

CHAPTER 3: IMPORTANT MEN RELATED TO BETHEL ACADEMY

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In the article, "The Bethel Academy Story," reference was made to a number of people who joined their lives and dedicated their labor to build and operate Bethel Academy. Among these people were an inner core who envisioned and brought to reality this frontier school for boys.

This article is a series of short biographies of several men. The first one is the famous Methodist bishop, Francis Asbury. Apart from the affairs of Bethel Academy, the others: Rev. Francis Poythress, Rev. John Metcalf, Rev. Valentine Cook, Rev. Nathaniel Harris, and laymen Richard Masterson and John Lewis, are little known. The life of each person will be briefly summarized and evaluated in terms of their input on the affairs of Bethel Academy.

BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY

Since many articles and books have been written about the life and work of Bishop Asbury, this biography will be limited to basic data found in *The Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury*, vol. I, edited by E.T. Clark, and that relate to Bethel Academy.

Francis was born in Handsworth Parish, Staffordshire, England. His parents were Joseph and Elizabeth Asbury. According to the calendar of his childhood, the Julian Calendar, Francis was born December 30, 1745.¹

The Gregorian Calendar was adopted in 1752 in Great Britain and the American Colonies and by its calculations Francis was born August 20, 1745, a date most frequently found in his biographies.

Because of many beatings from a cruel, male teacher, Francis dropped out of school at age thirteen. He was converted at age fourteen and began preaching at age sixteen, though he was not licensed to preach until he was eighteen. He served under John Wesley for four years, in charge of a series of circuits. At a conference in Bristol, August 17, 1771, Francis heard John Wesley's plea for

preachers to go to America. He volunteered for service and arrived in Philadelphia October 27, 1771.

After several months of riding from place to place holding services, Francis received a letter from John Wesley stating he was appointed as the superintendent of the various Methodist societies springing up in the cities of New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and nearby towns. During the Revolutionary War he had to live in hiding for two years, because of his ties to Methodism in England, and his refusal to pledge allegiance to the American colonies. He gradually convinced the colonists he was their friend, and more and more preached in Methodist churches.

John Wesley finally decided to ordain Dr. Thomas Coke as a superintendent of Methodist churches in America and sent him to America to ordain Francis Asbury. Francis insisted on being elected to the office by the American Methodist ministers. At the Christmas Conference held in Baltimore from December 24, 1784 to January 3, 1785, Asbury was elected superintendent, but since he was a layman, Dr. Coke ordained Francis a deacon on Christmas day, an elder the next day and on the 27th, he ordained Francis a superintendent, a term soon changed to bishop. At the same conference those present organized themselves as the Methodist Episcopal Church.

As mentioned in a previous article, "The Bethel Academy Story," Bishop Asbury came to Kentucky by horseback in May 1790 and held the first Methodist conference at Masterson's Station May 13-16 near present day Lexington, Kentucky. Entries in his journal that relate to his first trip to Kentucky, the establishment of Bethel Academy, and its early period of giving instruction to pioneer boys, are reproduced here:

April, 1790

Wednesday, 7...Now it is that we must prepare for danger, in going through the wilderness. I received a faithful letter from brother Poythress in Kentucky, encouraging me to come. This letter I think is well deserving of publication....

Friday, 9...Thence we went on to brother Gott's, and to brother P—'s; and thence, groping through the woods, brother Easley's; depending on the fidelity of the Kentucky people, hastening them, and being unwilling they should wait a moment for me....

May, 1790

Monday, 3...Sabbath night, I dreamed the guard from Kentucky came for me; and mentioned it to brother Whatcoat. In the morning I retired to a small stream, for meditation and prayer, and whilst there saw two men come over the hills: I felt a presumption that they were the Kentucky men, and so they proved to be; they were Peter Massie and John Clark, who were coming for me, with the intelligence that they had left eight men below: after reading the letters and asking counsel of God, I consented to go with them.

Friday, 7...We formed the whole of our company at the Valley Station; besides brother Whatcoat and myself, we were sixteen men....

Thursday, 13...Our conference was held at brother Masterson's, a very comfortable house and kind people. We went through our business in great love and

harmony. I ordained Wilson Lee, Thomas Williamson, and Barnabas M'Henry, elders. We had preaching noon and night, and souls were converted, and the fallen restored. My soul has been blessed among these people, and I am exceedingly pleased with them. I would not, for the worth of all the place, have been prevented in this visit, having no doubt but that it will be for the good of the present rising generation. It is true, such exertions of mind and body are trying; but I am supported under it; if souls are saved, it is enough. Brother Poythress is much alive to God. We fixed a plan for a school, and called it Bethel; and obtained a subscription of upwards of three hundred pounds, in land and money, towards its establishment.

