sup> Unitarians rejected the notion of human depravity while Universalists appealed to people who were uncomfortable with the doctrine of eternal damnation, preferring a doctrine of universal salvation.<sup>9</sup> Methodism fit nicely in the middle of this theological split, rejecting the

doctrine of predestination on the one hand, but still preaching salvation from sin through Jesus Christ and the importance of living a sanctified life. Wilber Fisk, a New England preacher of the day explained, “The Wesleyan stance...makes it possible to retain the biblical doctrines of the depravity of man and the salvation by grace alone, while not denying human ability and responsibility”.<sup>10</sup> John Allen, though not as sophisticated as Fisk, was thinking the same way as he critiqued his Universalist opponents with this witty verse:

And Judas, that perfidious wretch,  
Was not for crimes accursed,  
But by a cord, out went his Lord,  
And got to heaven first.<sup>11</sup>

### How Camp Meetings Spread

According to historian James Mudge, the first known Methodist camp meeting in New England was held in 1802 at Haddam, Connecticut (south of Middletown on the Connecticut River), lasting for 3 days with over 100 people who had been rounded up by the preachers of the Middletown circuit. With no tents or grove of trees, the group met either in the open air or on a boat during the day, and in nearby houses and barns at night and during rain showers. Thirty or forty converts were reported. Another meeting was held near New Haven and then in 1805 Presiding Elder Pickering and eleven preachers of the Boston District held one in Norton, Massachusetts.

Great numbers of people came, and a profound religious impression was produced. So great an outcry was made, and so many fell prostrate, that Pickering had to give over preaching and attend to the awakened. Fire spread from this center all over the Conference.<sup>12</sup>

In these early days, camp meetings were sometimes held in conjunction with Annual Conference, such as the 1809 conference in Monmouth, Maine that happened concurrently with a camp meeting one mile away. Many of the preachers, including

Elijah Hedding, Presiding Elder, devoted considerable time at the camp meeting during Conference.<sup>13</sup>

In the early years, the camp meetings were rarely held in the same place twice. They were kept simple and inexpensive, set up by the preachers in a circuit or district at some central location with enough water and firewood. Sometimes they were inland, approached by foot, on horseback and by wagon. But the New Englanders soon found that it was easier to locate a meeting on the coast so that the participants could travel by boat. In 1823 the Boston District held one in Marshfield that drew thirteen packet sloops and two schooners bringing 10,000 persons (including forty-seven ministers) during the week.<sup>14</sup> Meetings on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard soon sprang up to service the Lynn and Boston districts. The sites were still simple, with the only structure a preacher's stand; the people sat on logs with slabs over them and slept in tents on the ground covered with straw and bedding.<sup>15</sup>

With this general background in mind, we can now turn our attention to reports of specific camp meetings found three volumes of *ZH*.<sup>16</sup> In order to facilitate comparison I have divided the data into three sections: a description of the announcements of upcoming camp meetings, reports of the meetings after they took place, and reflections. The reports section includes descriptions of the setting, the reported numbers (attendance, conversions), the preaching, praying and singing, and any other acts of worship. The reflections deal with the stated purpose, apologetic defense of, and lasting effects of the camp meetings, and document as well the reporters' sense that the Holy Spirit was alive and active there. For comparison, a similarly structured summary of reports about camp meetings in the 1926 issues of *ZH* follows; the difference is noteworthy.

## Announcements

There are well over a dozen articles about camp meetings published in the *ZH* in both 1824 and 1827. The articles can be divided into three general categories. Some are simple announcements of upcoming meetings including two (in Westmoreland, New Hampshire and Brookfield, Vermont) that were specially planned to be *en route* for the many circuit riders heading for the Annual Conference in Barnard, Vermont. Sometimes the announcements give specific instructions for boat navigation or when to set up tents. Organizers often expected all the preachers of a circuit or district to attend.

## Reports

**Setting** Many reporters were quite poetic when they described the setting of the meetings, and how they were set apart from the world and thus conducive for worship.

The scenery with which we were surrounded was truly delightful. Covered as we were with the green foliage of the trees, which nature seemed to have formed for a “shadow from the heat” - shut out from the noise and tumult of worldly cares, nothing could disturb the quiet of our devotions or prevent us from waiting upon God so as to renew our strength.<sup>17</sup>

They held that the natural settings of the meetings were vital to producing the transformation they were hoping for. They believed that by leaving “worldly concerns” at home in exchange for “the shades of the wilderness” they had a

better opportunity to call to remembrance their sins and transgressions - to meditate upon the merciful forbearance and loving kindness of Jehovah - and to “dedicate their souls and bodies anew to Him and his service, in a holy, righteous and godly life.” In the stillness of the forest and in the retirement of nature, it is well known, from experience, that religious discourses often make the most lasting impression upon the human heart.<sup>18</sup>

In the wilderness, moreover, they felt like the scriptural children of God: the Israelites of Exodus,<sup>19</sup> or those listening to Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount,<sup>20</sup> or those experiencing a foretaste of “assembling with the heavenly host, under the shadow of the tree of life.”<sup>21</sup>

**Numbers** The most common items in a report were the numbers of tents erected, preachers present and lay people attending. In June 1824 one camp meeting drew 40 preachers, 15 tents and an estimated peak attendance of 2500 people. Another meeting held in September of 1827 had 16 tents, containing about 350 persons. Reporters also attempted to count the number of people who were converted or otherwise dramatically changed. Daniel Dorchester reported that at the close of a meeting in 1827,

The large circle was formed by nearly two thousand persons, members of our church and spectators; - prayer was made...then those who had experienced pardoning mercy during the meeting, were invited to come forward within the circle; and forth, on every side came fathers, mothers, young men and maidens to the number of eighty-three, besides a considerable number who had left the ground. So that we keep within bounds, if, including backsliders who were reclaimed, we recon one hundred converts, as the fruits of this meeting. How many sincere seekers left the ground without obtaining relief, we cannot tell; but at the Quarterly meeting...the day following, eighteen persons gathered at the altar, that they might be particularly remembered in the prayers of God's people.<sup>22</sup>

