

A HIGH AND HOLY PLACE:
The Methodist Episcopal Church
at New Almaden

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For thus says the high and lofty one who inhabits eternity, whose name is holy:
I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with those who are contrite and humble in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite.
Isaiah 57:15

Send out your light and your truth, that they may lead me, and bring
me to your holy hill and to your dwelling.
Psalms 43:3

Preface

Torn down sixty years ago, the Methodist Episcopal Church at New Almaden has become like that structure spoken about in scripture, a temple not made with hands, a roof that encompasses the entire sky. Its history is unlike any that you will find in the rack at a local church. It reveals not just the names of pastors or the donors of the organ and windows. The story of the New Almaden church tells us about the nature of Protestant Christianity in the Santa Clara Valley in the second half of the nineteenth century, an era of revival, temperance and renewal. It tells us about the circuit riders who brought scriptural holiness to a largely unchurched, pioneer population, and with it something of the civility and normalcy that people had left behind when they traveled West. It is also the story of an immigrant church, of Celtic people from the southwest of Britain who created a Cornish community six thousand miles away from the hamlets and towns where they were born.

Through the portals of the mine shaft, and up the wooden steps of the church, the Cornish immigrant entered America. By skill as hard-rock miners, some of the most highly-sought workman on the Western mining slope, they established homes for themselves and their families in a new land. By their Methodist discipline they became people of determination, men and women who could speak up and assume leadership, parents who could stress the value of education to their children. As the fortunes of mining dwindled they left the mining camp for the city and found new professions and trades, but they did not forsake their Methodist faith. Through the urban churches, and through the Methodist universities in San Jose and elsewhere, this immigrant population moved into the mainstream of American society. The history of the New Almaden church is their history. It is not precisely the same as the story of our modern immigrants, the newest Americans who have arrived in the latter twentieth century, especially from Asia and Mexico and Central America, but there are similarities. For all immigrants to California, whether in this century or the last, there is no separating the spirit of the believer from the spirit of the citizen to be.

In researching and writing this essay I have been helped by all those listed in the bibliography (as people consulted) and those mentioned in the text and footnotes. Traveling with my wife in Great Britain I shared with her the excitement of visiting the Wesleyan historic sites in London and tracing John Wesley's route across the Tamar River and into Cornwall. I have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with the people of the First United Methodist Church, Los Gatos, the Almaden Hills United Methodist Church, the First United Methodist Church, San Jose, and the Methodist community in the valley. The Los Gatos church is actually continuous with the New Almaden church as they once shared pastors and were considered one work; and the Almaden Hills church has continued to represent the Christian gospel in the Almaden Valley. I have benefited greatly from the support of the Archives of the California-Nevada Conference of The United Methodist Church, from the efforts of Methodist historical societies in California and Cornwall, and from the encouragement of the California Cornish Cousins and the New Almaden County Quicksilver Park Association. To all of them I am grateful.

Gage McKinney

The Cornish Emigrant's Song

Oh! the eastern winds are blowing;
The breezes seem to say,
'We are going, we are going,
To North Americay.

'There the merry bees are humming
Around the poor man's hive;
Parson Kingdon is not coming
To take away their tithe.

'There the yellow corn is growing
Free as the king's highway;
So, we're going, we are going
To North Americay.

'Uncle Rab shall be churchwarden,
And Dick shall be the squire,
And Jem, that lived at Norton,
Shall be leader of the quire;

'And I will be the preacher,
And preach three times a day
To every living creature
In North Americay.'

R. S. Hawker, *Cornish Ballads*.

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1. Methodist Church Day, May 1995

On Saturday, May 13, 1995, volunteers hosted a church picnic at a county park in California, twelve miles south of San Jose. That wasn't remarkable. What was remarkable was that the particular church had not heard a sermon, sung a hymn or even opened its doors in more than eighty years. The picnic celebrated the life of the Methodist Episcopal Church that from about 1860 to 1914 served predominantly Cornish workers at North America's largest mercury mine at New Almaden.¹ About one hundred fifty attended, including people representing Methodist churches, the Methodist Historical Society, the California Cornish Cousins, and friends of the county park. Among them were about seventy-five descendants of families that attended the old church, people representing four generations, young and old, some who knew and some who were just learning about their Methodist heritage.

The New Almaden County Quicksilver Park Association, the volunteer group that helps to maintain trails in the 4,300 acre park and operates a museum, began planning the picnic months in advance. A planning committee included two Methodist ministers, a church historian, a local writer and the association president. One of their chief concerns was to provide shaded picnic tables because they imagined the event on a warm Spring day. The planners imagined people standing on the prow of the hill where the church once stood, and where they could enjoy a commanding view of the valley below, the great bay and the bridges. The organizers did not appreciate that the entire history of this church — it was repeatedly damaged by winter storms and once blew down — was against any plans that depended on the weather. No one should have been surprised to wake on that May

¹ "The English Town Census," a project sponsored by The New Almaden Quicksilver Park Association and The California Cornish Cousins, has established that more than eighty per cent of the non-Hispanic population on Mine Hill were Cornish or of Cornish ancestry. From United States Census records, payrolls, rent-rolls, voter registration and church records the project has documented the lives of more than 1,000 people who lived in the English-speaking camp between 1864 and 1912. Gage McKinney directs the project; Ruth Brown and John Faull are researchers; Russ Pearce is the adviser. The project is scheduled for completion in 1997.

morning to the seamless black clouds and driving rain, one of the last storms of the wettest year in a generation.

There were few cancellations. Those who attended showed the tenacity of the Methodist pioneers. They came to New Almaden along a partially washed-out road and passed piled sandbags and other signs of recent flooding. They gathered in the Community Club beside the swollen Los Alamos Creek. They passed along a make-shift serving line, collecting their Cornish pasties, apples, homemade cookies and sodas or beers. As they were eager to get out of the rain, the room filled beyond its capacity, every table crowded. Many of them spilled out on to a patio where they sat at picnic tables and ate under umbrellas. Cora Trevorrock Bocks, a 98-year-old who had attended the church as a girl, sat under the eaves in her wheelchair and declined a seat inside — she wanted to sit with her family. Mary Trevorrock Frederick, 92, who also attended the church, shared an umbrella with her husband as she ate her pasty. No one complained, everyone made accommodations, everyone was companionable.

Nothing unfolded as planned. A loud speaker leaned in the doorway so those outside as well as those inside could hear. Pastor David Wolf of the Los Gatos United Methodist Church said grace after almost everyone had eaten. The assembled were welcomed and heard historical talks, including the Rev. Stephen Yale's account of the circuit riders, the early Methodist preachers. "They often died young," he said, "drowned in a river or struck by a train or pierced by an arrow." Later everyone joined in singing. After the event, and with a break in the storm, many trooped to the New Almaden museum, where they continued talking and sharing stories. It was not the day that anyone had planned in many ways it was a better one.

To understand what drew so many people to New Almaden on that stormy day, and why this long-closed church is remembered by descendants to the second and third generations, we must go back to the founding of the Methodist movement, beginning with John and Charles Wesley. We must begin with some understanding of Methodism in Cornwall, a Celtic land and the southwestern-most county of the United Kingdom, known for fishing, choirs, hard-rock mining, and saints.

2. A Wesleyan Heritage

In an era when we think of gentlemen riding, there could have been few better acquainted with the saddle than John Wesley, an Anglican priest who took a kingdom for his parish. In his day there were none better acquainted with the British people than this Oxford don who knew the educated and elite, but who turned his attention towards the yet inchoate working class, the largely illiterate, backward, toiling poor who were the brute strength of the so-called Industrial Revolution. His contemporary and friend, Dr. Samuel Johnson, thought that Wesley knew more people, of more varied estates, than anyone else in Britain.

John Wesley was born in 1703, and his brother Charles in 1707, in the reign of Queen Anne. At five John effected his own rescue from a fire that destroyed the vicarage where his family lived, and the event grew in significance as he did himself. John attended Christ Church, Oxford, was ordained and became a fellow of Lincoln College. Charles closely followed him. In 1729 John Wesley became the leader of a small group that Charles had gathered at Oxford. The group resolved to live a disciplined life, read the Greek New Testament together and receive communion weekly (in a day when quarterly was accepted practice). Their methods soon earned them the ridicule of fellow students who called them "Sacramentalist," "Bible moths," "enthusiasts" or "methodists."

These Oxford experiences were merely a beginning for John and Charles in their quests to live lives of spiritual authenticity. Both of them sailed across the Atlantic to take assignments in Georgia, but returned to England with little to show for their time away. Yet it was in crossing to America and in the immediately succeeding years that John became influenced by the Church of the Brethren, in Wesley's time known as Moravians, a Central European movement that aimed to recover the spirit and practice of the primitive Christians. Under their influence Wesley experienced a re-dedication or conversion at a Moravian meeting in London on 24 May 1738:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a [Moravian] society in Aldergate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the changes which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an

assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.²

The experience freed John Wesley from the intense introspection that had marked his young life. Turning all his energies to the salvation of others, he became the focal point of a great awakening.

An awakening was needed. Remembering the horrors of the English civil war, the established church emphasised conformity over conviction. Its emphasis on reason ("the candle of the Lord") served to exaggerate the distance between an educated clergy and the working poor. Still focused on a passing agrarian society that revolved around the farmer and squire, the church had neglected the increasing population of laborers who had quitted the land for the industrial centers. Pluralism and absenteeism (the practice of a clergyman having multiple livings and "subletting" them) too often put poorer church goers in the care of less committed or less capable curates. Preaching had grown sterile. There was little about the church, save the sacraments themselves, that addressed the needs of the surging population of laboring people.

Seeing the need, Wesley and others went into the open air (and into those few churches that would welcome their style of preaching) to address the people who the established church had stinted. In industrial towns and mining districts they found audiences eager for good news. Wesley's genius, though, was not for preaching (as was the Rev. George Whitefield's) but for organization. He grouped the converted into small bands with appointed leaders so that the weak were encouraged by the strong. These early societies developed the character that became regarded as Methodist. Wesley and other leaders visited the societies to support them, to expound the scriptures, and to make the gospel message comprehensible. The emphasis was on individual acceptance of a personal religion, and on the experiences of forgiveness and of God's power and presence. In this work Wesley continuously traveled, usually two or three hundred miles each week; preached twenty or more times in public; answered thirty or forty letters; met privately with

² Quoted by Rupert E. Davies in *Methodism*, Epworth Press, London, 1963, 1976, p. 51. I have relied on several accounts of Wesley's life, including Richard Heitzenrater's *The Elusive Mr. Wesley*, Garth Lean's *John Wesley, Anglican*, Blandford Press, London, 1964, and Albert Outler's *From Wesley to Asbury* and his edition of *The Works of John Wesley*. See bibliography.

individuals; and worked continually on manuscripts for publication. This was the consistent pattern of his life for more than fifty years. It only stopped when he died at eighty-nine.

As Wesley concentrated much of his efforts in the West Country around Bristol, it was not long before the movement gained a footing in Cornwall. First Charles Wesley and then John traveled beyond the Tamar River to support the new societies, and over the years John made thirty-two visits to Cornwall. In the old Duchy (as in other locales) the Wesleys restored a religion of the heart sometimes house by house. The people responded by turning their houses into preaching places, and eventually by building chapels.

Though the Cornish Methodist may have been few compared to the number of Methodists in other regions (the Cornish never comprised more than a tenth of Wesley's followers in Britain), they grew to dominance in their own small and insular land. Wesley found no sound on earth comparable to Cornish voices and he admired the Celtic tenacity. Rain no more dispersed the Cornish, he said, than it would a column of soldiers. The Cornish revered him and called him "Mr. Wesley." People who had heard Wesley preach, and especially their descendants, carried the impressions with them to the corners of the English-speaking world. A Cornish woman in California's Gold Country, Harriet Trengrove Barron, wrote the following in her Bible:

Gwenap Pit was an open mine where John Wesley began in 1783 preaching and converting thousands of Cornish people in the open air. He preached in Cornwall for forty years. He brought rebirth of pride in their work to the Cornish people, dignity to their living, tranquility and understanding to their homes.³

The Cornish Methodists' religious experience was not essentially different from that of Methodists in other parts of the United Kingdom or North America, or even from other Christians, but their expression of it revealed something of their distinct Celtic heritage. The emotional appeal of early Methodism, with its call to conversion, hymn singing and extemporaneous prayer, provided an outlet for religious expression that the Cornish had lacked since the Reformation. In the chapels and class meeting, along the pathway, in the fishing boat and in the depth of the mine, the Cornish sang Charles Wesley's hymns, full

³ Quoted in Ruth Rundle, *Soulsbyville United Methodist Church History*, privately printed, 1990.

of allusions to the Scriptures, the Nicene Creed, and the older Catholicism that had once made Cornwall a land of saints.⁴

With its hazards and terrors, long hours and miserable conditions, mining in Cornwall was brutalizing. The life expectancy of a miner was only forty years. Methodism's assurance of salvation through faith gave thousands the hope of a better life in another world if not in this one. Its re-assertion of the doctrine of Justification by Faith supplied a fitting paradigm for a time and place where a man, through the difficult and hazardous work of mining, could wrest his blessing from the earth. Methodism was an active faith that called for a belief in possibilities, and as such it helped men and women gain self-assurance and qualities of character that could enable them to seize their limited opportunities and turn them to account.