Monday, 17...Rode to Coleman's chapel, about ten miles from Lexington, and preached to an unengaged people. We thence rode to John Lewis's, on the bend of Kentucky River. Lewis is an old acquaintance, from Leesburg, Virginia; I was pleased to find that heaven and religion was not lost sight of in his family. Brother Lewis offered me one hundred acres of land for Bethel, on a good spot for building materials.

April, 1792

Wednesday, 11...I wrote an address on behalf of Bethel school. The weather was wet, and stopped us until Friday.

Monday, 23...I rode to Bethel. I found it necessary to change the plan of the house, to make it more comfortable to the scholars in cold weather. I am too much in company, and hear so much about Indians, convention, treaty, killing and scalping, that my attention is drawn more to these things than I would wish. I found it good to get alone in the woods and converse with God.

April 1793

Tuesday, 23...I was at Bethel—the place intended for a school.

Tuesday, 30...Wednesday, May 1, Thursday, 2. We spent in conference; and in openly speaking our minds to each other. We ended under the melting, praying, praising power of God. We appointed trustees for the school; and made sundry regulations relative thereto: we read the Form of Discipline through, section by section, in conference.

Saturday, 4...Came to Bethel to meet the trustees.

Sunday, 5...We had an awful time whilst I opened and applied, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." It was a feeling, melting time, among old and young; and I am persuaded good was certainly done this day. I feel a good deal tired in spirit, yet, blessed be God, I still have peace within; God is all to me: I want more faith to trust him with my life, and all I have and am.

October, 1800.

Saturday, 4...I came to Bethel. Bishop Whatcoat and William M'Kendree preached: I was so dejected I could say little; but weep. Sabbath day it rained, and I kept at home. Here is Bethel; Cokesbury in miniature, eighty by thirty feet,

three stories, with a high roof, and finished below. Now we want a fund of three hundred per year to carry it on; without which it is useless. But it is too distant from public places; its being surrounded by the river Kentucky in part. We now find it to be no benefit: thus all our excellencies are turned into defects. Perhaps brother Poythress and myself were as much overseen with this place as Dr. Coke was with the seat of Cokesbury. But all is right that works right, and all is wrong that works wrong, and must be blamed by men of slender sense for consequences impossible to foresee—for other people's misconduct. Sabbath day, Monday and Tuesday, we were shut up in Bethel with the travelling and local ministry and the trustees that could be called together. We ordained fourteen or fifteen local and travelling deacons. It was thought expedient to carry the first design of education into execution, and that we should employ a man of sterling qualifications, to be chosen by and under the direction of a select number of trustees and others, who should obligate themselves to see him paid, and take the profits, if any, arising from the establishment. Dr. Jennings was thought of, talked of, and written to. I visited John Lewis, who lately had his leg broken; I left him with good resolutions to take care of his soul.

Friday, 10... We rode to Pleasant Run to John Springer's: it was a very warm day for the season. I had a running blister on my side, yet I rode and walked thirty-two miles. We refreshed ourselves at Crawford's Tavern upon the way. We have visited Knox, Madison, Mercer, and Washington counties in this state. It was strongly insisted upon that I should say something before I left Bethel; able or unable, willing or unwilling: accordingly, on Tuesday, in the academical hall, I gave a long, temperate talk upon Heb. x, 38, 39.

Though Bishop Asbury came to Kentucky repeatedly after the above date and stopped in Fayette and Jessamine Counties to preach and visit friends, he never mentions another visit to the site of Bethel Academy in his journal.

Bishop Asbury never married; he left the girl he was dating, Nancy Brookes, behind in England. During a ministry of forty-five years in America, he travelled more than a quarter of a million miles in carriage and on horseback, held numerous conferences and preached over 16,000 sermons. Each year he moved from the northeast to South Carolina, then west over the mountains to the frontier churches, then back through Pennsylvania and New York. He crossed the Appalachian Mountains sixty times. He died in the humble home of a Methodist layman March 31, 1816, near Fredericksburg, Virginia. He was buried by the house but his remains were finally placed in Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1854.

FRANCIS POYTHRESS

Francis Poythress was born in Virginia of well-to-do plantation owners. *The Virginia Historical Index* lists a column and a half of Poythress names. There are thirty-seven references for the name "Francis."²

The earliest biography of this minister of the Gospel, and the basis for most information about him, is an article by Judge Thomas Scott.³ Since it is not easily accessi-

ble, it is reproduced here as it was printed:

Messrs. Elliott and Hamline,—The name of thee Rev. Francis Poythress having been recently been brought before the public with reference to the afflictive malady by which the Church was deprived of a useful minister, we ask liberty, through the medium of the *Western Christian Advocate*, to communicate a few facts illustrative of his character and sufferings:

Our acquaintance with him commenced in April 1794, and continued without much interruption for about six years, during which period we learned from him the following particulars: On the death of his father he inherited a handsome personal and real estate; and being, in early life, thus left, without any one to control his actions, he yielded to the impulses of his passions, which were violent, and rushed into all the follies and vices of youth. The circumstance which brought him to review his past life, was, the reproof of a lady of elevated standing in society. Her reproof carried conviction to his heart. He left her house in confusion, and on his way home resolved to amend his ways. He commenced reading the Scriptures and praying in secret—soon saw and felt the exceeding sinfulness of sin, groaned to be released from its galling chain. That led him to inquire after those persons whom he supposed capable of instructing him in the right way; but for a long time he sought in vain. At length he heard of the Rev. Deveraur Janet [*sic.* correct spelling, Deveraux Jarratt] an Episcopalian clergyman of learning and deep piety, then residing in a remote part of Virginia, whom he visited, and with whom he remained a considerable time, hearing and receiving instruction. Having at length obtained redemption in the blood of Jesus, he soon became sensible of his call to the ministry. He conferred not with flesh and blood, but immediately commenced his itinerant career, preaching the Gospel of the grace of God to all who would hear. This was prior to the time in which our Methodist preachers reached that part of Virginia in which he lived.

On one of his preaching excursions through the southern parts of Virginia and North Carolina, he fell in with one of our traveling preachers (whose name we have forgotten), with whom he formed an acquaintance, who furnished him with the Doctrines and Discipline of our Church, as drawn up by Mr. Wesley. These he read and attentively considered, and being convinced they were based on the Scriptures of divine revelation, he applied for admission, and was received into union and fellowship in the Church.

The Minutes of the several annual conferences show all the circuits he traveled, except one, and districts over which he presided. They are as follows: 1776, Carolina. We are unable to name the circuit he traveled the following year; but from the facts that in 1778 he was received into full connection, and appointed to the charge of Hanover circuit, we infer, that he traveled some circuit in 1777. In 1779, Sussex; 1780, New Hope; 1781, Fairfax; 1782, Talbot; and 1783, Alleghany. In that year, we believe, he extended his ministerial labors across the Alleghany Mountains on to the waters of the Little Youghioghany. In 1784, Colvert; and 1785 Baltimore. In 1786, he was ordained an elder in the

Church, and presided over the district composed of Brunswick, Sussex, and Amelia circuits. From the fact that in 1786 he was ordained an elder, we infer, that in 1785 he was ordained a deacon; and if so, he was among the first of our American preachers who were ordained to that office. In 1787, he presided over the district composed of the circuits of Guilford, Halifax, New Hope, and Caswell, and in 1788 he was transferred to Kentucky; and, in conjunction with Rev. James Haw, appointed to preside over the two former of these circuits. In 1790, Haw's functions as presiding elder ceased, and Poythress presided over the entire district. In 1790, Madison and Limestone circuits were formed, and added to his district. In 1791, the circuits south of the Kentucky River were reformed, the name of Madison being dropped, and that of Salt River substituted; and brother Poythress continued to preside over his district; In 1792, the following (1) circuits were added to his district; Greenbrier, Cowpasture, Bottetourt, and Bedford. In 1793, the four circuits last named were taken from his district, but Hinkstone circuit, then formed, was added to it. There were no other changes made in the bounds of his district during the years 1794, 1795, 1796, except that this last named year, Shelby circuit was formed, and, together with Logan and Guilford, added to it. (2) In 1797, Shelby circuit was dropped, and the Rev. John Kobler, was appointed presiding elder, and the Rev. Francis Poythress, supernumerary, over the district. In the fall of that year, brother Kobler crossed over on to the northwest side of the Ohio River, and formed the Miami circuit, and brother Poythress resumed his station on the district, over which he continued to preside until the end of that year. In 1798, the Rev. Francis Poythress and Jonathan Bird were appointed presiding elders of the district composed of New River, Russell, Holston, and Green circuits, and Rev. Valentine Cook was appointed presiding elder over the Kentucky district. Shortly after brother Cook's arrival in Kentucky (and we feel quite sure it was before he had completed one round on his district), he received instructions from Bishop Asbury to take charge of Bethel Academy, then on the decline for want of a suitable teacher, and brother Poythress was instructed to take charge of the district. Cook therefore took charge of the academy; Poythress of the district, and Bird remained on the station to which he had been appointed. In 1799, New River, Holstone, and Russell, Green and Miami circuits were added to the Kentucky district, and brother Poythress was appointed presiding elder over it. Late in the fall of that year, his bodily and mental powers gave way and fell into ruins. In 1800, he was, however, appointed presiding elder of the district composed of Morganton and Swanino, Yadkin, Salisbury, Haw-River, Guilford, Franklin, Caswell, Tar-River, Newbern, Goshen, Wilmington, Contentney, Pandico, Roan-Oak, Mattamuskeet and Banks; but his affliction rendered it impracticable for him to take the station assigned him.