The weather was also reported, especially if it explained low attendance or was a sign of success as when great numbers turned out in spite of uncomfortable conditions. When a hurricane arose during the meeting in Unity, Maine, Amasa Buck reflected:

There is scarcely any man however energetic in business- and however lucrative his employment, were he exposed to a severe storm, who would not quit his business during the storm; but not so at this meeting. The dear children of God would not leave their posts, but persevered in their work, and I did not discover the least murmuring or impatience; every one seemed to enter into the spirit of their work and labor for souls. There were but five sermons delivered on the stand I believe, but there were many sermons preached in the tents, and a very great work was wrought in the church, between twenty and thirty sinners were converted. Undoubtedly some would think it imprudent to encamp in the wilderness, but we are told in the scripture - 'that they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods' Ezekiel 34.<sup>23</sup>

***Preaching, Praying and Singing*** were the three main worship activities. *ZH*

reporter D. Young proclaimed:

Listening to the blessed word of life, which conveys peace to the troubled soul and raises the dead in trespasses and in sins to life and strength, was our high privilege; and offering up the grateful incense of praise and prayer, our pleasing employment.<sup>24</sup>

As in Jesse Lee's time, some meetings still scheduled three preaching sessions per day. In Ashford, Connecticut in 1827 they had preaching at 8 and 10 a.m., 5 p.m. and in the evening.

The preaching was "calculated to enlighten, alarm, comfort and sanctify" the listeners.<sup>25</sup> On three occasions we get a glimpse of the topics of the sermons. First a correspondent from the 1824 Westmoreland meeting listed nineteen preachers and the scripture texts each chose. Several them were well known New England preachers such as Daniel Dorchester, Able Lummus and Isaac Jennison. While the content of the sermons is left up to conjecture, we can speculate some of the parallels being drawn between the camp meeting and the selected scripture. For example, the text from Acts 4 lends itself to the expectation that the Holy Spirit would join the assembly and fill the preachers so that they too would speak the word of God with boldness. The texts generally provide a mixture of encouragement, positive role models like Abraham, the promise of salvation for the penitent, and admonition and warning to those who did not respond to the call.

Later that same summer, a report for the meeting in Lyndon, Vermont outlines four "most interesting" sermons. One sermon based on James 5:16 gave a description of a righteous person, then described a righteous person's prayer, followed by the effects of prayers "proved by the variety of examples from Genesis to Revelation." The second sermon was from Amos 4:12 – "prepare to meet thy God," – assuring the listeners that they would meet God in death and judgment; that preparation consisted in aligning one's will to God's; it also contrasted the life of a sinner with "a Christian." Another sermon based on Psalm 119:96 proclaimed that "there is an end to all human attainments," but

God's nature shows the way to attain justification. The fourth sermon described was titled, "The joy of thy Lord is your strength." In it the preacher portrayed this joy and its benefits.<sup>26</sup>

In September of 1827, Amasa Buck lists seven sermon texts preached in Royalton, Vermont and described how each was meant to prepare people for salvation, teach them how to witness about the work God was doing in their lives, and encourage reconciliation with God. Mr. Buck reported,

...the altar was thronged with mourners. God answered prayer, many were converted from mourning to joy and were clothed with the garments of praise; the work of the Lord moved on with power, many were crying for mercy, and immediately finding deliverance praised the God of Israel.<sup>27</sup>

Prayer often took place concurrently with preaching or on its heels. We read that each day of the 1827 meeting in Ashford, after the second, third and fourth sermons, the mourners were usually invited to come forward as subjects of special prayer. The gathering was led to pray by the preachers again in Royalton when

at the close of this discourse the power of the Lord came down upon the preachers, and the sons of Levi manifestly and powerfully labored in prayers, sighs, groans, and prevailing faith, to obtain a meetness for the work, in brightening and confirming them in the evidence of their acceptance with God, and the great work of the ministry.<sup>28</sup>

Apparently it was not considered improper to pray or even cry out loud in the middle of the preaching services. Rather, such emoting was encouraged as a sign of the Holy Spirit working on a person, transforming one from an unawakened state to a state of anxious desire to know the love of God through experience.

Prayer also took place in smaller group settings, such as within the Society tents. T. C. Pierce proclaimed it was providential that though it rained the first two days of the 1826 meeting in Lyndon, Vermont the young brethren became "disciplined in the tents to the important duty of prayer."<sup>29</sup> Philip Munger stated that "our object was to spend as

much time as was practicable in prayer meeting, either in a praying circle on the ground, or in the tents.”<sup>30</sup> From the context we can assume that most of these prayers were spontaneous, though we may expect many phrases of their prayers would be found in the Bible.

Brother Long counseled those gathered in Lyndon that prayer ought to be fervent, “like a man drowning would cry for help.” He gave permission to pray “vocally, mentally and ejaculatory” as it is “the expression of the soul, offered up to God in faith,” and he taught them about adoration, intercession, supplication and thanksgiving.<sup>31</sup>

Singing is not so much specifically reported in these newspaper accounts as it is alluded to when the reporters quote a verse or two now and then.<sup>32</sup> For example, Ezekiel Robinson wrote “A number of backsliders were reclaimed; the language of whose hearts undoubtedly was ‘We will no more our God forsake Nor cast his word behind’” from Charles Wesley’s “Come, Let Us Use the Grace Divine” .<sup>33</sup> Wesley’s “All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord” was quoted by T. C. Pierce when describing the feeling at the end of meeting,

Although prior to this meeting many had been entire strangers to each other; yet on the occasion of parting, hardly a dry eye was visible. ‘If our fellowship below in Jesus be so sweet, What heights of rapture shall we feel when round his throne we meet?’<sup>34</sup>

***Other Acts of Worship*** The first act of worship that usually took place at a new camp meeting site was a prayer of consecration. The report of the Falmouth camp of 1824 listed as the first rule for the meeting, “The ground within the circle of the tents is consecrated to the worship of Almighty God.”<sup>35</sup> At the start of another camp “the ground, the tents, the preachers, and the brethren, and all connected with that encampment” were “consecrated to God” by one of the preachers in the “introductory prayer.”<sup>36</sup>

At the end of a camp “those that had experienced religion during the course of the meeting, and those that had been reclaimed from a backslidden state, were invited to come forward.”<sup>37</sup> This ritualized act seems to me to be a way of showing the fruits of the camp meeting endeavor. It led to a concluding time of praise.