By the nineteenth century the best opportunity for many, especially in Cornwall's western mining districts, was emigration. Wherever the Cornish established themselves in America, they established Methodist preaching, praying and singing. Near iron mines in New Jersey and Wisconsin, beside the copper mines of Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, in the badlands of Nevada, the deserts of Arizona or the foothills of the Sierra anywhere the Cornish went Methodist societies began in homes and developed into churches and congregations. Especially around the Great Lakes region the Cornish retained something of their interdenominational loyals to splinter groups that had developed since Wesley's time, such as The Wesleyans, the Bible Christians or the Primitive Methodists. In the mining districts of California these differences dissolved within the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁵ In a Methodist chapel one was never far from Cornwall. In Grass Valley and Nevada City the Cornish swelled the Methodist rolls. In 1860 Cornish emigrants built The First Methodist Church at Soulsbyville, near Sonora. Methodists in California came to recognize a distinctive Cornish element in their ranks, and nowhere was that element more evident than at New Almaden.

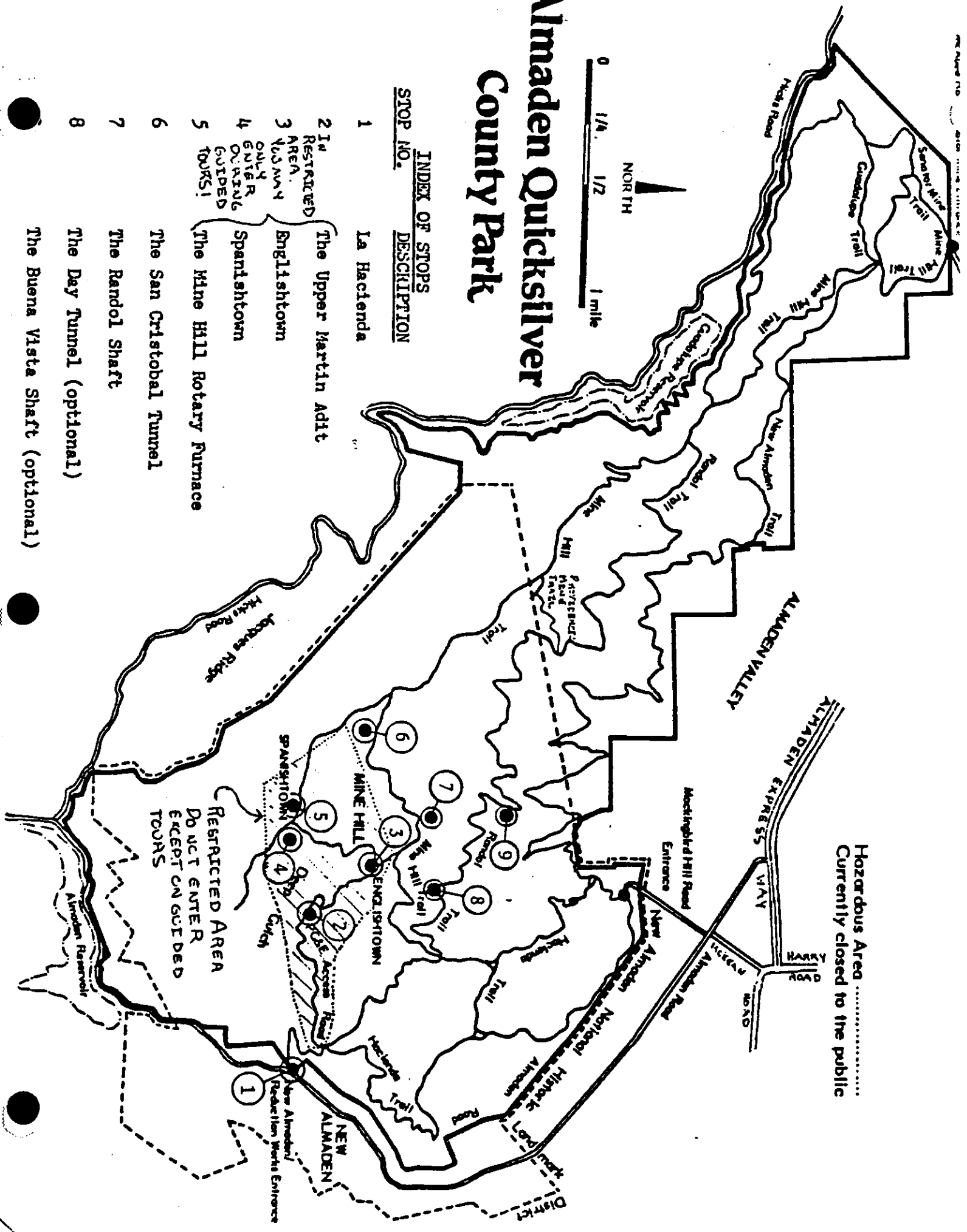
⁴ These ideas were derived from Thomas Shaw, "St. Petroc and John Wesley, Apostles in Cornwall: An Examination of the Celtic Background of Cornish Methodism," The Cornish Methodist Historical Association, Occasional Publication No. 4, 1962.

⁵ Johana Hawke, who was born in Devon and lived most of her life in Cornwall, was a Primitive Methodist before affiliating with the New Almaden church. *California Christian Advocate*, 15 March 1893, p.13.

Almaden Quicksilver County Park

INDEX OF STOPS

STOP NO.	DESCRIPTION
1	La Hacienda
2	1st RESTRICTED AREA
3	Yusany Englishtown
4	Yusany Spanishtown
5	Yusany The Mine Hill Rotary Furnace
6	The San Cristobal Tunnel
7	The Randol Shaft
8	The Day Tunnel (optional)
	The Buena Vista Shaft (optional)



Hazardous Area
Currently closed to the public

3. The Santa Clara Circuit, c. 1860 - 1871

We can imagine that the Methodist movement began on Mine Hill at New Almaden probably in the same way it began in innumerable frontier settlements. It may have started one Sunday when two or three families gathered in a single cabin for the reading of scripture and prayer. We cannot know in which house, but we can suppose that it was in the mid- to late-1850s when there were as many as twenty Cornish families settled at the mercury mine. In due time a minister came on horseback to support them. Since this is a California story, we can imagine him moving them into the sunshine and open air, where some beyond the initial band could more easily join in and rediscover the faith of their homeland.

The organization that brought a circuit rider to Mine Hill was ideally suited for the American frontier. In America (as in England) the traveling preachers served "societies," small groups or congregations, along a "circuit," a prescribed route (vaguely circular) that might extend a few miles or hundreds of miles around. As the circuit riders pursued their strenuous ministry, many of the societies along the circuits grew strong enough to become "stations" with a preacher all their own. Thus, a circuit had elasticity, releasing congregations that grew into stations and extending to take up new ones as they emerged among the shifting populations of immigrants and pioneers. As Wesley devised the plan, and as it continued in America, a preacher usually continued on a circuit for a year or two and then moved to another.

Such admirable flexibility makes difficulties for us in trying to trace the particular circuit that served New Almaden. This was the Santa Clara Circuit, established in 1854 as an extension of Methodist churches in Santa Clara and San Jose, but originally not including New Almaden. From some of the earliest records we know that the Rev. Isacc Owen, a venerated pioneer of Californian Methodism, took charge of the circuit in 1856 when it included Williams Chapel (four miles from Santa Clara), Saratoga, Eight Mile House on Monterey Road, Gilroy and Berryessa.⁶ Perhaps his successors called at New

⁶ C. V. Anthony, *Fifty Years of Methodism, A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, San Francisco, 1901, p. 226.

Almaden, though we cannot definitively locate a minister there before the Rev. R. R. Dunlap arrived about 1861.

Most of our knowledge of the circuit comes from the ministers who built the primitive frontier churches. One of them stands out against the cinnabar hills for having built the first church at New Almaden, probably with his own hands, and having left an account of his life and ministry. As shepherd to his flock, the Rev. Edward Hazen employed the proven methods of revivals, soul-stirring prayer and public conversions. His life's work, as he put it, was to bring salvation to the uttermost, and he came as a missionary to California to do it. He was a sympathetic individual with an introspective side that made him anxious for his own soul. His personal story offers glimpses of the immediate scene as well as a broader picture of the life of a Methodist in the mid-nineteenth century.

Hazen was born in Cortland County, New York in 1824. Reared in a church-going family, he used to climb into his small chair as if it were a pulpit and "preach" to his mother and sisters. The family fell away from the church through a succession of moves that took them to Ohio and Indiana. After his mother died of yellow fever, Hazen became (at least in his own mind) a wicked boy, though the only vice he specified was cursing at plow horses. Not wanting to condone sin, he leaves us to imagine what other temptations might bedevil a pubescent frontier boy. About this time he was revolted that the older sister who he idolized, Louisa, had been converted, falling into the clutches of those he called "howling Methodists!"

Some months after her conversion, Louisa persuaded young Hazen to drive her to a Camp Meeting (a combination camp out and revival). He only intended to rest the horses before returning to the farm, but after twice harnessing and unharnessing them, he stayed for the afternoon sermon. He listened from the rear of the crowd, standing under a maple tree. The preacher seemed to know him, he remembered, and every word struck to his heart. When the sermon ended, the preacher called the unconverted forward. Hazen didn't move. Then after a moment he saw Louisa coming towards him, holding out her hand, big tears on her face. She lead him forward to a bench set aside for those in the throes of conversion and as Hazen prayed others gathered around him. At last he heard himself cry

out, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" In the stylized manner of the day he had been converted.

From that point the course for Hazen's life became clear. At home he and Louisa took turns reading scripture and leading their father and younger sister in prayer. At the local church he led prayer meetings when the lay preacher was away. He became a carpenter to support himself as he studied for the ministry at Asbury University (now DePauw), Greencastle, Indiana. At twenty-four he accepted the position as assistant minister on a circuit in northern Indiana. Hazen rode to a schedule opposite the senior minister, preaching at eighteen appointed places during the course of three weeks, and having five days off in the fourth week. The following year he had his own circuit. "I studied my sermons on horseback," he said, "and did my general reading and that recommended in connection with the theological course at my nightly homes on my circuit." A few years later he married and requested a missionary assignment in California.

After reaching San Francisco by sea in December 1852, Hazen served several appointments. In late 1863 he accepted an appointment to the Santa Clara Circuit, then including Berryessa, Evergreen and New Almaden. He felt he could "do a good work in restoring that charge to a good condition." "During our pastorate on the Santa Clara Circuit, consisting of two years," he wrote, "a gracious revival occurred at Berryessa, greatly strengthening the society in numbers and spirituality, and some at New Almaden. We built a neat little church at the latter place."⁷ The *San Jose Mercury* reported in April 1864:

New Church at Almaden - A Methodist Church has been erected at the mining village of New Almaden on the hill. It is twenty-two by thirty-two feet in size, and the congregation there worshipping will be under the pastoral charge of the Rev. E. A. Hazen.⁸

As the records of the Santa Clara Circuit have not been located, we cannot know the extent of Hazen's work at New Almaden from 1863 to 1865 — how many he baptized, how many became probationers or full members of the church — though from his

⁷ E.[dward] A.[dams] Hazen, *Salvation to the Uttermost*, Darius D. Thorp, Lansing, Michigan, 1892, p. 83.

⁸ *San Jose Mercury*, 14 April 1864, p. 2, col. 3. Historian and author Clyde Arbuckle directed me to this newspaper account.

previous work we can picture his approach to building up the community. The revivals that he mentioned probably involved early morning meetings, before the miners went to work, where a few gathered in the small church, and after fervent prayer, some were moved to approach the front bench. Evening gatherings, that included men, women and families, probably continued on a nightly basis for perhaps two weeks or even longer, as long as the enthusiasm lasted. The tiny church reverberated with spirited hymn-singing. Hazen no doubt followed Wesley's advice to his preachers — first preach the law, and then forgiveness. He enumerated the things that can block a person from experiencing forgiveness and emphasized the gospel of regeneration and hope. Night by night, we can imagine, a few came forward.

In a community starved for diversion the revival period was exciting. In time the excitement abated and the community returned to its everyday patterns, religious practice resuming its routine of Sunday chapel and class, family devotions and individual meditation. Though many who professed conversion or reconsecration during the revivals probably fell away later, there remained the remnant of a few cataclysmically changed people who became earnest Christians.⁹

During Hazen's tenure, and as evidence of the growth of the Cornish camp¹⁰ and its church, the first child was baptized on Mine Hill. Dick Pearce, son of Richard and Louisa Pearce, was dipped in water and had the sign of the cross traced on his forehead in the schoolhouse in 1864, perhaps sometime before the small church was completed. (The little church that Hazen built does not seem to figure significantly in the story. It was soon forgotten).