Upon inspecting the bound Minutes, p. 245, it will be seen, that the Rev. William M'Kendree was, in that year, appointed presiding elder of the district, composed of Greenbrier, Bottetourt, Bedford, Orange, Amherst, Williamsburg and Hanover, and Gloucester circuits, and no presiding elder is named for the

Kentucky district. So soon as Bishop Asbury received information of the malady under which brother Poythress was suffering, he gave instructions to brother M'Kendree to proceed to Kentucky, and take charge of the district; and about the latter end of the summer of that year brother M'Kendree came on the district. In 1802 and 1803, the name of brother Poythress stands recorded in the Minutes among the elders, but without any station being assigned him; after which we anxiously sought for his name, but it was not there. We have heard that he died many years since, but when and how he died we are uninformed.

Bishop Asbury visited Kentucky for the first time in 1790, after which he never visited that state (if we rightly remember), until subsequent to the year 1800; and during these periods, brother Poythress presided over each annual conference which sat in Kentucky, and the stationing of the preachers, and government of the societies within his district, were almost exclusively confided to him by the Bishop.

Bishop Asbury was an excellent judge of men. He was intimately acquainted with brother Poythress; and the stations to which he appointed him, furnishes conclusive evidence of the estimate he set upon him as a man, and Christian minister.

Brother Poythress was grave in his deportment, and chaste in his conversation, constant in his private devotions, and faithful in the discharge of his ministerial duties. We have no recollection of his having ever disappointed a congregation, unless prevented by sickness or disease. As often as practicable, he visited from house to house, instructed and prayed in the family. Among the preachers, he, like most other men, may have had his particular favorites, but all were treated by him with due benevolence and Christian respect. He was unwearied in his efforts to unite the travelling and local ministry as a band of brothers, so that their united efforts might be exerted in furthering the cause of God.

As the weight of all the Churches in his district rested upon him, he sensibly felt the responsibility of his station, and put forth his utmost efforts to discharge, with fidelity, these important trusts which had been confided in him. The education of the rising generation he dreamed to be intimately connected with the interests of the Church, and the result of that conviction was the erection of Bethel Academy. The erection of that institution, we are quite certain, met the approbation of Mr. Asbury, and a majority of the traveling and local preachers of that day.

The conversational powers of brother Poythress were not of a high order, yet when he did engage in general conversation, he maintained his part with propriety, evincive of an extensive knowledge of men and things. His rank as a preacher was not above mediocrity. He was, however, sound in his faith, in doctrine, in purity. There are many words in common use, which he could not pronounce correctly; this we attributed to his loss of teeth.

He was (if we rightly remember), about five feet eight or nine inches in height, and heavily built. His muscles were large, and in the prime of life, we presume, he was a man of more than ordinary muscular strength. He dressed

plain and neat. When we first saw him, we supposed, he had passed his 60th year. His muscles were quite flacid, eyes sunken in his head, hair gray (turned back, hanging down on his shoulders), complexion dark, and countenance grave, inclining to melancholy. His step was, however, firm, and general appearance such as to command the respectful consideration of others. He possessed high, honorable feelings, and a deep sense of moral obligation. In general, he was an excellent disciplinarian. He endeavored to probe to the bottom of each wound in the Church, in order that a radical cure might be effected; but would never consent to expel from the bosom of the Church those who evidenced contrition and amendment. And when free from the morbid action of his system, to which it becomes our painful duty to refer, we esteemed him to be a man of sound discriminating judgment. We, however, claim not for him exemption from error, the common frailty of man, and therefore concede to our excellent friend Daviess, of Kentucky, that he may have inflicted a wound on the character of Rev. Benjamin Ogden. But we cannot concede it as a fact, that brother Poythress was influenced in his conduct, by an impure or wicked motive. We were too long and intimately acquainted with him to harbor, for one moment, an idea so uncharitable, and derogatory to his Christian character.

We never had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with brother Ogden, but having heard him preach his last sermon east of the Mountains, in 1786, when on his journey, as a missionary to Kentucky, we read, with great satisfaction, Mr. Daviess' vindication of his character. We, however, thought there were in that vindication, some expressions a little too harsh, and calculated to lead others to an erroneous conclusion respecting the character of brother Poythress.

Symptoms of insanity, were, at times, discoverable in brother Poythress several years prior to the time he ceased to travel and to preach, and such may have been his situation at the time the unpleasant circumstance occurred, to which brother Daviess refers. We, therefore, put to him to say, whether the veil of Christian charity ought to be drawn over actions induced by a morbid excitement of the system, materially affecting, at the time, his intellectual faculties.