### Reflections

**Purpose** The *ZH* reveals clear thoughts about the purpose of the camp meeting enterprise. For one thing it was a way for “those who labored from the stand” to teach doctrine about sin and “life of piety to God.” One correspondent wrote, “ In the discourses delivered at the stand, the deplorable condition of the sinner, without God, was represented - the character of Christ brought to view, and his readiness and willingness to receive every poor sinner declared, as well as the duty of the sinner enforced.” Such teaching was apparently taken to heart for many cried out *“what must I do to be saved.”* During the prayer times many made known their desire for salvation. “We heard many deploring the time they had occupied in sin and rejection of the Saviour's calls, and they cried to him for pardon with a loud voice. We found that the penitent did not cry nor the saint pray in vain; for Jesus came, and did not pass by without giving them, (as the good physician) his healing medicine; - and the effect was, their mourning was turned into rejoicing.”<sup>38</sup>

Careful study of this passage shows that the main purpose was revival. Camp meeting leaders assumed that such a revival not only consisted of conversion, but of affecting change in the faith of people wherever they were along a continuum. This doctrine of the way of salvation was presented in clear, easy to remember terms. Through preaching, praying and singing unawakend souls were brought to Christ, backsliders were

reclaimed and believers were renewed in love. Amasa Buck writes of “awakening, enlightening, converting, sanctifying and saving sinners” with the assistance of the grace of “the Great Parent of all kindness and tender mercy.”<sup>39</sup> By treating sin as serious and describing it in terms the listeners could identify with, and by presenting life in Christ as an alternative the congregation was led to repent and their desire for salvation was increased until they felt anxious for a change. Encouraged by kind people offering intercessions, these anxious mourners were able to stay open to the Spirit, allowing the “healing medicine” to sink in.

Though the preachers presented a clear pattern for saving the sinner, they also made room for a variety of acceptable responses and allowed that the work of the Spirit could require different amounts of time to take full effect. Time and again the reporters not only touted the number converted on site, but also expected that others who were still in a state of mourning when the camp was over would receive the Spirit in the near future.

An anonymous article printed in June of 1824 entitled “Reflections at Camp Meeting” instructs the reader to attend with the proper expectations. If one attends out of curiosity, a blessing is not to be expected. If one comes to be made holy so that life will be easier, that too is a wrong motive. Rather, one should come to camp meeting desiring to become holy so that one may do good and be a better member of one’s family and community. The reader is assured that “this is what Heaven desires.” The article makes it clear that every individual was expected to know his or her own spiritual state by searching the heart, and that the whole endeavor was really about submitting one’s own

will to God's will. Any changes that came were a work of the Spirit and would be made as the Spirit saw fit. Finally, the reader was encouraged to pledge:

I will do or neglect nothing that shall weaken my faith; but will be examining myself, watching, reading, meditating, or praying, when not engaged in public meeting and the more distressed I feel about myself, the more, and the nearer will I expect the blessing; and when I get a blessing ever so small, I will own it, bless God, pray for and expect still greater blessings.

Such instruction served to give people markers of what to expect as they started down this life-changing path; it was guidance through the emotional terrain they would likely pass through, and thus it helped them hold on until the blessing came their way.

*Defending Camp Meetings to Other New Englanders* It doesn't take much reading between the lines to see that Methodists were frequently scorned by their New England neighbors for the events that took place at camp meetings. One can often find a note of defensiveness as the reporters describe the "good order of the exercises." The "brethren" are often described as respectable, serious and observant of good decorum. Even a powerful worship service with a great multitude could be held without being "boisterous." The leaders took care that the attendees of their meetings, "do honor to the community of which they are members." One report was even more direct.

A Camp-meeting in this place was a novel thing. It might therefore be expected that much curiosity would be excited and much speculation indulged. Many reports, unfavorable to the character and design of these meetings, had been industriously circulated by the enemies of our cause; in consequence of which, many well disposed persons came with very strong prejudices against them, which nothing but the strongest evidence in their favor could remove.<sup>40</sup>

It was not uncommon for each camp meeting to have its share of critics. Sometimes gangs of rowdy young men would arrive to taunt the preachers. But the clever circuit riders were ready for these hecklers and delighted the congregation by their witty retorts. Sometimes the preachers were so effective that the hecklers were converted, as is the case with John Allen.<sup>41</sup> But legal action was also taken in the

legislatures of several states to protect meetings from those prone to riot, mock, and drink “ardent spirits.”<sup>42</sup>

Sometimes the criticisms and thus the defense were made on theological grounds. Once the editors reprinted a long critical editorial by a Unitarian and followed it with a defense. The Methodists found they also had to defend themselves against fellow “disciples of the same glorious Redeemer” lifting up the fruits (converts) as proof that such “extraordinary means of grace” can be the means of great good.”<sup>43</sup> D. Young was particularly sharp tongued:

As for those who dip their pens in the waters of Meribah, and represent Camp Meetings as scenes of confusion and licentiousness, though they may think like the prophet Jonah, that they do well to be angry, and though they may give reasons more weighty and numerous for their suppression, than did the moody prophet for the destruction of the Ninevites, let them be assured that their good effects are sufficient to frown down ridicule and kindle indignation at its intrusion upon scenes so hallowed.<sup>44</sup>

Some critics charged that it was unnecessary for mourners to be called forward to the alter, objecting that God can bless people in one place as well as another. In response Philip Munger retorted, “the question with us when we want to get souls converted, is not so much what God can do, as it is what He is wont to do, and in what way souls are most likely to get blessed.” He claimed that in a “vast number of cases” those who came forward when invited “found peace” because they were expressing their “determination to seek the Lord” as well as the desire for God’s people to pray for them. Munger also believed that conversions “without first openly manifesting...determination to renounce sin, and seek the Lord, are exceedingly rare.”<sup>45</sup>

By and large all of the apologetics boiled down to the results of camp meeting. This innovative way of worship was drawing the unchurched, and those who had been

neglecting their faith back into the fold of the church. The fruits were so bountiful that camp meetings, to the minds of the Methodists, must indeed be blessed by God.