Hazen was followed on the circuit by other pastors, and they are best remembered for their pioneering efforts in Los Gatos. Dr. William Morrow, a medical man who took up the ministry, is celebrated as the first Methodist minister there. He must have had an impact

⁹ Revival meetings occurred over the years. In January 1893, for example, we know that a revival continued for three weeks — until a storm closed it — and brought four new members to the church — *California Christian Advocate*, 1 February 1893, p. 5.

¹⁰ The Quicksilver Mining Company styled the English-speaking settlement on Mine Hill "English Town." Author Mary Hallock Foote, who lived there, called it the Cornish camp. William Trevorrow, who grew up there, called it English camp, but said there were no English there — only Cornish. Lotty Tonkin and her sister Elizabeth Tonkin Colliver also remembered it as English Camp.

at New Almaden, too, because he was born in New Jersey (perhaps among the Cornish lead miners) and was remembered for his "Cornish eloquence."¹¹ Next came the Rev. William Bramwell Priddy, who remembered from his Ohio boyhood how farmers would abandon their plows, wives and daughters would leave the washing, and all would gather to hear the itinerant preacher. When he remembered the Santa Clara Circuit he principally recalled the church at Los Gatos:

I was appointed to Los Gatos and New Almaden in September 1867. When I went there I found no church property of any kind at Los Gatos. There was a church at New Almaden but no parsonage on the work. I held services under a live oak tree just above the old stone mill [Forbes Mill at Los Gatos] as the weather would permit, but in the meantime I had a church and parsonage in process of erection. I moved into the new parsonage in November. The church was dedicated I think in January 1868 by Dr. Thomas.¹²

Since from surviving letters we know that Priddy was sensitive to nature, we might imagine him riding over the hills from Los Gatos in the Spring, descending the slope into Guadalupe Canyon, fording the stream, and ascending the dusty trail to the mining settlement. He would have noticed the wild flowers, the butter cups, lily-of-the-valley, white and yellow violets, rooster daisies, Jack-in-the-pulpit, the golden poppies, red tulips, blue flower, and even the skunk weed. He would have noticed the white oak in flower, the live and scrub oaks, bay trees, buckeye, red madrone and manzanita. He would have recognized all their colors and scents as an expression of the God he served. Probably wearing a black coat, and perhaps the bushy brows, wire-framed glasses and the mustache and goatee that characterized him in later years, he would have been comfortable astride a horse, mulling over the words that he would preach.

With the appointment in 1868 of the Rev. James Corwin, another Methodist pioneer,¹³ we see clearly how the circuit had evolved. One Sunday he would preach at eleven o'clock at Los Gatos and ride to the community of Alma at the Santa Cruz summit for a service at four in the afternoon. The next Sunday morning he would preach two sermons near the Guadalupe Mine and one on Mine Hill at New Almaden in the evening.

¹¹ First Methodist Church, Los Gatos, California, "A Century of Faith and Service, 1866-1966," pages unnumbered.

¹² W. B. Priddy letter to C. V. Anthony, circa 1901, Archives of the California-Nevada Conference of The United Methodist Church, Berkeley. See also C. V. Anthony, p. 226.

¹³ C. V. Anthony, p. 31.

Corwin was succeeded by the Rev. Hugh Gibson, who continued the work from 1869 through 1871 (during the first year assisted by F. D. Hodgram). In 1871 the Santa Clara Circuit disappears from the records and is replaced by the "Los Gatos Circuit" and in subsequent years simply by "Los Gatos."¹⁴

4. The Los Gatos Circuit, 1871 - 1879

The Rev. A. C. Hazzard was the first appointed to the Los Gatos Circuit. He obtained his appointment, as all of the ministers, from the California Conference, the annual meeting of Methodist ministers, superintendents and usually a bishop. Hazzard reported forty-four communicants, two churches (Los Gatos and New Almaden) valued at \$1,500, and the Los Gatos parsonage valued at \$500. During these years James Randol, newly arrived from New York, was settling in as the mine's general manager. When he arrived there were already at least sixty Cornish living on Mine Hill. He liked their work ethic and advertised for more like them in the newspapers of Nevada County, California and Cornwall. By 1880 the English camp population rose to about 600. The population changed from a predominance of single men to a predominance of families and children.¹⁵

Much of this happened during the Rev. William Gafney time on the circuit. He was one of the most influential pastors to take the charge, though perhaps the least likely to succeed. Extremely reticent, almost painfully diffident, Gafney was a pioneer of California Methodism, a class leader beginning in 1851 at a church on Powell Street in San Francisco. A woman in his class reported, "Brother Gafney has a call to the ministry and is resisting it." Since the Methodists sorely needed pastors at that time, Gafney was not allowed to resist for long. Perhaps that diffidence condemned him to a series of

¹⁴ California Conference Minutes, 1854 - 70; C. V. Anthony, pp. 160-1; First Methodist Church, Los Gatos, California, "A Century of Faith and Service," 1966 (pages unnumbered). To avoid confusion, one must distinguish a "Circuit" from a "District," a larger organizational unit, usually a geographical division, that groups several circuits and stations under the leadership of a presiding elder. Originally the Santa Clara Circuit was part of the San Francisco District, but in the mid 1860s it separated into a new, rather unwieldy Santa Clara District that extended all the way from Half Moon Bay to San Diego. This short-lived district disbanded when the Los Angeles District was formed in 1870, and the Santa Clara Circuit rejoined the San Francisco District. All of the districts were part of the California Conference, a yet larger unit, comparable (at least geographically) to a diocese in the Anglican or Roman Catholic churches.

¹⁵ See my essay, "The First Cornish Miners at New Almaden," available in the Pioneer Papers at the California Room of the San Jose Public Library. Also at the New Almaden Museum.

impoverished appointments. In 1858 he traveled the Santa Clara Circuit for \$487 per year at a time when the best appointments paid about \$1500. During his years on the Los Gatos Circuit (1872-75) he earned only about \$800 annually (earnings comparable to those of an experienced miner). He was never a popular preacher but what tactful colleagues called "a useful one." The faithful at Los Gatos and New Almaden found him solemn and even austere, but with a "warm heart beating beneath a cold exterior."¹⁶

Gafney, like the good servant in the parable of the talents, threw off his reserve to give an accounting of his three years on the circuit. We see how effective he was. He provided the unique spelling of "Guadalupe" in this 1875 letter to the editor of the *California Christian Advocate* (the Methodist newspaper).

Los Gatos Circuit

Mr. Editor:—As I am about to close my third year at this place, perhaps a brief account of the work may be proper.

The circuit embraces Los Gatos, the New Almaden and Guadalupe quicksilver mines. Through the instrumentality of Thomas A. Mitchell and Joseph S. Richards, two worthy local preachers (the latter of whom was taken away by death on the 27th of last June, which resulted from severe cold — taken by coming out of a very hot place in the mine into the cold night air), religious services were commenced early last spring at the Guadalupe mine, resulting in the organization of a Sunday-school, and the formal organization of a class of Church members last April, which now numbers twelve. They have their regular weekly prayer and class meetings; and, with the aid of the pastor once in four weeks, and local brethren of the circuit, they have preaching every Sabbath evening.

During my pastoral term, there have been forty-two children and one adult baptized; and forty-two persons received into the Church on probation; one of whom died, three were dropped, six moved away before their probation expired, ten are received in full membership, and twenty-two still on probation; most of whom were brought in during the revival meetings, which were held with the aid of brethren and sisters from San Jose. Forty persons have been received into the church by letter and by recognition [that is, those transferring their membership]. Within the last two years the full membership of the circuit has just about doubled, and within the last year it has increased from forty to sixty-five. Nearly all the increase has been at Almaden and Guadalupe.

My salary is all provided for, and, by the blessing of Divine grace, I will leave the charge, as a whole, in a prosperous condition.

Wm. Gafney.¹⁷

Those who were joining the Methodist community included some who would become its leading members. Among them were Susan Bunney, Richard Faull, William Geach, Martha Jane Geach, Richard and Louisa Pearce, Samuel Henwood, John and Susanna Tregonning, Charles James and Louisa Varcoe. Of the forty-two children Gafney

¹⁶ M. C. Briggs, "Memoir of William Gafney," Conference Minutes, 1885, p. 38. Unless otherwise attributed, quotations in my account of the Rev. Gafney come from M. C. Briggs. Anthony tells us that Mrs. Briggs has the woman who recognized Gafney's call. See C. V. Anthony, p. 155.

¹⁷ William Gafney "Los Gatos Circuit." *California Christian Advocate*. 16 Sept. 1875. p. 4.

baptized on the Los Gatos Circuit at least eighteen lived on Mine Hill¹⁸ In 1876 his immediate successor, the Rev. Hopkins, brought a class of ten new members into the church, including Mary Heathorne, Samuel Argall, Matthew Willoughby, Constance Nichols, and my ancestor William John Hicks, the only one of four Hicks brothers to have his name recorded in the church ledger. No doubt the pinnacle of the year that the Rev. R. W. Williamson spent on the hill was the day in July 1879 when he received fourteen into the church, including Alfred Tregonning and William Dunstan.¹⁹ Following him was the bespectacled Rev. Jesse Smith, the last to have responsibility for both Los Gatos and New Almaden, who conducted a well-publicized camp meeting in the vicinity of the mines.

In September 1879 New Almaden appears in the Methodist rolls for the first time as a separate charge, a congregation strong enough to support its own pastor. The Rev. George W. Beatty was the first minister assigned. He served at New Almaden until 1881.

5. Building and Rebuilding, 1875 - 1885

During Gafney's tenure a delegation of miners called on the general manager of the Quicksilver Mining Company. They sought permission and support for building a new and larger Methodist Church on Mine Hill. We might more appropriately call them a "delegation of husbands." It was the women on the hill who urged the men forward for they saw that a proper church would help to make the camp a better place for families. Randol recognized the wisdom of the proposal and perhaps calculated that a family camp would provide him with the most stable work force. He pledged that the company would match the funds raised by the employees.²⁰

The first of the churches built by the company and community was dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1875. That day it rained. Even on such an importance occasion a simple service would have featured singing and extemporaneous prayer, and preaching. The event

¹⁸ Los Gatos Church Record, 1869 - 1881, Archives of the California-Nevada Conference of The United Methodist Church, Berkeley, California.

¹⁹ Conference Minutes, 1900, p. 66-67.

²⁰ R. J. (Dick) Pearce, "Visiting My Old Home Town," an unpublished manuscript, p 15. My thanks to Clyde Arbuckle for providing this manuscript to me. Thanks also to Russell Pearce for the observation about the role of women in the building of the Methodist Church. His family as much or more than any other has preserved the stories of English Camp

was marked by having as guest preacher the Rev. Charles V. Anthony, an impressive orator and later the historian of California Methodism, who probably preached in the conventional long black coat. We were able to walk into that church today we would probably be impressed by its simple sanctity, by the clean-swept wooden floor, the redwood joist and beams. With no surviving photographs to guide us we can safely presume that the pulpit was prominent and that the church was not decorated. There may have been two candles on the altar, and if there was also a cross some of the old Cornish may have grumbled about "idolatry." There were benches in front for the choir and perhaps for the church leaders, so they could set a good example. Oil lamps probably provided light on dark days, and on brighter ones sunlight angled in through the tall, clear windows and through an occasional chink in the panelling. On that Easter Day or any day, sitting in the stillness of the wooden pews, one usually heard the wind, or at least a faint breeze, along the eaves and about the steeple.

The first winter, after Gafney left and the Rev. Hopkins took charge, the church blew down. A second more substantial structure, that included a full basement, replaced it. Despite having to rebuild, these were good years for the Mine Hill church and they justified a bit of boasting. When the Rev. Beatty wrote a report to the *California Christian Advocate* he was in part responding to a recent series of articles that had appeared decrying debt. His report gives us a glimpse of the church, its furnishings and functions. He also explains (consistent with Methodism's patterns) that regular Methodist services had begun at The Hacienda, the community below Mine Hill where the mine manager lived.

New Almaden
Sept. 7, 1880

Eleven person united with the church on the 29th and 31st of Aug. Three on probation, one by letter and seven from probation. "Praise God from whom all blessings flow!" As freedom from church debt seems to be the special cause of praise this year, we can ask all to unite with us on that basis also. The trustee's report now before me shows: Debt from last year, \$10.40; Organ, \$111.75; Improvements, \$159.85; A total of \$282.00 all paid except \$18.50 and that provided for in the near future. Adding to this the Sunday-school expenses for the year all paid, \$85.00, collections taken, \$25.00; salary paid, \$650.00; and we have the sum of \$1024.50 from a place which has been one of four appointments to pay \$920. The above is the Hill report. The Hacienda has done nobly, \$258, from a point where a Sabbath-school has never before been organized nor regular services held. We could wish more of the above was "Pastor's support," yet we rejoice to see a new organ and new Sunday-school song books at each point. If we do not return to reap, some good brother will enter upon our labors. The Hill Sabbath-school has an average enrollment of 136 and an average attendance of 111. The Hacienda numbers 31 with an average attendance of 29. Better still, 95 per cent of the

Hacienda school remain to preaching and 75 per cent. of the Hill school return to evening service. Best of all the financial statements. The pastor's salary is paid *monthly in advance*. We almost lost our equilibrium when paid a month's salary the first week of our pastorate. How soon we become accustomed to any treatment! These monthly ordeals are now passed without a tremor, in fact, we rather enjoy them.