During the latter part of the summer, fall, and winter of 1794 and 1795, brother Poythress, at times, exhibited the appearance of a man whose mind was drawn off from surrounding objects, and in that situation he would sometimes remain for one or more hours, when his system appeared to react, and he would engage in conversation as usual. At other times he complained of giddiness and pains in his head, and his stomach and bowels appeared to be affected with flatulency and acrid eructations. A general listlessness, irksomeness, and disgust seemed to overwhelm him. His countenance appeared sad and sullen, and he evinced an utter aversion and inability to engage in business of importance. At such times, he usually betook himself to bed, but did not appear to sleep soundly. These symptoms became more frequent during the fore part of the year 1795, and would sometimes last for hours. Near the close of the summer of 1795, Rev. Aquila Sugg, who traveled the Lexington circuit, in consequence of bad health, was rendered incapable of performing effective service; and at the

request of brother Poythress, we took charge of the circuit until the ensuing spring. Our first quarterly meeting was held in a small log meeting-house not far from Versailles, Woodford county. On Saturday, brother Poythress arrived just before the time of commencing the public exercises—complained of being exceeding unwell, and went to bed. In a few minutes he called, and said, "Brother Scott, you must conduct the quarterly meeting, I can take no part in the public exercises." On returning from meeting, we found him still in bed, but finally prevailed on him to get up. We then walked out together, but had not proceeded far out of the hearing of others, when he suddenly stopped, and said, "Brother Scott, I am a ruined man, a conspiracy has been formed against me by my sister Prior, Mr. Willis Green, and brother Simon Adams. My sister Prior charges me with having kept back part of the price of some negroes I sold for her several years since; Mr. Willis Green accuses me with having embezzled part of the money I collected for Bethel Academy, and brother Adams accuses me with having taken advantage of him in the purchase of a horse; the officers of justice are now in pursuit of me. I shall soon be incarcerated in prison, my character be ruined, and the Church disgraced." I assured him, I knew each of those individuals to be his fast, adhering friends, and incapable of harboring a suspicion injurious to his character, and that he might rest assured they had not formed a conspiracy against him. But all I said had no effect, and he pertinaciously insisted that what he said was true, and said, "they were then engaged in drawing others into their conspiracy." During that conversation, his countenance exhibited a ghastly appearance, and his whole frame trembled. On returning to the house, he again retired to bed, where he remained (if we rightly remember), with his head generally covered, until the next Monday morning, when he was again prevailed on to get out of bed. After he had taken some refreshments, we again walked out together, and I urged him to return home to his sister's, assured him no conspiracy had been formed against him and that if all he imagined were true, it was far better for him promptly to meet the danger, than to attempt to flee from it like a coward.

That advice seemed to strike the right chord, it immediately vibrated, and after a few minutes, he answered, "It is perhaps best promptly to meet the danger, but I cannot do so, unless you will attend and conduct the quarterly meeting for me at Browder's meeting house, near Bardstown, on next Saturday and Sunday. That meeting must not be neglected." We promised to comply with his request, and he returned to his sister's. That was the first clear and unequivocal evidence of partial insanity, which we recollect of having noticed in brother Poythress—insanity as it respected three most intimate friends; for the conspiracy, and the causes leading to it, which he supposed to exist, had no existence, except in his own heated imagination, and, for the time being, it was found to be impracticable to remove those delusive ideas from his mind.

We were confident no conspiracy had been formed against him, as he imagined, and still we entertained fears that in the particular cases named, he had yielded to the temptations of the arch enemy of souls; and that a conviction of

his crimes, and fear of detection, had produced the effects we witnessed. Having, however, since that time, acquired some little knowledge of the symptoms which often exhibit themselves in partial insanity, the fears we then entertained have entirely vanished. We mention this, in order to show, how extremely careful we ought to be, not to suffer suspicions deleterious to the character of another to make a lodgement in our minds.

Agreeably to promise, we attended the quarterly meeting, and in meeting brother Poythress, he exclaimed, "Why, upon earth, don't you suffer me to leave you? It was all a delusion. My sister met me as usual." Even in the year 1797, he was confined by affliction, but whether his mind was affected during that affliction, we are entirely uninformed. The last time we saw him was in the fore part of the winter of 1800. The balance of his mind was lost, and his body lay a complete wreck. His labors in the Church militant were at an end, but the fruits of his labors still remain.

We are not aware that any hereditary trait existed, which, in its ultimate range, dethroned his reason; but we can readily imagine that the seeds of that dreadful malady were sown in his system, but the constant exposures and sufferings during the war of the Revolution, and for twelve years he traveled and preached in the then almost wilderness of the west. Among the eight pioneers of Methodism in Kentucky and Tennessee in the year 1788, the name of Francis Poythress, stands pre-eminently with those intrepid heroes of the cross, the foundation of Methodism was laid in those states in which others have since built, and others are now building. Their names ought to be held in grateful remembrance by all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. And among all, we are inclined to the opinion, he is not one of them to whom the members of our Church, in those states, owe a greater debt of gratitude, than to Francis Poythress.

Yours in the bonds of a peaceful Gospel.

Thomas Scott

Chillicothe, O., December 11, 1840

A few observations may be added to the data contained in this article by Scott. While Bethel Academy was being built and then operated as a school, Rev. Poythress served as president of the trustees appointed by Bishop Asbury.