The positive effects, as reported in *ZH*, went beyond the individuals who went to the meetings, but spread through the surrounding communities. A Vermont correspondent gives credit for the start of the revival in the Lyndon circuit to a camp meeting in Cabot the previous September. Conversion did not just change a person's inner state, but the process turned them into people who witnessed their transformation to others. By such witness it was reported that "many of their neighbors were awakened and converted. A glorious work ensued. About twenty have joined the Methodists, and many more the Free-will Baptists."<sup>46</sup>

***"Giving All the Glory to Him to Whom All Praise Belongs"*** One of the most exciting aspects of these early reports of camp meeting is the sense that the living God was moving among the people of New England and transforming their lives. Such transformation caused those who were experiencing God's mercy to speak enthusiastically about the meetings to everyone around them, thus producing curiosity and drawing more participants into the movement. In this sense it was a lay-led movement. One layman who deserves much more attention than this paper can give is "Camp Meeting John." He used to say that "he went [to camp meeting] a bold, blatant, rum-drinking, song-singing, fun-making Universalist; and came away a red-hot shouting Methodist." After his conversion he returned home on fire.

He visited his neighbors, prayed with them, and exhorted them to seek the Lord, and extended his visits, calling at every house for several miles around. He established a prayer meeting at his own house, which soon became crowded to overflowing. One of his neighbors offering the use of his house, having much better accommodations, the meeting was accordingly removed. Soon this room became crowded, and the meeting was removed to the Congregational church at the village...resulting in the most extensive revival ever witnessed in that place. Most of the converts were received into the Congregational and Baptist churches. The Methodist having no organization in the

village and only a small class in the upper part of the town [*sic*]. One person said to him "Brother Allen, you are only helping the Congregationalists." He replied, "I thank God that I can help anybody."<sup>47</sup>

It is clear that Methodist congregations were not the only ones reaping the benefits.

However excited and proud the Methodist leaders were about the fruits of their camp meetings, they made it perfectly clear that in the end, only God could measure the entire bounty.

The amount of the good that was done at this meeting will be best known at the finishing up of "life's great drama." Then it will be distinctly ascertained, what man, and what woman was born there; - then it will be discovered, how many, at this meeting, received those good impressions, which, by the Divine blessing, were productive of a godly life, and which eventuated in the final salvation of the soul. Then, too, it will be known how many, on this occasion, as well as on many other, by grieving the Spirit of God, made that, which was kindly designed to be a savor of life, a savor of death to themselves. But, blessed be God, good was done; yes, great good was done...we judge not our own selves, we are known and read of all men. Neither would we speak of the most evident good effects of our labors but to the glory of Him who is the author of all good, and for the encouragement of ourselves and others, lest there should be fainting or weariness in well-doing. .<sup>48</sup>

Many of these reports sound like the fulfillment of Revelation as all of God's people are gathered around the throne in worship.

Ah! it was a scene sufficient to affect the stoutest heart, and might well interest the attention of Angels, to behold children of but ten years of age, with many of the once gay, trifling and proud youths, the gray headed sire, together with some of the courageous sons of the ocean, sea captains who had braved the dangers of the deep, now bowed together at the foot of the cross, trembling under the mighty and mysterious power of God, and in a short time feeling the burden of sin removed, arising and declaring that they believed God for Christ's sake had forgiven their sins - that they felt in their souls a joy unspeakable and full of glory, and were determined to devote their lives in the cause of the precious Jesus.<sup>49</sup>

### ***Interesting Institutes: New England Camp Meetings in 1926***

Like all human institutions, New England camp meetings changed over time. For one thing they became more settled: camp meeting associations formed, purchased property, and put up buildings. The simple tents once pitched over the bare ground were upgraded to wooden platforms and then were later converted into cottages. By 1926 the railways and automobiles increased attendance. But the changes were more than

physical. By examining the camp meeting reports from the 1926 *ZH* we can see that these meetings, though still largely attended, were designed more for active Methodists rather than to attract the un-churched. *ZH* also reveals changes in program and in emphasis, which reflected the times and affected the results of the meetings.

While much had changed in the *ZH* 100 years later, including the addition of photographs and pagination, much of the content remained the same. The journal was still published weekly, had a predominant readership from New England, and camp meetings were still given plenty of space.

### Announcements

The *ZH* calendar lists 10 meetings, each falling sometime between August 6 and September 6. The paper also published three individual announcements containing the dates, places, and names of not only the district superintendent in charge but a whole cast of leaders including evangelists, seminary faculty, male and female missionaries, and bishops from overseas. Special events such as a pageant are also advertised.

### Reports

The reports no longer have a defensiveness about them. Instead, they are glowing, but vague. Each event, it seems was, “One of the best camp-meetings held at...in recent years. This is true regarding the program, the financial returns, and the spirit which prevailed.”<sup>50</sup>

**Setting** There was still appreciation for the natural beauty surrounding the camp meetings, even if they were less rustic. Rev. Edson R. Leach reported, “A fine crowd came to worship beneath those trees which always remind us that Bryant was speaking more than poetry when he said, ‘The groves were God's first temples.’”<sup>51</sup> There is more

talk of cottages, boarding houses, new auditoriums, tabernacles and grounds keepers, and other events now take place on the grounds outside of the actual camp meeting week.

**Numbers** The reports still contain figures, but tend to count different things. Attendance is still considered important, but no one is counting converts, let alone those awakened, or the repentant backsliders. Attendance was more fluid due to trains and cars. Reporting twenty-four occupied cottages and tents, and thirty-nine ministers on the grounds of one camp meeting, an article continues, “naturally a large majority of attendants drove in for the day or evening” .<sup>52</sup> The same article quotes the gatekeeper’s report of 2,500 in attendance for the final Sunday. There is a prevailing desire for the camps to make progress. All the camp meeting reports indicated an interest in building a bigger and better program for next year.