Pastor²¹

The course of its history was never easy, and the church was damaged by winds almost every winter. Then a worse disaster — on the night of 5 September 1884 the church burnt to the ground. "While over to Oldham [a nearby ranch] we were called to the door," an eighteen year old witness, Charles Schneider, noted in his journal. "We stepped on to the porch where we saw that the church at upper Almaden was on fire. It was a very pretty sight."²²

Not so pretty to those on the scene, who were only able to save the organ and a few pews, water being scarce on the hill. One of them was Captain James Harry, a native of Breage, Cornwall, who supervised 350 men at the quicksilver mine. He gave a brief history (His account overlooks the little church built by the Rev. Hazen).

Q. What do you know about the Building of the church here and how it came to be built, and the history of the church?

A. I do not exactly remember the date that the first church was built, but the first church was built one-story, built by subscriptions here at the mine. The first time Mr. Randol gave \$250 and the company \$250; the first winter the church blew down. Mr. Randol said if we wanted a good church to go on and take up our subscriptions and that whatever we subscribed in the community that he would double it; that he would give as much as all the rest; the whole amount that we had from Mr. Randol and the company that time was \$848; afterwards the church was again destroyed by fire: that was, I think, in 1884, and again we had to appeal to Mr. Randol, and again he gave from the company \$500, and his own personal subscription was \$355, and the balance of the money was raised by subscription from the people working on the Quicksilver Mining Company's grant; that church cost \$3,450. That is the present church; Mr. Randol has subscribed towards the Protestant church on the Hill \$2,203 since he has been here.

Q. How many people will that church accommodate?

A. About 250 or 300.

Q. How is it generally filled at religious services?

A. Filled to the fullest capacity. In fact our pastor is talking about enlarging; the Sunday school is held there Sunday afternoons. We have a fine Sunday school with an average attendance of 165 to 170; those are the children of the people who work for the company; the Good Templars' Lodge meets in the basement story, and the Miners' Benevolent Society.²³

²¹ California *Christian Advocate*, 15 Sept. 1880, p. 5.

²² I am indebted to Jo Schneider Young, whose family has long been associated with New Almaden, for reading to me this passage from the journal of her pioneer ancestor, Charles Schneider.

²³ *Contested Election Case of Frank J. Sullivan vs. Charles N. Felton* (in two volumes), Government Printing Office Washington 1887

While the Quicksilver Mining Company and general manager made conspicuous contributions to the church, so did the California Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. At its annual meeting in Pacific Grove, September 1884, the ministers addressed the case of New Almaden through a series of motions:

New Almaden Church.—W. Dennett [presiding elder] presented the following, and it was adopted:

WHEREAS, We have no deed for the church lot at New Almaden and can secure none, the mining company owning all the property and simply charging a nominal rent of one dollar per year, and,

WHEREAS, At the dedication the property was delivered over to the Trustees (duly elected) free of debt, and,

WHEREAS, The church members are poor day laborers with two or three exceptions, and,

WHEREAS, The church building has been lately burned, nothing being saved but the seats and organ; and,

WHEREAS, There was no insurance on the property, therefore,

RESOLVED, That a committee of five be appointed to enquire into the case and report what steps, if any, should be taken in the premises, and report to the Conference.

The committee recommended that the Church Extension Board contribute \$500 to the rebuilding of the New Almaden church, provided the trustees buy insurance, a policy payable to the board.²⁴

6. Pastors

Much of the history of the New Almaden church, as any church, is the story of its pastors. The courage, fortitude and commitment of these men, who lived much of their lives under rustic and sometimes harrowing conditions, is nothing less than heroic.

Most of the ministers at New Almaden were well-educated men for their day, fully capable of feeling the harshness of their surroundings, but there was little uniformity. Among the better educated, The Rev. Thomas Hopkins had earned a Master's degree at Genesee College (later Syracuse University). Among those with less education, the Rev. Charles Grey Milnes scarcely had any formal training beyond a country school, but was reputed to have a thorough self-education, and in the parlance of the day "he wrested out of hardships the fine gold of a resplendent character." Others had graduated or at least

²⁴ Conference Minutes 1884, pp. 6, 24-25, 41-42. My thanks to Dr. Stephen Yale, Director of Archives, The California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church, for locating these conference minutes

attended various Wesleyan colleges and seminaries, including the Rev. Priddy, who worked as a miner to earn his tuition to the College of the Pacific in San Jose (now the University of the Pacific, Stockton). Some, such as the Rev. Marion Willis, had experience as school masters. They all continued their learning after their ordinations, reading in the saddle as Wesley had done.²⁵

One of their band, Henry Clark Benson, doctor of divinity and student by instinct, was probably the most learned man to inhabit Mine Hill. Benson taught in a country school for eight years to pay his way through Indiana Wesleyan University. As a minister he taught among the Choctaws in Arkansas and wrote a book about his experiences. Proficient in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, he later became a professor at his alma mater. He transferred to California, served at various stations and then for sixteen years edited Methodist newspapers in Portland and San Francisco. After giving up his editorship, he came to New Almaden (1888 - 90), far removed from the varied life that he had known in the cities. It may have been about this time that he was studying medicine for, ever the student, he eventually earned a medical degree. After leaving New Almaden he became president of the University of the Pacific. A handsome man with an ascetic, clean-shaven face, Benson was naturally was a leader in the Conference. At the meetings, a colleague said, " He usually voted with the majority not because he was a follower, but because others followed him."²⁶

All of the ministers had rich experiences before they arrived at New Almaden, and those included the most trying kind. At least four of them served in the Civil War, including Thomas Hopkins, who with the 107th New York Volunteers fought in Sherman's bloodiest campaigns. Beatty enlisted as a teenager in the Union army; Lemuel M. Hancock, already a minister when fighting broke out, served as a chaplain in the war; and Joseph R.

²⁵ Conference Minutes 1903, pp. 66-8; 1908, pp.64-6; 1919, pp. 509-10; and 1924, pp. 71-2. Also letters from T. B. Hopkins and Rev. W. B. Priddy and C. G. Milnes, circa 1901, to C. V. Anthony in the Archives, The California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church.

²⁶ C. V. Anthony, pp. 89-90. See also Conference Minutes, 1897, pp.59-60; *The Encyclopedia of World Methodism*, p. 253; and *San Jose Pioneer*, February 1897, p. 22

Wolfe rose to the rank of captain with the 107th Illinois. Wolfe later practiced law and ran for office.²⁷

All of them had seen considerable service in California. Riding circuits from the southern Sierra to the Oregon border, they knew the state and its people well. To give but one example, the Rev. William Smith Urmy, a white-haired, dark-eyed doctor of divinity, was aging by the time he came to close his career at New Almaden in 1905-06. He had come to California in 1852 and began his ministry soon after his arrival. He served in Coloma, where gold was discovered, and later on the Sonora and Columbia circuit with responsibility for all of Tuolumne County. When serving a circuit in Amador County he got lost and wandered into the town of Sutter Creek. On a moment's notice a congregation gathered in the school house and he preached the first sermon ever heard there. His career spanned forty-three years and many pastorates.

Many of the pastors had extensive experience building churches. Hopkins said of himself, "During my ministry I have built four churches and four parsonages and have tried to fight a good fight and do a good work, but it has never equalled my desires." They all could have said that. John W. Bryant from Wisconsin, erected churches at Crescent City, Lodi, Woodland and Hollister and parsonages at Santa Cruz and Salinas. He held 17 pastorates and saw "more than a thousand souls added to the church."

Two of the ministers had experience in the desert of Nevada before they came to New Almaden. When the Rev. Francis Marion Willis took up the ministry in 1872, he connected with the Nevada Conference, and served Honey Lake Circuit, American and Indian Valley, Walker River, Bishop, Independence, and Antelope. His physical strength (not to mention religious convictions) enabled him to establish churches and erect buildings with his own hands. A colleague said, "He made the desert to blossom as the rose."

Willis' friend in Nevada and later his successor at New Almaden, the Rev. J. L. Trefren, founded an unique venture in the history of the church "The Methodist Mining Company." Trefren was stationed in Austin, a boom town with daily murders. With his white hair and beard, boyish, cherub-like face and shiny dark eyes, he hardly appeared

²⁷ Conference Minutes, 1915, pp. 81-2; Joseph R. Wolfe, letter to R. E. Wenk, circa 1903, Methodist Archives, Berkeley.

suitable for such a challenge, and yet he mastered the situation. In an effort to raise money for the Methodist Church, he asked for blocks of stock in the various mines and organized a holding company, The Methodist Mining Company. He went to his native New Hampshire where he sold \$350,000 of the company's securities and, by agreement with the mining companies, kept ten per cent of all he sold. With that he built a large brick church and parsonage and began to change the tenor of Austin. The miracle in this story is that the mines paid so well that the Yankee investors suffered no losses.

It is little wonder that some of these pastors were remembered for their sense of presence. As personalities they contributed generously to the life on Mine Hill. The Rev. Hopkins, with a tuft of white hair at the peak of his broad forehead, deep-set, dark eyes, mustache and clerical collar, was one of those best remembered:

Brother Hopkins dealt with people personally, and not professionally. There was a kindliness in his tones, a sincerity in his inquiries, a magnetic genuiness in his handclasp, and, withal, that subtle something which drew people to him and convinced them of his unselfish devotion to their interests. In many, many homes he was a part of the family life. In sorrow he was there to comfort, not merely as a minister, but as one who could weep in truest sympathy. Every festal gathering he attended was sanctified by his presence.²⁸

One imagines that the Rev. William J. Peters had a special relationship with the New Almaden congregation because he was Cornish like most of them. He could speak to them of home. Like them, too, he had seen a fair portion of the world, having preached in Methodist Churches on three continents. Peters was born in 1856 in the village of Portscatho, on Cornwall's tranquil southern coast. No one recorded what took him to South America (copper mining most likely), but there he became a lay preacher. Later he returned to Cornwall where he continued preaching for another eight years. About 1884 he came out to Yuba City, California, where two of his sisters lived, and there he became a Methodist minister on trial. He served in Roseville, Fort Jones, Florin and Point Arena before coming to New Almaden (1895-98) for three years, the maximum time then allowed by the Conference. During his tenure he had 77 probationers in classes and he received 27 of them into full membership.

²⁸ Conference Minutes, 1903, pp. 66-68.

If any one wonders about the commitment of these men to the gospel they preached, one needs only hear how their careers ended. When Gafney, aging and feeble, was told that he must retire from the active ministry, he wept. He lived on for several years, assisting in churches in Sonoma County until the end. On a sunny May morning he called out to his wife, "Good bye! I'm happy! Hallelujah!", and he died. Too infirm in his last days to attend the annual conference, Milne sent a letter saying, "I rejoice that ever God counted me worthy to be in the ministry." Lemuel M. Hancock died with the words, "I owe all to Jesus."²⁹ Partially paralysed and feeling the life leaving him, Dr. Morrow wanted a visiting minister to hear his final testimony:

He was scarcely able to articulate intelligibly, even in a whisper, and yet, he seemed anxious to magnify God's saving grace. Said he, "The gospel which I have preached saves. . . . There is a revelation in the heart that is only known by experience."³⁰

He died in San Jose 3 April 1903. In a letter at the end of his life Hopkins wrote, "The dear Lord knows all about it and he will do better by us all than we deserve."³¹

7. Madonnas of the Trail

At Methodist Church Day Janet Engle, historian of the Los Gatos First United Methodist Church, spoke about women of the church. She took her theme from a series of female statues that the National Old Trails Associations and the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated years ago to mark the Westward trails. "Each statue depicts a pioneer women in sunbonnet, flowing skirt and boots, walking, carrying a small child and with another child tugging at her skirt," Engle said. On each an inscription reads, "Madonna of the Trail — memorial to the Pioneer Mothers of the Covered Wagon Days." "Pastors wives," Engle continued, "joined their husbands as yokemates to the gospel. They were the Methodist Madonnas of the itinerant trail."

²⁹ C. V. Anthony, p. 353.

³⁰ *The California Christian Advocate*, "A Minister Fallen," 18 April 1872. Also George G. Bruntz, *The History of Los Gatos: Gem of the Foothills*, Western Tanager Press, Santa Cruz, 1983, p. 119, and C. V. Anthony, p. 92.

³¹ Conference Minutes, 1903, p. 68.