Scott admits to lack of knowledge of Poythress' relationship to the church after he became ill. The journal of the Western Annual Conference of 1802 has these notations:⁴

The Conference proceeded to take into Consideration the critical, deranged state of unaccountability which Francis Poythress at present is in, and judge it best, for the safety of the Connection, that his name shall be left off the General Minutes. But at the same time we are tenderly concerned for his support and welfare,—and therefore Resolve, That his name shall stand in our Journal; and that he shall have a proportionable Claim on the Western Conference for his support; and further it is our opinion, that his name should be perpetuated on the Journals of the Conference, for the same purpose.

The report of the Committee of Claims shows in the same minutes a sum of twenty dollars granted to Francis Poythress. Also a notation: "It appears to this Committee, that William McKendree has, in the course of this year, paid Francis Poythress's acct., \$13.69, and begged, and applied, \$11 more, to the same purpose"⁵

The journal of the same conference of 1803 has this notation:⁶

"Francis Poythress stands on our Journal as a claimer for \$80.00. But it appears that he is able to support himself, and does not expect or wish his support from us. We therefore judge, he should not be considered as dependent on us."

The reason Poythress was able to support himself rested on the kindness of his sister Mrs. Susanna Pryor who had a large farm and many slaves in Jessamine County, Kentucky. She took him into her home and placed him under the care of her slaves, several of whom she bequeathed to him so he could be cared for after she died in 1817. Francis lived for another year.

Bishop Asbury visited Poythress in 1810 while traveling through Kentucky. His entry dated Monday, October 15, is short and poignant: "This has been an awful day to me. I visited Francis Poythress, if thou be he; but O how fallen!" The total mental collapse of his friend was almost more than he could bear.⁷

JOHN METCALF

In the article "The Bethel Academy Story," Rev. John Metcalf was discussed quite often. This brief biography will summarize some information not found there, and tie the data in the article together in a sequence.

John Metcalf was born in Southhampton County, Virginia, in 1758 to a well-known family. *The Virginia Historical Index*⁸ has a number of entries under the Metcalf and Metcalfe names. His father was Henry.⁹ Nothing is known about how he became acquainted with Methodist preachers, nor how and when he was converted. Records of the early years of the Methodist Episcopal Church¹⁰ do not show John Metcalf as received on trial as a preacher in 1790, but he is listed as assigned to the Cumberland, Virginia, circuit with John Lindsey. The minutes of 1791 show that he was continued on trial that year, so his name must have been omitted in 1790 accidentally. That year he was appointed to the Banks circuit in Virginia. He was ordained a deacon and appointed to the Bedford, Virginia, circuit and to the Bottetourt, Virginia, circuit in 1793.

In 1794 he was sent to be co-pastor of the Lexington, Kentucky, circuit with Tobias Gibson. Metcalf had a dual task that year—he was also designated the principal of Bethel Academy which he opened for instruction either in January or June, depending on the accuracy of the dates on the three versions of a letter he sent to George Nicholas.¹¹ See the text of these letters in the article, "The Bethel Academy Story." Since the 1794 conference met on April 15, of that year, this fact may indicate the June date is correct.

While in charge of Bethel Academy, Metcalf married in 1795 a niece of his presiding elder, Rev. Francis Poythress. She was Ann (Nancy), daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth (Poythress) Peniston, who lived near Lexington, Kentucky. Together they managed Bethel Academy until 1798. That same year they built a log home among a

small cluster of log structures about ten miles to the northeast. Anticipating that a portion of Fayette County would soon become Jessamine County, Metcalf, having surveying skills, laid out several streets. Soon the place was called Nicholasville and made the county seat. Metcalf was successful in his efforts to honor his friend George Nicholas in this way.¹²

In the year these events took place, 1799, Metcalf founded a Methodist society in Nicholasville and promoted the construction of a building for the congregation. This is interesting, because in 1795, Metcalf was located and thus not appointed to a circuit in official records of the Methodist Episcopal Church.¹³ Neither is the Nicholasville congregation mentioned in the early Journals of the Western Conference from 1800 through 1811.¹⁴

Either in the fall of 1801 or early in 1802, Metcalf started a school for boys in his home and then in a log structure next door. He called it Bethel Academy, though Rev. Nathaniel Harris was still conducting classes at the original site by the Kentucky River. When Harris closed the school, Metcalf took all moveable equipment from the original building and used it for his own purposes. For this act he was suspended from ministerial activity for twelve months.¹⁵ Metcalf continued his school in Nicholasville for over a decade and a half, but also engaged in the ministerial activities of preaching and marrying couples. At the same time he served as a Justice of Peace from at least 1804 to 1812. He also was much involved in the buying and selling of real estate in Jessamine County, as a series of deeds recorded in the county court house indicate.