These reporters now are also keeping count of various offerings taken at camp meetings. One foreign missionary collected an offering of \$151 for work in China, while the speaker for the Woman’s Home Missionary Society’s anniversary inspired a collection of over \$160 .<sup>53</sup>

**Preaching, Praying and Singing** Bishop Brenton T. Badley of India made the rounds to at least six camps and institutes in 1926, serving as guest preacher .<sup>54</sup> Rather than focusing on God, “Bishop Badley has India ‘on his heart,’ and has a way of getting his message upon the hearts of all.”<sup>55</sup> Another preacher who made the rounds was Bishop George A. Miller of Mexico City who graced at least five different meetings. “His presentation of the prevailing conditions in that troubled land was both interesting and informational.”<sup>56</sup> Other adjectives offered for the preaching in 1926 include “timely,” having “intellectual depth,” and “delivered with charm and power.” Only occasionally

are words like “spiritual” or “inspirational” used. And not a single report tells of the people’s response (other than the size of an occasional offering).

While group singing was part of the original camp meetings, there was a variety of music at the 1926 meetings. Pianists, singing leaders, and vocal soloists who contributed to worship and other musical events are almost always named. In addition, it is not uncommon to find mention of other musicians. “There were two and sometimes three violinists, and Rowland Rushford ... assisted two Sundays with the cornet.”<sup>57</sup>

Other camps added organ, saxophones, musical glasses, Swiss bells and even an orchestra. Sometimes the musicians were imported such as Mr. Justin Lawrie of New York who, “as a gospel singer has few equals today,”<sup>58</sup> and Signor Mario Capelli who,

had just returned from a European tour... At each of the services on the next day, he gave inspiring messages with his voice. Thousands listened intently, while this generous world tenor sang with dramatic effect *Vale, Largo, Ave Maria, The Blind Plowman, I've Done My Work, There is No Death, and Going Home*. He lifted the hosts into the very presence of God.<sup>59</sup>

Prayer was still a part of the camp meetings, but no longer such a highlight. The report of one camp meeting simply states, “Each evening at 6:15 a prayer-meeting was held in Wesley Church House”.<sup>60</sup> When the prayer is described, it seems to be focused on praying for others, rather than for one’s own salvation. Bishop Badley of India encouraged those gathered to hear him at Asbury Grove to pray for “the salvation of the pagan multitude, to become spiritual itself.”<sup>61</sup>

***Other Acts of Worship*** Several other forms of worship are mentioned throughout the pages of the 1926 *Herald*. Devotions or Morning Watch services were most common. At one camp meeting, the day “closed with good-night devotional service and prayer.”<sup>62</sup> We also have evidence that the old Methodist practice of the love feast was still being used at three sites,<sup>63</sup> though no details are given regarding how it was

conducted. But the term love feast was also coming to be used figuratively for the whole meeting as in, “A few old hymns, and exhortation, some ringing testimonies, the love-feast was on, the camp-meeting had opened in due form.”<sup>64</sup> Those attending one camp meeting were invited to attend the dedication of a new church as part of the opening day services.<sup>65</sup>

*The Expansion of Activities* The 1926 *ZH* reports of camp meetings also provide ample evidence of other activities that had been added over the past 100 years. Some of these activities were geared for the children and youth of the camp. Several camps had a daily “children’s hour,” while in another arrangements were made for the children to have separate class exercises, storytelling, sports, a pageant and campfire at the close of the evening service. A recreation period was also typically offered each day. “Mr. Melvin Fletcher...superintendent of recreation, provided a unique and interesting program of sports, contests, games and recreations daily which commanded the attention of both young and old.”<sup>66</sup> And campfires were now considered an important part of the program, as were popular concerts, illumination nights (when colorful paper lanterns were hung by the cottages to create lovely, fairyland effect) and other entertainment. But not all the additions were fun and games. One district superintendent, for instance, led his camp in round-table discussions each morning.

Some of the days now had themes. More than one camp meeting had a Governor’s Day when the governor of that state was invited, ushered in with a parade and given opportunity to make an address. At Asbury Grove it was reported of Governor Alvan T. Fuller, “No oldtime evangelist could have pleaded the cause of righteousness

with more passion and religious sincerity than did the governor of this commonwealth”

.<sup>67</sup> At another camp meeting:

In keeping with the plans of the World Service Commission the opening day...was Missionary Day. The speaker of the morning was Mr. John P. Johnson, Commissioner of Immigration at the port of Boston. He gave a most helpful address, and was high in his praise of the work being done at the Immigrants home by the Woman's Home Missionary Society.

Some of these additional activities then are religious in nature, but meant for people already active in the church, like members of the Women's Home Missionary Society. The games, parades and concerts on the other hand seem to have a secular function – though one can argue that fellowship might also be a byproduct of the games. What all of these activities show is how the emphasis was no longer on converting the unawakened.

### Reflections

*New Purpose – Places of Learning* One 1926 camp meeting began with an address by the district superintendent called, “Why We Are Here.” It would be wonderful if there was some record of what he said, for I suspect it would be very different from the reasons given in the 1820s. But based on just the evidence of the *ZH* we can see by the nature of what was offered that the purpose had indeed changed. Rather than a time of religious conversion, camp meetings were becoming places of learning for those already active in the church.

Classes were given by professionals. One professor spoke on, “‘Wesley - the Man,’ ‘Wesley - the Evangelist,’ ‘Whitefield - the Evangelist,’ and ‘Charles G. Finney - the Evangelist.’ These were most illuminating, and full of human and humorous touches.”<sup>68</sup> Evangelists Ralph Webb and Gordon Wells, “who had been working in the Gospel Car under the auspices of the Department of Evangelism of the Board of Home

Missions and Church Extension, rendered valuable assistance with their vocal and instrumental music, their work with the young people, and their addresses at the meetings.”<sup>69</sup> Yet there is no word that anyone was converted or sanctified.