Like other women in California, the pastors' wives either knew the hardships of crossing the prairie or the dangers of ocean passage and malarial swamps. Like other women, they probably had been reluctant to make the journey in the first place, regretting the rending of families and communities. On the trail, in addition to the physical hardships, they suffered great loneliness. Far from civilization their privacy and sanitary requirements (not to mention pregnancies) were little considered. Those who came West as children and who later married ministers — such as Emma Willis and Agnes Bryant — may have not fully recognized the dangers of the journey. Those who came as grown women faced the dangers and had their faith tested along the way.³²

Perhaps none of the wives who came to New Almaden knew the prairie as did Armenda Luella Taylor. She was born in Illinois in 1859 and as a child moved with her family to Missouri. When she was fourteen the family pressed on to Kansas where in nomadic fashion her father pitched a tent on the prairie. Before he could finish building a house, he perished in a Kansas blizzard. A year later, at fifteen, she married Theodore Taylor and saw him fail to eke a living from the soil. The following year she and her husband walked beside their ox-drawn wagon, trekking across the plains, climbing and descending the mountains. "The lines for this devoted couple never fell in easy places," a friend wrote. "They early knew pioneer hardships."³³

Women who came by sea knew hardships, too. Lizzie Hazen came to California by the Isthmus of Panama and arrived in San Francisco in December 1852 suffering from yellow fever. It was one of the wettest winters on record and rained constantly. After a week she and the Rev. Hazen took a steamer to Alviso, where they boarded a six-horse stage to San Jose, eight miles away. In the first mile the stage mired in the mud, forcing them to horseback. The horse on which Mrs. Hazen rode with the stage driver lurched in the mud, throwing them both — and this was Christmas day! The Hazens were never adequately provided for through a series of appointments in northern California. They lived on prayer. In time Mrs. Hazen's health failed. Her husband considered giving up the

³² See Lillian Schlissel, *Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey*, Schocken Books, New York, 1982. Details of the women come from the Conference Minutes, 1893, pp. 51-2; 1902, pp. 81-2; 1920, pp. 77-8; 1921, pp. 214-5; 1931, pp. 569-70.

³³ Conference Minutes, 1923, pp. 462-4.

ministry, but instead he built a house in Santa Clara, situated his wife there, and rode the Santa Clara Circuit. He served New Almaden and the other stations, visiting his wife and family as his schedule allowed.³⁴

One of the ministers' wives, Mrs. W. J. Peters, had crossed an ocean as well as a continent. Having come from ancestral Cornwall she had the most in common with the women on Mine Hill. At age 89, retired in Pacific Grove, she appended a few lines about herself to her husband's story.

So all I can add to it is that my husband came out from England about a year before I came, a promise from me that I would follow him, so with the "consent" of my dear parents, I came and met my friends in Yuba City, two of his sisters with him. So we were married by Rev. Woodward who was the Pastor at Marysville, not far from us. Mr. Peters was preaching there in "Yuba City." He was about seven or eight years older than myself. From there later on we were sent to Roseville & remained there three years. At that time it meant that three years was the limit — we were very happy.³⁵

When she arrived at Mine Hill in 1895 she could have compared her story with those of other women — they probably knew people in common back home.

By the mid-nineteenth century the Methodist church and its congregations expected the ministers' wife to have education and a variety of specialized skills that were unique to her situation, practically a recognized vocation. Like the pastors at New Almaden, many of the pastors' wives were well acquainted with classrooms. Mrs. Lucy M. Gaffney taught school in Santa Cruz before her marriage; Juletta Coil Wolfe attended the State Normal College in Bloomington, Illinois. Mrs. W. S. Urmey (then Miss Eliza Bradford Pettis) graduated from a "high-grade seminary" in her native Somerset, Massachusetts, and taught in the public schools for perhaps fifteen years before coming to California.

In their families the pastors' wives bore primary responsibility for child rearing. They could not count on their husbands who, pre-occupied with reading and preaching, attending to classes, visiting the sick, and traveling, might become strangers to the family. The wives were responsible for seeing their children properly schooled. They raised their broods in knowledge that the community had higher expectation for the behavior of the minister's children than for other children. This must have weighed especially on those with

³⁴ E. A. Hazen, pp. 72-73.

³⁵ F. J. Peters, letter to the Methodist Historical Society, 1 April 1954, in the Archives of the California-Nevada Conference of The United Methodist Church, Berkeley, California.

the largest families, such as Mrs. Willis with nine children; Mrs. Benson, five sons and four daughters; and Mrs. Taylor, four sons.³⁶

All of the pastors' wives experienced what one of them called the "dark side" of the itineracy — packing up and moving, severing ties, parting from friends every one to three years as the itinerant scheme required. One wife recalled:

In old times husbands went where all the tribes do gather, not knowing what would befall them there. And wives waited for the reading of the appointments while getting ready to move . . . Dark side of itinerant life this moving is! Yet tired feet and aching hearts never allow a dark side where love and loyalty hold sway.³⁷

Some of these women moved as many as twenty times during their husbands' careers, and the repetition made it no easier to say good bye. The three-year limit held until near the turn of the century, and then increased to five, though no pastoral family stayed that long at New Almaden.

The pastors' wives set a tone for their neighbors not only of morality, but of piety and civility. By living their faith, they reasseted the patterns of domestic and social life that people had left behind when they traveled West. New Almaden remembered the pastors' wives as saints. The report on Mrs. Trefren was typical: she "loved humanity, sympathized with all kinds of sorrow, prized the Church, and with a burning desire to honor her Savior bent all her consecrated energies to his cause." "Her name and memory," the Conference minutes tell us, "are as precious ointment."³⁸ Matilda Benson "was as one who knew God face to face and what she thus learned, she gave to others." Armenda Taylor's hand was "a touch of tenderness and strength to many who needed Christ-like friendship; while her caress of kindness eased the way of numbers of weary pilgrims passing through 'the valley of the shadow of death.'" One writer especially remembered Hester Buxton for her influence on him when he was growing up on Mine Hill.

Mrs. Buxton will be best remembered by her friends for her unfailing fidelity to her husband and the work of the church to which they gave their devotion and love in unstinted measure. It was in the little church on the mountain at New Almaden that the writer came as a

³⁶ H. M. Eaton, *Itinerant's Wife: Her Qualifications, Duties, Trials, and Rewards*, New York, 1851. Reprinted in Carolyn De Swarte Gifford, ed., *The Nineteenth-Century American Methodist Itinerant Preacher's Wife*, Garland Publishing, Inc., New York, 1987, pp. 37-50.

³⁷ Quoted from Loofbourov, *In Search of God's Gold*, San Francisco, 1950, p. 144. The writer was Ann Taylor Briggs, the same woman who discerned that William Gafney had a call to the ministry.

³⁸ Conference Minutes 1905, p. 60; 1907, p. 340; 1914, pp. 70-80; 1921, pp. 569-70; 1926, p. 76-77.

boy to know this good woman and to appreciate her Christlike character. Always cheerful, buoyant of spirit, radiating that light of Christian love and kindness by which she won the hearts of both old and young. Who shall measure the influence of such a life lived in such simplicity and complete abandon to the things of the spirit? Truly the lives of many were made sweeter by her presence and that influence shall never cease.³⁹

In a few cases, reflecting the changing roles of women, minister wives became leaders in the community and assistants to the ordained men. Mary Gough played such a part, and with a vigor that caused her husband to often say, "Dear wife, put on the brakes." Years of exertion cost Mrs. Gough her health, which failed while her husband was serving at New Almaden.⁴⁰ Emma Margaret Steele Willis turned the wives' share of her husband's work into something of a co-pastorate. "Her services were in continuous request as an advocate of religious and the temperance causes," a contemporary tells us. "Her voice was often heard in Sunday School Conventions and in public assemblies where a larger field for woman's work was discussed. Often she took the Pastor's place in neighboring appointments."⁴¹

Most of the wives became widows and remained active in the church, often singing in choirs and teaching Bible classes. Once widowed, most relied on the meager pension provided by the Conference, as did Lucy M. Gafney. The Conference records tell us that "she bore uncomplainingly the burdens of her widowhood and poverty, but she was ever true in word and deed to her divine Master." In 1891 (when the average salary of a pastor was \$1200) she received \$250 from the Conference. In subsequent years pensions increased, especially thanks to the Rev. J. H. Wythe, Jr., who served at New Almaden in 1881-82 and who displayed his business acumen as the fund's principal agent.⁴²

8. "The Surest Steps Out of the Mine"

At Methodist Church Day I spoke briefly on the roles that nineteenth century Methodism gave to lay people. On Mine Hill, as elsewhere, Methodism's emphasis on the

³⁹ George H. Colliver, "Hester Adeline Buxton," in Conference Minutes, 1921, p. 214-5. The Rev. Colliver was raised at New Almaden.

⁴⁰ Conference Minutes, 1912, p. 80.

⁴¹ Conference Minutes, 1893, pp. 51-2.

⁴² Conference Minutes, 1905, p. 60. On The Rev. J. H. Wythe, Jr., and retirement funds see Conference Minutes, 1930, pp. 562-3, and Leathbrow, *In Search of God's Gold*, p. 287.

reformation of the individual promoted self-improvement. The church encouraged those who would read, think and speak for themselves. It gave opportunity to those who would lead.

First among these were the "local preachers." As Methodism developed in Britain and America, local preachers were licensed to serve in a particular place under the supervision of the pastor. Opportunity arose for local preachers at New Almaden because the Methodist tradition called for Sabbath preaching in the morning and evening and the pastor always had more than one congregation at a minimum one on the hill and one at The Hacienda. So selected laymen preached on Sundays, and during the rest of the week retained their secular vocations and supported themselves and their families. Unlike the ordained ministers, most of whom had at least a semblance of university training, the local preachers were primarily self-educated.

"Never license a local preacher," advised a Methodist newspaper, "who does not have such a burning zeal for the cause of Chrsit as to make him feel, 'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel.'"⁴³ This was the zeal that prompted all of the local preachers listed in the appendix. Most were appointed for a year or two and not renewed, presumably because they were not effective preachers, did not care for the assignment, or exhausted themselves in the work. All of them were practical miners. They helped to assure that the preaching remained close to the immediate concerns of the hearers.

We have few written accounts of the ministry of these men. We know a little of the work of John Harris and Thomas Vivian, who left Cornwall in the 1850s and mined elsewhere before coming to California.

These faithful local preachers [their pastor reported], dispense the word of life from the pulpit, and from house to house, in the absence of the regular pastor. They also sustain the prayer meetings and Sunday school.⁴⁴

We know more of Edwin P. Willoughby, whose typical story included atypical success. He had entered the mines at age nine and came to America at eighteen. In 1885 he installed the skip road at the Santa Isabel shaft on Mine Hill. He became an assistant to Professor S.

⁴³ *California Christian Advocate*, 5 April 1871.

⁴⁴ *California Christian Advocate*, 12 April 1871.

B. Christy of the College of Mining and Metallurgy at the University of California, Berkeley. Later he was superintendent of the Soledad Mine in Mexico.

The most prominent local preacher was another miner, Henry Tregoning. He was born 12 November 1849 in Wales to Cornish parents, John and Susannah Tregoning. His father had probably gone there to work in copper smelting. Later Henry was raised in Cornwall, probably near Par where his siblings were born. He emigrated to America at the age of twenty-three and came to New Almaden, where he was first appointed a local preacher in 1872. Three years later he married Lucy Gray, daughter of Captain William Gray, superintendent of the mine, the Rev. Gafney presiding at the wedding.

"By his modest and appreciative spirit," said a friend, "Tregoning was always a learner." He needed an insatiable appetite for learning to keep up with the course of study prescribed in 1880 by the Methodist Episcopal Church. While taking his turn in the pulpit perhaps fifty or more times a year, he was also working through the "Course of Study of Local Preachers." He was preparing himself for examinations in the common branches of a liberal education as well as knowledge of the Bible and church doctrines. The reading lists included

First year

Outlines of Bible History, by Hurst; "Catechism of the Methodist Church, No. 3"; *Christian Theology* (introduction and book 1) by Wakefield; *Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1880 edition); *Life of Wesley*, by Watson; *Hundred Years of Methodism*, by Simpson

Second year

The Bible: Doctrines, *Christian Theology* (books II & III); *Christian Baptism*, by Merrill; *Outlines of Church History*, by Hurst; *History of the United States*, by Ridpath; *Compendium of Methodism*, by Porter

Third year

The Bible: Sacraments, *Christian Theology* (books IV & V); *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, by John Wesley; *Rhetoric*, by Haven; *Wesley's Sermons* (volume 1); *Introduction to the Gospel Records*, by Nast; *Era of the Protestant Reformation*, by Seebohn

Fourth year

Christian Theology (books VI & VII); *Logic* (Science Primer Edition) by Jevons; *History of Methodism*, by Porter; *Wesley's Sermons* (volume 2); Review of the previous three years⁴⁵

No doubt Tregoning referred often to an additional volume on the list, Porter's *Hints to Self Educated Ministers*. His commitment to study probably explains why Tregoning

ceased to work as a miner and became a night watchman for the Quicksilver Mining Company. Much of the night he must have kept watch over his books.