In 1818, Metcalf began selling some of his property. A two-acre plot was sold to the trustees of Bethel Academy for a new building to be constructed from materials gained from razing the original structure in 1820.

Apparently, Metcalf closed his Bethel Academy about this time and did not live to see the new Bethel Academy completed. He died August 15, 1820, at the age of sixty-two. He was survived by his wife, Ann, and five children: Henry, b. Nov. 9, 1800; Elizabeth, b. Feb. 23, 1805; Sarah; John W.; and Lucy Ann. Cemetery gravestones show two children died before their father: Lucy A. age 19 years, d. July 26, 1815, and Thomas H, age fifteen, d. Jan 21, 1815.¹⁶ His estate was settled July 19, 1832.¹⁷

VALENTINE COOK

The contact of Rev. Valentine Cook with Bethel Academy was brief, but it occurred at a crucial period in the existence of the original Bethel Academy, the years 1798 to 1880. A summarized biography of his life and ministry should be enlightening.

Valentine Cook, fifth son of Valentine Sr. and Susannah Baughman, was born in 1765 in York County, Pennsylvania. When he was a child, his parents moved to Greenbrier County, Virginia (now West Virginia). He had limited formal education, but he read every book he could find and studied English grammar carefully. He had a special interest in the Bible and read it often, memorizing many portions of it.

During his youth, he heard a Methodist preacher and was converted. His family at first was cool to this new religious fervor, but before long they were persuaded by their son to start family devotions. His parents were soon converted.

His father sent him to Cokesbury College, the first Methodist school in America, and Valentine Jr. soon became known as that school's brightest student. He became proficient in Latin and Greek and could speak German fluently.

After completing his studies at Cokesbury in 1787, he returned home and began witnessing and preaching wherever he could find an audience. In 1788 he was received into the Methodist ministry with the status of being "on trial" and assigned to the Calvert circuit in Maryland, under the guidance of Rev. Jonathan Forrest. Cook was the first native college-educated Methodist preacher in America. The next year he was teamed with Lewis Chastain and Thomas Scott to travel the Gloucester circuit in Virginia.

Cook was ordained deacon at the conference held in 1790 and assigned to serve with Daniel Hitt on the Lancaster circuit in Virginia. The year following he was paired with Lewis Chastain again, but this time they traveled the Berkley circuit in the same state.

Following the practice in Methodism in those days, a change was made again in 1792. Cook, with Seely Bunn, was sent to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In this area, Methodists were under severe verbal attack led by several Presbyterian ministers in Westmoreland County, just west of Pittsburgh. Cook responded to an assault written by a man named Porter and published in a newspaper. The interchange continued for several issues.

Soon another Presbyterian, named Jamieson, challenged Cook to a public debate. This debate took place in the summer of 1792 in a wooded area where a large crowd gathered. A Methodist minister, A. Banning, was a co-moderator with a Presbyterian minister of the debate. Cook was so effective in his defense of Methodist doctrines that he won the support of the mostly Calvinist crowd, and his opponent left the scene. From then on it was much easier for Methodist preachers to find willing listeners wherever they went. Banning later published a report of this debate.¹⁸

Cook was ordained elder in 1793 and promoted to the position of presiding elder over Northumberland, Tioga, Wyoming, and Seneca Lake circuits in Pennsylvania. The next year he was moved east to preside over another district comprised of the Bristol, Chester, Philadelphia, Lancaster, Northumberland and Wyoming circuits. In 1795 he was given charge of fewer circuits to superintend: Northumberland, Wyoming, Tioga and Seneca. The following two years he moved to western Pennsylvania and presided over Clarksburg, Ohio, Redstone, Pittsburgh and Greenfield. While serving this district, Cook began a new method of dealing with seekers, he had them bow at a bench near the pulpit to be counseled and prayed through to victory. This procedure soon became a regular feature of Methodist revival meetings and continues to the present time.

Due to the physical breakdown of Poythress, Bishop Asbury appointed Cook as presiding elder of Methodist circuits in Kentucky. Shortly after Cook's arrival, and due to the resignation of Metcalf, Asbury appointed Cook principal of Bethel Academy.

Because a restructured Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky was drawing a number of students to its campus, the Methodists reacted by requesting Cook to upgrade Bethel Academy to a higher academic level. Latin, Greek, classical literature,

and Bible courses were taught and the number of students increased (no record remains of the number involved). But Cook was outspoken in his opposition to slavery, whereas Metcalf and some of the trustees were not. Early in 1800 Cook was either fired or chose to cease teaching at Bethel Academy.