Bible study hour was often led by someone like Professor Robert F. Allen who presented an “exceedingly instructive and interesting” course on the “Hymn Book of the Hebrews.”<sup>70</sup> Another gave a presentation on the “Psychological Interpretations of Religious Facts.” A camp meeting in Maine featured the Daily Doctor’s Hour “at which very practical and helpful addresses were given...and [a] series of talks on child welfare...”<sup>71</sup> The praise of such events was that they proved “very helpful” or were “informative and inspiring” but we have no detailed description of how the people were personally affected.

By 1926 the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Societies and the Woman’s Home Missionary Society were sponsoring missionaries to visit the camp meetings. Dr. Roger S. Guptill of Elisabethville, Belgian Congo was on the camp meeting circuit that summer giving mission talks. He also helped by superintending the daily recreation hour at Riverside and led the morning services and morning lecture hour at Asbury Grove. Mrs. Lucie Mears Norris, corresponding secretary of the New England Branch of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society presented daily mission study classes and lectures at four sites over the summer. There is not enough detail in the newspaper reports to know if equal numbers of men and women attended these talks, or whether events sponsored by these women’s groups were of more interest to the women. But the fact that the missionaries were sponsored by a subgroup of the Methodist Episcopal church is in itself institutional differentiation.

*Segregation of Youth* Such differentiation is even more marked by the separate youth events called “institutes,” which were offered during the summer. While some institutes were offered concurrently with camp meetings, the trend was to hold them during an entirely different week. In 1926 three institutes were reported. The small Empire Grove institute was held at the same time as the camp meeting. Though led by the district superintendent, he was aided by a deaconess and a lay woman.

The 1926 *ZH* gives the most details about the nature of an institute for the young people of the New Bedford District at the Yarmouth camp. Rather than an opening prayer of consecration, the first act of this event was a Tabernacle social hour. But the clergy did take the young people seriously. A preacher was brought from Atlanta, Georgia, for the opening sermon, and Bishop William F. Anderson spoke during the afternoon of the first day. Daniel Marsh, Dean of Boston University, was present on the first four evenings to lead a “series of heart searching messages.” Bishop Badley also came to sound a “World Service call” on the final day.

A series of morning chapel talks on “Portraits of Jesus” was offered and the whole group assembled again for a study of “Jesus as a Master Teacher” after lunch. Youth could also choose from courses such as, “How We Got Our Bible,” storytelling, recreational leadership, “fearless preachers,” and the books, “Christ of the Indian Road,” and “The Romance of Methodism.”<sup>72</sup> In these study periods was “The Spicy Fifteen, a period of recreation” presumably designed to keep the blood circulating to the young people’s brains. During the noon mealtime the group experienced fellowship and songs, followed by a quiet time and then baseball and swimming. On Friday afternoon a special event called “The bigger, better, brighter Circus of 1926” (apparently a comedy sketch)

was presented by the youth. In the evenings the group gathered in the tabernacle for one more program followed by the “Baker Cottage Hour” led by Dean Marsh when “a great number of young people responded to the challenge of Christian service. Two [youths]...pledged to full-time service renewed their former pledge.”<sup>73</sup>

The write-up about the institute at Laurel Park provides evidence that such institutes were supported by the Central Office of the Epworth League and, given the required programmatic elements, could be certified by that office. Bishop Badley, and Dean Marsh were joined by Boston University professor Elmer Leslie at this institute. The array of study topics including the Bible, Missions, Stewardship and Life Service seemed to be meant to train up youth leaders for local Epworth Leagues. These youth had fun too at evening socials and pageants including a culminating religious drama.

We can see from these reports of camp meetings and youth institutes that the trend toward leadership training and dissemination of Christian information was clearly taking the place of conversion. The meetings were mostly for those who were involved in a local church or subgroup of a church rather than for converting the unchurched. The most evangelical aspects took place at the Institutes, where the young people were asked to make an adult, confirmation-like commitment to their faith.

But not all camp meetings had made these sorts of changes. The report of the East Livermore camp meeting and young people’s institute is touted as, “A real old-fashioned camp-meeting, full of power and enthusiasm, with the spiritual tide rising daily as the meetings progressed... Many heart-gripping conversions took place, and hundreds of persons returned to the home churches with new courage and inspiration.”<sup>74</sup> Though Bishop Miller of Mexico was present, it seems most of the other leaders were local. The

nine o'clock morning prayer meeting was labeled the "Power House" and the sunset service held near the memorial stone of "Camp-Meeting John Allen" was popular. But even here the children were segregated from adult experiences for their own storytelling hour and the camp meeting included a children's parade on Sunday School Day:

Over five hundred children were present and four hundred thirty-two took part in the parade and marched to the Tabernacle for their service. Each child was given a balloon, flag, paper hat, and other novelties. Five hundred gas balloons with dolls and advertising matter were sent up in the air. Ice cream and orangeade were furnished free to every child.<sup>75</sup>

Even while trying to hold an "old fashioned" meeting, such marks of modernization as diversification and secular activities were creeping in. We might even ask whether the conversions at East Livermore were truly conversion from a non-Christian identity to that of a Christian, or if they were instead times of reaffirmation or strengthening of faith.

*God No Longer Center Stage?* While it may be too simplistic to judge that the camps of 1926 were more secular than their predecessors, a shift in focus is quite clear. One new focal point was the material aspect of the camp meetings. The concern for finances can be seen in articles reporting offerings and asking for donations to future meetings so that the associations could reduce, or stay out of debt. "With this added income, the promoters are assured of a fine array of talent" and could be assured of progress.<sup>76</sup> The election of trustees was announced, as was the addition of new buildings.<sup>77</sup> In the same way that the local congregations' growth had resulted in the ability to build grand sanctuaries and large Sunday School wings with basketball courts which diverted the lay people's attention to acquiring, maintaining and expanding the physical space used by the church, so too the camp meetings grew in a way that diverted attention and energy from spiritual matters to material *adiaphora*.