During his many years on Mine Hill there was never a time when Tregoning was not a leader in the church. Along with his preaching he also led classes, served in various church offices and was Superintendent of the Sunday School. Beyond New Almaden he held other responsible positions. In 1896 he was elected president of the Lay Association of the California Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at a time when the laity were demanding a greater role in governing the church. Under his leadership the association passed a resolution supporting women's suffrage. He encouraged support of the anti-saloon movement and criticized the association's tendency to put ordained ministers on the program rather than lay people. He was the leader of the Order of the Sons of St. George, a fraternal organization for the English-born.

Tregoning left New Almaden in 1888, lived in Grass Valley for a year, and then moved to the College Park district of San Jose, near the College of the Pacific. He continued as a local preacher at the College Park Methodist Church, and was affiliated with the college in what a newspaper called a "humble capacity." He died 21 April 1906, just three days after the great earthquake. He only lived to fifty-six. At Tregoning's funeral Professor Cross of the University called him a good preacher and said that, "If he had had the advantage of a college education his talents would surely have given him great prominence in the world."⁴⁶

Along with his remarkable talents, Tregoning must have been blessed with humility. The Cornish were known in their homeland, and in the Cornish Camp settlement at New Almaden, for despising anyone who tried to rise above their fellows. As a Methodist minister once wrote from Cornwall, "Uppish men are an abomination here."⁴⁷ The Cornish suspected the motives of those who became preachers because, as the Cornish saying went, "the steps to the pulpit are the surest steps out of the mine." No one seemed to suspect

⁴⁶ San Jose *Daily Mercury*, 24 April 1906.

⁴⁷ Quoted by Thomas Shaw, *A History of Cornish Methodism*, p. 106. Russell Pearce told me that according to stories that have come down in his family such attitudes prevailed at the Cornish camp.

Tregoning. Despite the close scrutiny of his community, he played his leading role and never give offense.

Another long-time local preacher was William Lanyon, born in Cornwall in 1847. He began preaching at New Almaden as early as 1886, and like Tregoning he later affiliated with the Methodist Church in College Park. In various years at New Almaden he took the part of Sunday School Superintendant, church steward and class leader. He and his wife Sarah had their faiths sorely tested in 1902 when their son, William Lanyon, Jr., was murdered in a saloon at the New Idria quicksilver mine. He was shot in the back while walking away from a quarrel. When news of the murder reached San Jose, Lanyon rushed off to New Idria with the local sheriff, which left Sarah Lanyon to explain to a reporter what the son of a Methodist preacher was doing in a barroom on the Sabbath. Having learned the trade at New Almaden, he was a steady, industrious practical miner, she said. He was also "fond of a good time." She told the reporter that she had a premonition of the young man's death, having seen him in a dream, lying in a pool of blood.⁴⁸

The most intriguing name on the roll of local preachers is Jane Vincent, who was appointed (probably by the Rev. Gafney) in 1872 at the age of about forty-four. Women preachers were rare in the California Conference, but not unknown. They would not have been unfamiliar to the immigrant congregation. John Wesley had occasionally used women preachers and one branch of Methodism, the Primitive Methodists (who played a minor role in Cornwall) had prided itself on having "no sex limitation in church work." In the California Conference women lay preachers were not officially acknowledged until 1918, which probably means that in her day Jane Vincent had an extraordinary calling to preach. We regrettably know nothing more.

Another type of preaching at New Almaden was supplied by James Carlyon, born in Cornwall in 1842, a common miner. He was the "exhorter" who would speak following the pastor's sermon, enlarging on the established theme and urging right conduct. He also led prayer meetings. During the time of the New Almaden church the ministry of the exhorter fell into disuse.

9. Class Leaders, Faithful Guides

While most of the men, women and children in the Cornish camp heard the preachers regularly or at one time or another, only those who had full membership, or became members on probation, received tickets to attend the weekly class meetings. The pastor renewed the tickets quarterly on the recommendation of the class leaders. In class the faithful participated in prayer, Bible study, individual witness and discipline. The class leader, who knew the members intimately, interrogated each one regarding the state of his or her soul, and gave each one the necessary instruction, encouragement or reproof. One of the Charles Wesley's hymns expresses the feeling of personal fellowship that informed the classes:

Jesus, united by Thy grace,
And each to each endeared,
With confidence we seek Thy face,
And know our prayer is heard.

Touched by the loadstone of Thy love,
Let all our hearts agree;
And ever towards each other move,
And ever move towards Thee.

Usually two classes met on Sunday mornings at New Almaden, one at eight and one at nine, each with twelve to thirty members. For many who attended, the meeting was an emblem of heaven. They prized their tickets.⁴⁹

Class meetings were an important part of evangelism. "All new converts should at once be inducted into this school of Christ," the Methodist newspaper recorded. "It will save them from backsliding."⁵⁰ Responsible for this important work, the class leaders were virtually sub-pastors, appointed by the pastors and acting under them. In addition to leading the class, they visited the sick, met with the pastors and the stewards at a quarterly meeting, and collected and paid over the funds from the classes (traditionally a penny a week from each member). The leaders reported to the pastor when, usually due to illness or grief, members needed pastoral services in their homes. From the remaining church records we know that the leaders were all practical miners. (See appendix for a list of

⁴⁹ Class tickets have been preserved as heirlooms in a least one New Almaden family.

⁵⁰ *California Christian Advocate* 6 April 1874, p. 6.

leaders and classes.) A man who was interrogated by his class leader on Sunday night work beside him in the stope on Monday.⁵¹

A different kind of class met under the leadership of Mine Captain James Harry on Thursday evenings. If practice at New Almaden followed that in Cornwall, this class focused less on the Bible and introspection and more on reading and writing, probably with a view towards reading the Scriptures, though also with the possibility of people writing letters home or improving themselves in their work. The class members met for perhaps two hours of instruction after a ten-hour work day. In 1873 six women composed the class. Within a few years it grew to twenty or more and included several men. (See appendix for a listing of class members). Though we have few records, we know that Harry led this class for as long as twenty-five years.⁵²

Education (as the many Methodist universities around the world attest) was a more or less natural consequence of the Methodist movement. The adult students in Captain Harry's class probably had some education as children, but the resources were limited. Growing up in Cornwall, they may have been taught in an Infant School (or "Dame School"), where a partially-literate instructor drilled them on ABC's for a few pence a week. In England the instruction that common people received in Methodist classes made a significant contribution to the development of the working class and trade unions, and to the greater participation in the community by people who could not attend a university. In America, where there was more opportunity, it helped immigrants to assimilate into the larger community, to move out of their initial occupations (such as mining) into a broader range of fields and professions. It encouraged them to put a high value on the education of their children, as New Almaden families did.

Preaching and teaching were not the only opportunities for leadership. Other lay officers of the church included the stewards and trustees. Stewards were responsible for the money and various funds. Their ranks included miners, practical engineers, pumpmen and timbermen — all of them trusted. In addition to these there was a least one women

⁵¹ Nolan B. Harmon, general editor, *The Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (The United Methodist Publishing House, 1974), pp. 518-9.

⁵² Dr. Fred Harris, founding president of the Cornwall Methodist Historical Society, pointed out to the uniqueness of the Thursday evening class.

steward, Emma J. Miners; and at least one who was not of Cornish stock, Philip Bohemia, who lived at the Hacienda.

In addition to stewards, the church had trustees who met as a board to bear the responsibility for the church property and continuing operations. Their names, so far as we know them, are listed in an appendix. One of the notable trustees was John Goldsworthy (ancestor of Ranger John Goldsworthy of the Santa Clara County Parks Department). When the church burnt down in 1884, he contributed \$500 to the building fund — an amount equal to more than six months of a miner's wages. Another prominent trustee was Captain James Varcoe, a supervisor in the mine under Captain Harry. He had wide experience, having mined in Cornwall, New Jersey, Michigan and Nevada, as well as at Grass Valley and New Idria. He was trusted by both those he worked for and those who worked for him. In addition to his role in the church he was also a trustee of the Benevolent Society of New Almaden, the fund organized by the mining company to which all workers contributed.

10. A Church for Children

In 1776 at Redruth, Cornwall, Wesley addressed a group of fifty or sixty children, and wrote afterwards, "How much depends upon these! All the hope of the rising generation." The Methodists did not invent Sunday School, but rather saw its value and adopted it. Early in his itinerant ministry John Wesley required his traveling preachers to gather the children of their societies into catechism classes.⁵³

At New Almaden the religious activities of children centered on their Sunday classes. On the sabbath instruction ran for about two hours in the morning and perhaps another hour or two in the afternoon. About 165 children attended classes every week in the church basement. In 1887 the Rev. Trefren gave his appraisal:

I want to say this, that I have never preached to a better, more intelligent appearing congregation, better behaved congregation, better dressed, and apparently better fed; our Sunday school is an extra Sunday school, if you please: they are well officered; they have good teachers; it is very regularly and well attended, and they are better versed in the

⁵³ An article in the *California Christian Advocate*, 23 June 1880, told the story of Robert Raikes inventing the Sunday school in England

Scriptures than is usual in Sunday schools even.⁵⁴

We have a good account of what the boys wore on Sunday:

Sunday forenoon, boys would wear clean every-day clothes, but after the noon dinner they would change to their "Sunday best" store clothes, and then on to Sunday school where there were boys and also girls classes, and Bible classes for the grown-ups who attended. I learned much of Bible history from Mr. William Reed and Mr. Edwin Tregoning. Then a walk along the new road and home to "tea" (supper), before we went to church. Never were clothes so carefully guarded. Monday mornings, before washing by hand the week's clothes, mother would brush the suit and carefully fold it away in a bureau drawer not to be worn again until the next Sunday.⁵⁵

In addition to the one on the hill, there was a second Sunday school held in the school house at the Hacienda. (On fine days they met outdoors on the lawn of the mine manager's residence). For many years Mrs. James Randol, wife of the general manager, was its benefactress. When she left New Almaden in 1886, the children presented her with a scroll that read in part —

Your presence and general disposition have brought blessing, and sunshine, to our hearts, and lives; and your kindly attention, and unsparing generosity towards us has laid us under obligations that we cannot discharge.⁵⁶

Though it took a hand other than a child's to write something so obsequious, we can imagine that the children appended their signatures with genuine gratitude. The thirty-eight little signators included several groups of siblings, many Cornish children, and offsprings of the mine management, such as Alma, George, Lottie, David and Arthur Bulmore. (Robert Bulmore, their father, was cashier of the mining company). One child signed "John Hancock," but it wasn't a prank. John was the brother of Ellen and Joseph, and son of Joseph and Emma Hancock. His Cornish father had died in a mining accident a few years before.

The women on the hill probably played an important role in teaching the children, and they relied on materials published by the Methodist church. An article in the *California Christian Advocate* described the teacher's duties. "To interest your class in the lesson of the hour," it read, "because you have first become interested in it yourself, because you have been planning, before-hand, is how you shall interest them." The duties continued,

⁵⁴ *Contested Election*, p. 1220.

⁵⁵ William J. Trevorrow, "New Almaden Hill," a manuscript generously loaned to me by Rear Admiral and Mrs. Ted Fredericks. Mrs. Fredericks is the daughter of W. J. Trevorrow.

⁵⁶ The original faded scroll hangs in the New Almaden Museum.

To gather and keep a class about you, not merely to teach those who happen to be present. You can easily enough gather a class, by a word of introduction to the boys and girls playing in your streets, who do not go to Sunday school. You can only keep a class by making them feel, both in the school and out of the school, that you are interested in them. Greet them with kind words whenever you meet them. Hunt them up as soon as they become regular in attendance.⁵⁷

Since we have found no Sunday School records, our knowledge of the classes or methods is limited. We do know that when Bishop E. O. Haven visited New Almaden in 1881 he found that the children were uniformly healthy and as intelligent as any he had seen. "The Sabbath school is a model," he wrote in a brief account. "The church seems to be a great family, made up of all the families of that faith in the village."⁵⁸ What we know of the school beside this is largely anecdotal. In classes children were perhaps told that they were being trained for heaven. They sometimes memorized Bible verses and perhaps this ditty that was popular in Cornish churches:

Then children, attend to the words you repeat,
And always remember this line:
'Tis a credit to any good girl to be neat,
But quite a disgrace to be fine.

Several of the pastors took a special interest in the children on Mine Hill. In April 1892 the Rev. Bryant organized a probationers class of 40 children, and in the next year at least fifteen of them were received as full members. Some children showed a special affinity for the spiritual life. The Rev. Joseph R. Wolfe was impressed by eleven year old Salina Odgers: "This girl came to the parsonage February 18, 1893," he wrote, "and wanted me to put her on the probation list." Selina was received as a full member of the church the following October. One minister took time to sign the autograph book belonging to Jemima May Andrew:

Dear Friend, Choose the better part, ere it be too late, is the wish of your friend. [The Rev.] W. J. Peters. New Almaden, March 20, 1896

There were also organizations for adolescence. A chapter of The Epworth League, the church's society for teenagers and young adults, was meeting under the supervision of

⁵⁷ *California Christian Advocate*, 8 January 1871.