There is also a marked shift of emphasis from camp meeting being a place that stirred up “red-hot Methodists” to a place where people were kept interested and entertained. Dr. Milton S. Rees, an evangelism expert, spoke on spiritual passion, “preached in his masterly way several evenings,” and closed the meeting with a “very helpful dedication service,” but he seems to have been upstaged even in the words of the district superintendent by tenor Signor Mario Capelli who “lifted the hosts into the very presence of God.” When superintendent Coons was praised for organizing Asbury Grove, “evangelistic” was only one word in a list of praise that included being courteous, witty, and handling “business affairs such as the raising of money and the arranging of the program with...dignity and force.”<sup>78</sup> The preacher/speaker receiving the most accolades from Asbury Grove that summer was Christian Reisner, the well known and “undisputed pioneer in the modern businesslike method of drawing people to the gospel message.” *ZH* praised him for his “witty remarks” and “fully illustrated messages.”<sup>79</sup>

The *ZH* even shows evidence that folks were aware of how their camp meetings had changed over time, and were pleased with such changes:

Some say that camp-meetings are dead, and in all probability they are, if we mean the old-time protracted meetings transferred to a grove, a meeting to which sinners will flock to hear the D L Moodys of our day. But the camp-meeting of today and tomorrow, the church institute where ministerial and lay leaders and young people form the churches come to be instructed daily by the intellectual and spiritual specialists of the church at large - that day has just begun.

### ***Reclaiming Lost Practices***

In 2005 I attended portions of three New England camp meetings that are still active. Time does not permit me to list my findings, but in summary they are more like camp meetings of the 1920s than the 1820s. They are no longer fulfilling their original calling of turning the unawakened into enthusiastic Christians. And in the present age, when both parents work and children have all manner of summer activities available to

them, the existing institutions do not even capture the interests of most active Methodists families in New England.

After reviewing this material, I have concluded that what looked like progress into the future in 1926 was in fact weakening the camp meetings' power to reach the unchurched and draw them to Christ, leading to dwindling attendance and the inability to meet the challenges of religious life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In conclusion, let us revisit the 19<sup>th</sup> century "converting" worship practices that are missing, not only from Methodist camp meetings, but also from most New England United Methodist worship.

One set of factors might be called the physical atmosphere of the camp meeting worshippers; an atmosphere that encourages the movement of people to convert. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century camp meetings, people were gathered at a distance from work and home, removed from daily life and worldly concerns. The setting was simple, easy to take care of, and allowed people to focus on the task at hand – worship, prayer and informal spiritual counsel. Worship was conducted all through the day, but the evening was a particularly potent time when many conversions took place. The worship itself was lively; people were encouraged to emote in public and not to resist the physical "exercises" of the Spirit such as falling, shouting, and shaking during worship. All of these elements came together to form a kind of *communitas*, experienced by everyone, not just the converts.<sup>80</sup>

Another factor was the wide array of people who originally participated in camp meetings. The camps were open to all and attractive to many "outsiders." Being ecumenically minded, the leaders intentionally chose worship rites open to all who were gathered (i.e. not the Lord's Supper). The preachers were also ready to welcome the

skeptics and even the hecklers (as long as they were not violent). But what attracted so many “outsiders” to the groves was the types of messages proclaimed.

While itinerant preachers, duly trained to “take a text” and licensed by the Methodist church contributed their skill to the meetings, I posit that the exhortations, and the testimonies given at camp meeting were even more important to forming converts. While exhortations and preaching was similar in that they both included scriptural understanding of God and human experience, exhorting focused more on the human experience of faith and also urged the immediate response of the congregation. Even more, exhortation was open to those with less training than the licensed preachers. Testimony was even more accessible to the lay people (including slaves, women and children) who were encouraged to speak when the Spirit said speak, telling all of the particular work the Spirit was doing in their lives. The result was a clear, if unspoken message: that the God who can touch and move one ordinary person’s life can do the same for anyone in the congregation. Thus the gulf between sacred and secular was collapsed and the sense of *communitas* was increased.

Two final practices I want to lift up are 1) the willingness to speak about sin in a way that motivated people to open themselves up to change and 2) a way to describe stages of faith development that are clear enough for all to use to identify their own spiritual status and to help one another move along the way. Both can be found in the following description:

More than one hundred, were awakened to a sense of their guilty perishing condition, and came forward for the prayers of God's people. Forty-two of these were brought out of darkness into God's marvelous light, and were enabled to praise their blessed Redeemer. Many of God's professed people, who had been lingering in a lukewarm and backslidden condition, were reanimated, and led to resolve to give themselves up anew to the service of their Saviour. While some of the followers of Jesus experienced what the Bible and our Church calls a full sanctification and a total deliverance from inbred corruption .<sup>81</sup>

## Naming Sin

The preachers and exhorters of the early camp meetings spoke about sin. They saw themselves as working for God in a sinful world. They were called to proclaim an alternative way of life to sinners, a life transformed by the Holy Spirit. They preached about sin frequently, carefully taking time to describe how sin works in our human lives, what it looks like, and what it feels like; they made clear that the wages of sin is hell. This in itself would not be enough to change people. What the Methodist preachers added was their solid assurance that salvation was freely available to anyone and everyone who would recognize the sin in their life and, of their own free will, turn toward Christ (repent) and accept his gift of forgiveness. The recorded responses to the sermons and exhortations show that they were very effective. The new listeners could identify with the sins being described, could see sin at work in their own lives, and thus, newly awakened, began to desire the relief of forgiveness – also eloquently described by the preachers. At the same time, most of the camp meeting hymns were joyful assurances of salvation<sup>82</sup> which, together with the sermons, set up a tension that those newly awakened souls felt as anxiety or mourning. I believe it was the naming of sin in this manner that opened people up for the Spirit to transform them. And once that transformation took hold, the less formal structure of the early Methodist movement allowed them to testify and exhort with great enthusiasm, thus drawing more and more souls to the church.

## Stages of Faith

The final practice I will highlight here is the way that the early New England Methodists spoke of the stages of faith. Being open to and receiving God's forgiveness of sin was not the only goal. There was a continuum beginning with a state when people

were not awake to God's presence in their lives through to a "second blessing" also known as sanctification, and even then the sanctified were urged to move on toward perfection. The Methodists acknowledged that people would move along this continuum at different rates, and they trusted God that as long as one had been awakened, the Spirit would effect the change in God's good time. Thus Brother Otheman did not lament that 58 of the 100 newly awakened were not yet "brought out of darkness" by the end of the meeting. He was equally excited that the many professed Christians who had become lukewarm backsliders were "reanimated," and still others who were followers of Jesus experienced sanctification.

By articulating this way of salvation in practical terms that everyone could apply to themselves and others, and by emphasizing that anyone could and everyone should move in one direction along this way, an atmosphere of hope and companionship (*communitas*) was fostered. At a camp meeting, and back in the local congregations, everyone was surrounded by helpful, encouraging friends who prayed for them and had faith that the Lord was with them in the valleys and was leading them to the green pastures. The spontaneous sharing of stories of how God brought one person after another moved further along the way allowed for diversity. But the notion that God was calling all on a one-way path toward "Beulah Land" created powerful unity of purpose.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists* (Rutland, Vt.: Academy Books, 1974), 361-362.

<sup>2</sup> Lester Ruth, *A Little Heaven Below: Worship at Early Methodist Quarterly Meetings* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2000), 186-187.

<sup>3</sup> Jesse Lee, *A Short History of the Methodists* (Rutland, Vt.: Academy Books, 1974), 362.

<sup>4</sup> Kenneth O. Brown, *Holy Ground: A Study of the American Camp Meeting*, *Garland Reference Library of Social Science* ; V. 717 (New York: Garland, 1992), 22.

<sup>5</sup> Numbers gathered from the 1900 Annual Conference journals of New England, New England Southern, New Hampshire and Maine.

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<sup>6</sup> The current New England Annual Conference reported 95,742 professing members (including clergy) in 2005, and only 1/3 of the membership attended worship on an average Sunday in 2006.

<sup>7</sup> This Methodist newspaper was produced weekly in Boston for the benefit of preachers and laity through New England and beyond.

<sup>8</sup> Irving W. Lovell, *The Story of the Yarmouth Camp Ground and the Methodist Camp Meetings on Cape Cod* ([S.l.: s.n.], 1985).

<sup>9</sup> Winthrop Still Hudson and John Corrigan, *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life*, 5th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 158.

<sup>10</sup> Frederick Abbott Norwood, *The Story of American Methodism: A History of the United Methodists and Their Relations* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 228.

<sup>11</sup> Stephen Rev. D.D. Allen, *The Life of Rev. John Allen, Better Known as Campmeeting John* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1888), 92.

<sup>12</sup> James Mudge, *History of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1796-1910* (Boston: Published by the Conference, 1910), 385.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 386.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 387.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 389.

<sup>16</sup> The 1824 issue was the first for *Zion's Herald* and I added 1827 to increase my data. I picked the year 1926 to represent change over 100 years.

<sup>17</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, July 21 Vol 2 No 30.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Aug 25, Vol. 2 No. 35.

<sup>19</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, October 31, No. 44.

<sup>20</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, Aug 25, Vol. 2 No. 31.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, September 1, No. 36.

<sup>22</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, Sept 19 No. 39.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, October 24.

<sup>24</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, July 21 No. 30.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, September 4.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, September 15, Vol 2, No. 38.

<sup>27</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, October 24, No. 43.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*.

<sup>30</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, October 24, No. 43.

<sup>31</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, September 15, Vol. 3, No. 38.

<sup>32</sup> Other sources such as journals and biographies record New England camp meeting singing in this period. See Stephen Rev. D.D. Allen, *The Life of Rev. John Allen, Better Known as Campmeeting John* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1888), Edward Otheman, *The Christian Student: Memoir of Isaac Jennison, Jr., Late a Student of the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn: Containing His Biography, Diary, and Letters* (New York: Published by G. Lane & P.P. Sandford for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1843).

<sup>33</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, October 31, No. 44.

<sup>34</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, September 15, Vol. 2, No. 38.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, August 25, Vol. 2 No. 35.

<sup>36</sup> *Zion's Herald* (1824): September 15 Vol. 2, No. 38.

<sup>37</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, October 24, No. 43.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, September 19, No. 34.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, October 24, No. 43.

<sup>40</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, July 21, No. 30.

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Rev. D.D. Allen, *The Life of Rev. John Allen, Better Known as Campmeeting John* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1888), 91.

<sup>42</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*.

<sup>43</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, September 19, No. 39.

<sup>44</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, September 1, Vol. 2 No. 36.

<sup>45</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827 1827*, October 24, No. 43.

<sup>46</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824 1824*, May 5, No. 10.

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- <sup>47</sup> Stephen Rev. D.D. Allen, *The Life of Rev. John Allen, Better Known as Campmeeting John* (Boston: B.B. Russell, 1888), 26.
- <sup>48</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1827* 1827, September 19, No. 39.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, August 25, Vol. 2, No. 35.
- <sup>50</sup> *Zion's Herald* (1926): 1091.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*: 1186.
- <sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*: 8.
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*: 1090.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*: 1026.
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*: 1091.
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*: 1124.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*: 1029.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*: 1092.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*: 1153.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*: 1092.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*: 1186.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*: 1221.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*: 1026.
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*: 1186.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*: 1026.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*: 1221.
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*: September 22.
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*: 1091.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*: 1125.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*: 1091.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*: 1283.
- <sup>72</sup> By E. Stanley Jones and Ruthella Bibbins respectively.
- <sup>73</sup> *Zion's Herald* (1926): 1125.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*: 1248.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*: 1124.
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*: 1040.
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*: 1186.
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*: Sept 22.
- <sup>80</sup> Ellen Eslinger, *Citizens of Zion: The Social Origins of Camp Meeting Revivalism*, 1st ed. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999), Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* ([Chicago]: University of Chicago Press, 1960), Victor Witter Turner, *The Ritual Process : Structure and Anti-Structure*, The Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures ; 1966. (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1995).
- <sup>81</sup> *Zion's Herald*, *Zion's Herald 1824* 1824.
- <sup>82</sup> Dickson D. Bruce, *And They All Sang Hallelujah; Plain-Folk Camp-Meeting Religion, 1800-1845*, [1st ed. (Knoxville,: University of Tennessee Press, 1974).