⁵⁸ *California Christian Advocate* June 1881

Joseph Pearce in 1893. When the Boys' Brigade movement became popular in the 1890s a company was organized at New Almaden for drill and Bible study.

A company of twenty-three of the Boys' Brigade has been organized. The boys seem to like the arrangement very much, and willingly pledge themselves to three things — not to swear, not to drink intoxicants, and to attend church at least once on Sabbath Day and occupy front seats. It was good to see them bravely and quietly come to the front seats to hear preaching.⁵⁹

For the Sunday school children, the holidays were a delight. One of the best remembered was Christmas of 1875. An entertainment on the hill a week before raised enough money to provide for a Christmas tree in the church. The young and old of the camp brought presents to hang on the tree. "At 7:00 [on Christmas Eve] the little church was full and never a more beautiful sight was seen upon our Hill than our laden down evergreen with its hundreds of pretty and useful presents." After the service several of the Sunday school children recited and then the gifts were distributed. Santa Claus arrived "and was very liberal with his candy, giving to each little one at least a pound." That same Christmas the members of the Methodist Church presented a Bible to Mr. and Mrs. Randol.⁶⁰

Lotty Tonkin and her sister Elizabeth Tonkin Colliver remembered the Christmases they spent on Mine Hill in the 1890s. About a week before Christmas a choir of Cornish miners, finding the path by lantern light, would go from door to door singing carols. Probably they sang traditional Cornish carols such as "Lo the eastern sages rise," "Sound, Sound," and "Hark what music fills creation." After singing they would be invited in, usually for the customary saffron cake and tea, and according to the Tonkin daughters, often "something stronger than tea." In their wood stoves the women had already begun baking homemade fruit cakes, candy, more saffron cakes and figgy-duff cookies. "It was very pioneerish," they recalled.

We'd kill the turkey for Christmas Day dinner. There was plum pudding and a dressing of bread crumbs, suet and thyme from the garden. It gave real flavor to the bird. We'd pick the thyme and clean off all the little fine leaves.⁶¹

⁵⁹ *California Christian Advocate*, 1 February 1893, p. 5; and 22 March 1893, p. 5.

⁶⁰ "Christmas Festivities at New Almaden," *San Jose Weekly*, 6 January 1876, page 1.
⁶¹ "Memories of Bilingual Christmases," *San Jose News*, 23 December 1966, page 6.

On Christmas day, Laurence Bulmore and Milton Lanyon remembered in their book *Cinnabar Hills*, the residents assembled at the store where adults performed a variety of Christmas music and the school children offered a program under the direction of their teacher. The evening might include more carolling. The night after Christmas, in keeping with a Cornish custom, the children would wear masks or blacken their faces and do pranks, and they would expect refreshments or small gifts.⁶²

Other holidays punctuated the children's year. Washington's Birthday was commemorated with a church tea in the afternoon, usually followed by an entertainment at night. The church marked Good Friday with a tea and social. Children were often baptized on Easter Sunday in the church and it was a feast day in the homes and boarding houses on the hill.⁶³ "Mother would roast a hind quarter of a very young lamb," William Trevororrow remembered, "and that day would serve our first green peas and potatoes of the season." On Thanksgiving Day a tea was held at the church.

On May 30 the children enjoyed the annual tea treat, a Cornish custom. In the old country the treats were limited to a cup of tea and a saffron bun, but New Almaden afforded more elaborate fare. The children feasted at a pot-luck picnic, spread beneath an oak tree at the rear of the church. William Trevororrow remembered,

The one day of the year that provisions, cooked, were sent from San Jose. I never since have tasted such excellent baked ham, and the cakes and baker's "milk" bread, etc., was long thought of with much appreication. After the "Treat" games were played by the young. Kissing ring was most popular. Cornish folk, young or old, are very fond of a bit of kissin'. In the evening some noted preacher from "away" preached, and his words were absorbed with reverence.⁶⁴

Trevororrow left out the clotted cream his mother made for these occasions.

11. Englishtown Commonwealth

To begin understanding the common life of Englishtown we can return again to the founding of the Methodist movement. From the beginning the Wesley's rejected the

⁶² Laurence Bulmore & Milton Lanyon, *Cinnabar Hills: The Quicksilver Days of New Almaden*, Los Gatos, 1967, pp. 69-70; and William J. Trevororrow manuscript

⁶³ California *Christian Advocate*, 12 April 1893, p. 5.

⁶⁴ William J. Trevororrow and R. J. Pearce manuscripts. Trevororrow is also the source for information in the preceding two paragraphs

Calvinist doctrine of predestination, which became the doctrine of English Puritans. The restriction of God's grace to an elect few was repugnant to the Methodists. It contradicted their sense of the New Testament and made nonsense of the spiritual life. Methodist, nevertheless, and especially as it was practiced in Cornwall, incorporated an energy that can only be described as Puritan. A scholar's description early Methodists makes the point:

They were frugal, industrious, conscientious, sabbatarian; strict, and sometimes narrow and prudish, in their morals; stern in the bringing up of their children; averse from entertainments and unrestrained laughter. So far they were staunch representatives of the Puritan tradition which has never died out in England, unless it has done so recently. But those who had really caught the meaning of Wesley's message had something else about them also: an inward, serene gaiety which comes out over and over again in Charles Wesley's hymns, springing from the joyful assurance of salvation which Calvinism fails to give. And, as a result, the Methodists knew not only how to face hardship and scorn without being much troubled, but also how to die.⁶⁵

When one Mine Hill descendant recalls that her family was "straight-laced and Wesleyan," she alludes to that in-dwelling Puritanism that had come across the ocean like the sprigs of periwinkle that the Cornish planted around their cabins. At New Almaden Cornish Methodism imposed an asectic discipline that called for regular attendance at preaching, the sacraments, and class meetings. In such a small, homogeneous community there must have been considerable pressure to conform. Believers renounced such pleasures as sports, revels, theatre, idle (that is, non-religious) songs, cards and dancing. Young women cut their curls and young men wore short hair. Even as the strictures lessen, no young woman would become so worldly as to wear ribbons in her bonnet. The church members frowned on the Cornish dialect, preferring the more educated English of the preachers to an English that retained some of the rhythm and intonations of the old Cornish language.⁶⁶

Though the community had an insular quality, as does Cornwall itself, the residents had daily and weekly reports from the wider world. More than thirty families subscribed to *The California Christian Advocate*, the Methodist newspaper published in San Francisco, and from them it probably passed around the camp. The *Advocate* dealt with religious news along with wider social issues and it summarized various articles (crimes stories, for

⁶⁵ Rupert E. Davies, p. 80.

⁶⁶ William J. Trevorrow manuscript.

example) from secular newspapers. As all California newspapers it carried mining news, reports of discoveries and values of precious metals. It analyzed the annual reports of the Quicksilver Mining Company, giving the miners at New Almaden an objective source of information about their employer. It also contained stories for children, poems, obituaries of the faithful, and advertisements. One of the interesting ads promoted Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry Cough Syrup, which claimed to cure consumption. There were other newspapers on Mine Hill, too. By the mid-1880s about forty copies of the San Francisco *Chronicle* arrived every day. Some Cornish people subscribed by mail to the newspapers from home, including Cornish's *West Briton*. Some subscribed to other Methodist newspapers and publications.

During the years of the Mine Hill church temperance was the familiar face of Methodism. (In the sixty-three years since the repeal of Prohibition, the popular image of the teetotaling Methodist has not entirely faded). Throughout their travels Methodist ministers saw the effects of drunkenness and they deplored it. Methodist laymen, and especially laywomen, saw the debilitating influence of drink on their fellows and mates and calculated that liquor was the common denominator of the country's social ills. Temperance became a crusade, abstinence an ideal. Grape juice replaced wine in the church. Many at New Almaden and elsewhere were supported in their attitudes by the Temperance page in the California *Christian Advocate*. Men on Mine Hill organized a lodge of Good Templers, a fraternal temperance society. With their wives they may have attended temperance lectures, such as the ones sponsored regularly in San Jose by the Methodists and other Protestant denominations.⁶⁷

As not all of the quicksilver miners heeded, the church and the saloon became the poles of community life. When some of the miners took the stage into San Jose they frequented the saloon owned by Charles Barr on First at El Dorado streets (now called Post). William Trevorrow had his first taste of steam beer standing at the bar beside his Grandfather Geach in Old Joe's Brewery in San Jose. Nearer the mine a saloon operated on Almaden Road, north of the mining company's property, at one time under the

⁶⁷ California *Christian Advocate*, 9 June 1880, p. 5.

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⁶⁷ *California Christian Advocate*, 9 June 1880, p. 5.

management of an Irish immigrant, and at another under Edward Arents, a Welshman. (The company exerted its influence to have this saloon closed on Sunday evenings to assure that workers would report to work on Mondays.) The company store also sold beer, wine and liquor, but there were no saloons at English Town. (There were saloons and gambling at the Mexican camp).

Abstinence pledges were popular at New Almaden, but not everyone was willing. Such a pledge was printed in the front-matter of miner John Drew's family Bible, but no one bothered to sign. One who did make a pledge was young Dick Pearce. In 1871 when he was ten he sampled the keg at a welcoming party for Captain James Harry. With other young boys he performed a dance on a water tank that drew the wrong kind of attention. Attempting to escape his irate father, Dick slipped down a narrow ravine and tumbled into a blackberry thicket. His father eventually caught up with him, and before the night was over, scratched, bruised and remorseful, he swore off hard liquor. He stuck to his pledge for the rest of his life.⁶⁸

Temperance could cause dissension in families, as evidenced in the lives of Henry and Eliza James. Both of Cornish stock, they came from the old country when young, met at New Almaden and married in the church: he aged age thirty-eight; she, twenty-seven. They were strict Methodists, never played cards, never danced. On the Sabbath they read only the Bible, *The Advocate* or other religious literature. They didn't drink, though over his wife's objections he kept a partially consumed bottle of brandy on a high shelf. The issue of the bottle was not resolved until Henry James died. Immediately on coming home from her husband's funeral, Eliza James pushed a chair under the shelf, took the bottle and poured it down the sink.⁶⁹

An especially unattractive aspect of the camp to our more ecumenical age was the prevailing attitude towards Roman Catholics. The Cornish had an aversion to the church of Rome and concluded that the relative poverty of their Hispanic neighbors was partly a consequence of its teachings. One explanation as to why the Cornish were predominantly

⁶⁸ Told to me by Clyde Arbuckle, historian and author, who collected stories from his conversations with Dick Pearce and others.

⁶⁹ Told to me by Doris Enman of Denver, Colorado, granddaughter of Henry and Eliza James.

Republicans was that they associated the Democrats with the Irish and the Irish with Catholicism.⁷⁰ Such entipithy, though, was not unmitigated. Thomas Hicks, who promoted the building of Hicks Road, married Josefa Bernal in his wife's church and saw his ten children baptised by the priest. The Cornish children appreciated the sheer color of Catholic observances and ventured to the Mexican camp to see them. They never forgot witnessing the "Buena Noche" procession on Christmas Eve, when men carried statuettes depicting Mary and Joseph looking for a place to stay. They vividly recalled the burning of Judas in effigy on Holy Saturday. Sometimes, winning their further admiration, Judas' wife and children were also burned.

Wesley knew something of the Cornish. "Many of them have little sense and a great inclination to criticize," he said.⁷¹ For all their traveling across oceans and continents, the Cornish often traveled from one mining camp to another and this was not necessarily broadening. A community, though, is not just measured at its narrowest points of strictures or taboo; there are always broader points of charity and toleration. Maybe no one better reflected the charity of this community as did Louisa Rowe Varcoe, New Almaden's "angel of mercy." "Auntie" Varcoe, as all the children called her, was born in Cornwall about 1842 and came to New Almaden in her late twenties. She married Captain James Varcoe. Judge A. C. Innes, a long-time New Almaden figure, described her:

Day or night, rain or shine, Almaden's messenger of mercy was there, to comfort the afflicted, to console the widow, and ease the heart-sobs of fatherless children. Mrs. Varcoe possessed in high degree that rare faculty of being able to do things while most people were simply appalled, her hand worked in unison with her heart. . . . her memory will be cherished as a beautiful example of the everyday-all-the-time, noble Christian woman.⁷²

12. A Wesleyan Work Force

As a consequence of emphasizing the reformation of the individual, Methodism create desirable workers. By teaching individuals to accept their work as a divine calling, the church gave them strength of purpose. It upheld the morality of the economic order, and this no doubt pleased Randol and the officers and managers of the mining company.

⁷⁰ Captain James Harry testimony, *Contested Election*, 1887.

⁷¹ *The Letters of John Wesley*, viii, p. 247. Quoted by Shaw, *A History of Methodism in Cornwall*, Truro, Cornwall, 1967, p. 105.

⁷² Undated newspaper clipping (circa July 1914) in a scrapbook at the New Almaden Museum.

Whatever else the church represented to the management, it connoted a stable, law-abiding, industrious work-force. It was something to show to potential investors.

For all that Randol and his workers may have shared in ethical and religious values, the economics of their stations divided them. English Town is sometimes remembered as idyllic. "The climate being balmy, the school for children excellent, and the Methodist Church associations being good for families," William Trevorrow remembered, "New Almaden Hill was a family mining camp and married men did not often seek employment elsewhere."⁷³ Yet as in other idylls, all was not as it appeared. The conflict surfaced when the miners struck in 1865 and continued long after work was resumed. The center of controversy was the company store.

On Methodist Church Day we learned about the conditions of the camp and the store from Russell Pearce, a descendant of ministers and miners. In Nevada in the 1880s miners earned a minimum of four dollars a day, while at the same time at New Almaden miners on contract averaged as little as \$2.48. In addition, Mine Hill residents were expected to patronize the company store where prices were twenty-five per cent higher than in San Jose.

The situation left little money for families or for the church. When they could every family or single member of the church contributed a dollar a month, and non-members usually fifty cents, to pay the pastor's salary and maintain the operation. Under such conditions even this modest level of support was not always possible. The daughters of the Rev. F. M. Willis, who served at New Almaden from 1885 - 86, called it "the poorest place we ever were in." Willis, who had known countless mining camps and had even done some mining himself, fully appreciated the plight of the workers. He decided to make a stand for them and for his family. In 1886 he resigned his charge as a protest against the company's practices. The act, Pearce told us, had a strong impact: "The church appeared as a whitened sepulcher." In the following year the company's practices received more noteriety as the result of an investigation pertaining to a Congressional election. Conditions

and wages improved after that and the company store became competitive with stores in San Jose.⁷⁴

13. "Claims to be Episcopal"

Louisa Pearce, mother of Dick Pearce, was listed as a "Member in Full Connection" in the log of the New Almaden Methodist Church, and beside her name appears the notation, "Claims to be Episcopal." It was not an uncommon assertion. Methodism began as a movement within the Anglican church in England and Wesley insisted on regular church attendance. Even into the twentieth century in Cornwall (and in some other localities) many went to Anglican church services on Sunday morning and heard preaching in the Methodist chapel in the afternoon.⁷⁵

Several of the Mine Hill families, including the Cornish, Doble, Drew, Faull, James, Harvey, Pearce, Trengove and Willoughby families maintained connections with Trinity Episcopal Church (now Cathedral) in San Jose. Thomas Drew had been married at the parish church in Truro, Cornwall (St. Mary's Church before it was transformed into the present cathedral) — his descendants found his name in the registry there. In 1891 his son John married Sarah Bishop at Trinity in San Jose. Richard Faull was a member of the Methodist Church on Mine Hill when he married Susan Tressider at Trinity in 1877. His daughter Mildred Maria was baptized and confirmed at Trinity. His brothers Captain Thomas and James, his sister-in-law Jane and his niece Minnie Faull were all buried at Oak Hill following Episcopal services. Several couples were married at Trinity and then had their children baptized at the Methodist Church, including William and Emily Gray Cornish, Samuel and Bessie James, Thomas and Elizabeth Trengove Harvey, and Elijah and Mary Trengove. Edwin Willoughby was a local preacher and Ann Billings was a member of the Methodist Church when they elected to marry at Trinity in 1880.

⁷⁴ Remarks by Russell Pearce at the New Almaden Community Club, 13 May 1995. A copy is on file at the New Almaden Museum.

⁷⁵ Shaw, *A History of Cornish Methodism*, p. 32 and 122. Shaw notes the following: "The myth, often repeated, that Wesley left the Church of England, is unhistorical. The Conference of 1793 recorded in its *Minutes*, 'Our venerable father who is gone to his great reward, lived and died a member and friend of the Church of England. . . We entreat our societies. . . to continue. . . in connexion with the Church of England' [the elipses are from Shaw's text]. In England the Anglican and Methodist churches unsuccessfully attempted to reunite in 1077

While we don't have sufficient information to identify a pattern, it seems likely that some of these families relied less on Trinity Church, 12 miles away in San Jose, after a Methodist minister was assigned to the Cornish Camp, and especially after the church was erected in 1875. At the least it was more convenient to have infants baptized on Mine Hill rather than taking them to town, and given the prospect of infant mortality, more sure. New Almaden people continued to be buried from Trinity Church into the twentieth century, including Jane Doble in 1901 and James Kelly (a Cornish Kelly) in 1902. Some families, like the Faulls and Paulls, affiliated with Trinity after leaving the mining camp and moving to San Jose.⁷⁶

While the first religious services in the Cornish Camp were Methodist, the first services at the Hacienda may have been read from the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. The mining company officers and their families apparently read Morning Prayer on Sunday until about 1880 when a Methodist service and Sunday school were organized at the foot of Mine Hill.⁷⁷

14. Born in Song

At Methodist Church Day, after the pasty lunch, most everyone joined in singing hymns by Charles Wesley — "A Charge to Keep I Have," "O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing," "Jesus, United by Thy Grace," and "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling." In singing we were carrying on a Cornish tradition with an enthusiasm that might have made the old Methodists proud. Like other Celtic people (and so many people everywhere) the Cornish are exceedingly fond of music. In past generations their taste ran towards choirs and brass bands, and you can still hear both throughout the old country. For two hundred years — at least from the time of the Wesleys to age of radio — hymns were the popular music of the working people, and in many lyrics the Cornish found expression for their deepest convictions.

⁷⁶ Estella L. Guppy, *Trinity Church, Advent 1860 to Easter 1903*, Trinity Parish Guild, San Jose, 1903. This book includes a list of baptizisms, confirmations, marriages and burials.

⁷⁷ San Francisco Call 9 Dec. 1883, p. 1

Anyone visiting the Cornish camp in its day would have recognized that music was central to the life there. A reporter from San Francisco described the choir he found during a visit in 1883:

I visited the church on a Saturday afternoon. It is a clean, well-cared-for building, and already the organist and choir were rehearsing the hymns for the succeeding day. The subdued strains of that hymnic invocation, one of the earliest as well as the best in the Methodist collection,

"Leaders of faithful souls and guide
Of all that travel to the sky,"

floated out on the still air. There are many very good voices among the miners — the parent sings a manly bass or baritone, the daughters contribute a rich soprano or mezzo, that harmonizes with the boyish contralto of younger members of the family. Pretty nearly all the miners go to church on Sunday; that is, when they are above ground.⁷⁸

While planning our picnic in 1995 we learned the identity of the church organist and choir director. She was Emma Morcum Tregoning, born in Par, Cornwall in 1861 and at nineteen married in the New Almaden church to Edwin Tregoning. A central figure in the church, she was the camp's contralto singer and led the Sunday School entertainments. The Tregoning home was a regular source of music on Sunday evenings when many of the camp's musicians would gather on the porch and men and families would crowd around to join in singing. On nights other than Sunday they must have also sang folk songs from home:

Pasty, role out like a plate
Baked with turnets, tates and mate
Crumpled up and baked like fate —
That's a Cornish pasty.

Emma Tregoning lived out her life in northern California. In her eighties she was spry enough to climb into a tree to pick apricots for her granddaughter.

The hill was a musical place and the sophistication of the music might surprise us. Along with hymns from the Methodist Hymnal and perhaps alternate song books, the New Almaden choir may have performed portions of Handel's oratorios and even, though much less likely, older Anglican church music from Purcell, Byrd and Tallis. Such a variety of music played a role in many Methodist chapels back in Cornwall.⁷⁹ Much depended, no

⁷⁸ George E. Barnes, "A Thanksgiving Day Visit to New Almaden," *San Francisco Call*, 9 December 1883, page 1.

⁷⁹ J. C. C. Probert, *The Worship and Devotion of Cornish Methodism*, privately printed, Cornwall, 1978. pp. 47-57

doubt, on the strength of individual singers. One of the memorable voices belonged to Jimmy Johns, a barrel-chested bass, a miner, bachelor and stalward Methodist who resided at Pearce's boarding house.⁸⁰

Families on the hill valued musical talent, Those with daughters tried to afford a small organ for them and often Emma Tregoning gave lessons. Another prominent musician, Emily Collins Pearce, taught piano on The Hill for more than twenty years. When her family moved into San Jose, as most of the Mine Hill families did after the turn of the Twentieth Century, Emily Pearce became the organist at the First Methodist Church. Many New Almaden families reunited every Sunday at the San Jose church.⁸¹

15. Last Years

The life of the Methodist church at New Almaden flourished in the 1890s, especially under the leadership of the Rev. J. W. Bryant. He brought more members than any other minister into the New Almaden congregation. During his time on the hill (1890-92) 101 people, including forty children, attended probationer classes, and fifty-three of them were received into full membership.⁸² At the end of the decade, though, membership plummeted. As mining diminished the workers and their families moved on. The Rev. J. W. Buxton, who served two tours of duty, longer than anyone else at New Almaden, saw membership fall from about eighty in 1898 to only fifty in 1902.

About the ministers who served New Almaden during the declining years we know little. Of Edwin Harry Smith who served there in 1903, we know least. He was born in Hamilton, Missouri and was a probationary minister in the California Conference when he came to Mine Hill. There he earned \$800, baptized six children and had seventeen probationers in a class. He wrote of New Almaden,

There has been practically no change here in the last ten years. The charge has been well served and is seemingly in good condition, but there have been no conversions to speak of. There is a list of young people here, but only a few in the church. We are determined by the help of God to change this, or move on.

⁸⁰ William J. Trevorow manuscript.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Conference minutes, 1920, pp. 77-78; Letter circa 1903, John Wallace Bryant to R. E. Wenk, Archives of the California-Nevada Conference of The United Methodist Church. Berkeley

Apparently he had some success because he got seventeen probationers in a class and saw the number of full members increase to 80, the best showing in several years.⁸³ Smith turned the work over to the Rev. Theodore Taylor, whose outstanding singing voice was probably much appreciated.⁸⁴ The Rev. M. J. Gough was probably the last of the ministers to reside at New Almaden (1907-1908). Born in England, once a student of medicine, he won only the faint praise of his colleagues: "He was one of a host of humble, undistinguished men who will find an abundant welcome in the Heavenly City."⁸⁵

Three young men, A. H. Clark (1908-09), C. J. Irwin (1909-10) and J. Wesley Richards (1910-11), closed out the ministry at New Almaden, though probably none of them actually resided on Mine Hill. Richards, for example, was affiliated with the College of the Pacific in San Jose and may have gone to New Almaden to preach two or more times a month. During his tenure a visitor to New Almaden named Maria Branard sent a picture postcard of the church to her daughter in San Francisco. She wrote on the card,

New Almaden, June 7, 1909. Dear Daughter, This is where I went to Sunday School and church yesterday. There were 18 at the Sunday school and 18 at church. . . .⁸⁶

In succeeding years the number of full members shrank to thirty-four, to eight and finally to one. No infants were brought for baptism. From 1912-14 the Conference did not appoint a minister but left New Almaden "to be supplied." Eventually, as the Quicksilver Mining Company tottered into bankruptcy, the church was abandoned. It retained its place, a ruin on the hill. In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps moved into the area and tore the church down, salvaging the usable materials.

The Methodist Episcopal Church at New Almaden lived on in its people. When they left New Almaden many gave up mining, but not their Methodist faith. We see them listed in the 1916 directory of the First Methodist Church, San Jose: H. J. Pacoe, who had become a plumber; George English, a contractor; Hocking and Williams, funeral directors; Ed James in a glass business; Bennett Argall, a dentist. More than two dozen New

⁸³ Edwin Harry Smith, letter to the Rev. R. E. Wenk, 18 July 1904, Methodist Archives, Berkeley.

⁸⁴ Conference Minutes, 1916, pp. 101-103.

⁸⁵ Conference Minutes, 1924, pp. 76-77.

⁸⁶ The postcard is in the collection of John Drew of San Jose, whose grandfather was the last superintendent of the New Almaden mine.

Almaden families affiliated there and others joined the Centella, College Park and Los Gatos churches. The New Almaden church lived on in the ministry of the Rev. George Colliver, who grew up on Mine Hill to become a respected pastor and an authority on Christian education. Even today the old church lives on in the memories of its descendants and in the minds of hikers who climb the trail through the Quicksilver County Park to see where it once stood. As a result of our Methodist Church Day it lives on in the hearts of local Methodists, and in the imaginations of the youngest descendants who came and heard the stories, sang the hymns and met two women who once were little girls in the pews of the old church.

In 1878 when John Tregoning died at New Almaden (age 58), the Rev. Hopkins wrote his obituary.

He died in great peace, with full confidence of a blessed immortality. He leaves a wife and four children, two daughters and two sons, both local preachers and earnest Christian workers. May this whole family, mother, and children, be an unbroken family in the kingdom of glory.⁸⁷

In that kingdom, where brokenness is mended, may the whole family of the New Almaden church gather on a hill.

⁸⁷ *Californian Christian Advocate*, August 1, 1878

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