Before Cook left Bethel Academy, he met and married on November 9, 1799, Tabitha Slaughter, daughter of Lt. James and Elizabeth Slaughter, of nearby Mercer County.¹⁹ In 1800, Valentine and Tabitha Cook moved to Harrodstown (Harrodsburg), county seat of Mercer County, where he began teaching in a school for boys. He dropped his itinerant relationship with the Methodist Church and located, i.e., he ceased pastoring a church but preached whenever he was asked. Soon his widowed mother and two of his brothers moved to a farm in Mercer County, but Valentine was restless and moved several times. A deed, dated April 25, 1803, gives information that Valentine and his wife paid \$1,260 for two hundred acres in Washington County, which bordered Mercer County to the west.²⁰ Apparently his farm was close enough to the county line that he could marry fourteen couples in 1805 in Mercer County.²¹

In either 1806 or 1807 Cook and his family moved to a farm near Russellville, Logan County, Kentucky. His log house served as both a home and a school for boys. He was also active as a preacher; he and Rev. Phillip Kennerly of Virginia started a second Methodist church, called Kennerly's Chapel, in the county.

The campmeeting movement had started in Logan County in July, 1800 under the leadership of a Presbyterian minister, Rev. James Gready and two brothers; John McGee, a Methodist preacher and William McGee, a Presbyterian preacher. Campmeetings sprang up throughout central Kentucky and in neighboring states.

Cook gave his full energies to promoting this new form of evangelism. Evidently some of these activities placed a measure of obligation on the Western Conference, for there are notations in several conference minutes relating to monies paid to, and some owed Cook. The Journal of 1808 notes five dollars were paid to Cook,²² and this statement: "Lawner Blackman proceeded to read a letter addressed to Valentine Cook on the subject of his Mission, in which he is informed that the Conference will pay him when able."²³

The journal for 1809 has in its report of the Committee on Appropriations this note: "Paid Volentine [sic] Cook \$50. It being part of \$75 due him from the Conference."²⁴

A controversy with some Baptist preachers in Logan County over the practice of baptism involved Cook, who was slow in bringing his converts into the Methodist Church. A Baptist, Mr. V--- enjoyed this opportunity to convince these converts that they ought to be immersed and join the Baptist Church. He ridiculed Cook's position that it was valid to baptize converts by sprinkling or pouring water on the head, and that children of Christians should be baptized. A public debate was arranged between the two men and Cook easily won. Dr. Edward Stevenson published the text of Cook's arguments but provided no place or date for the debate.²⁵

Valentine and Tabitha Cook were the parents of eleven children: James, b. circa 1800, Jessamine County, Ky.; Richard H., b. circa 1802, Jessamine County; Valentine,

b. circa 1804, Washington County ? ; Gabriel S. b. circa 1806, Logan County, KY.; Nancy, b. circa 1806, Logan County; Eliza A. b. circa 1810, Logan County; Rev. Thomas F. b. 1813, Logan County; Rev. John F., b. 1814; William M. b. circa 1816; Susan Bell, b. Jan. 5, 1820, Logan County; Franklyn (Francis) Asbury, b. circa 1821-22, Logan County.²⁶

Excerpts from a letter written by Rev. Thomas Scott provide insight about the Rev. Valentine Cook:²⁷

Chillicothe, O., May 16, 1851

My Dear Sir; I became acquainted with Rev. Valentine Cook first in the autumn of 1789, when I suppose he must have been not far from twenty-five years of age. I knew him ever afterwards until he was summoned away to his eternal rest. He was undoubtedly, in several respects, one of the remarkable men of his day.

As to his personal appearance—standing erect, his height was about six feet; his limbs were straight, muscular and well proportioned; his breast and shoulders broad; his complexion very dark; his hair thick, black and curly; his eyes also black, and when excited, very piercing; his eyebrows and eyelashes dark and heavy; and his mouth uncommonly large. His general appearance was altogether imposing, indicative at once of great activity and strength. His movements when walking resembled those of the Indians, or former hunters of the West—the foot was drawn directly up, thrown forward, and then placed firmly upon the ground with the almost noiseless movement of a cat, and the eyes were alternatively moving from side to side, that no object embraced within the range of his vision might escape his observation.

He was slovenly in his dress, and ungraceful in his manners and conversation, but not discourteous. He seldom smiled; but when he did, it was an odd, freakish, whimsical kind of smile that I am at a loss for words to describe. He was one of the most absent-minded men with whom I have ever been acquainted....

Several of his intellectual organs were finely developed, but this was by no means true of all. He had in his constitution a dash of both enthusiasm and superstition; and it was sometimes difficult to determine, by his actions, whether he had or had not passed that very delicately drawn line, which separates eccentricity from the lower species of monomania.

Mr. Cook's Christian and ministerial character was in every respect most exemplary. He was humble, tractable, patient, and faithful in the discharge of every private, social and ministerial duty. He professed, and I doubt not enjoyed, uninterrupted communion with the Father and the Son, through the Blessed Spirit. His efforts for the salvation of his fellow-men and the extension of his Redeemer's Kingdom were seldom, if ever, surpassed. He always found ready access to the hearts of the people. Great multitudes, during his ministry, acknowledged him as their spiritual father. If you ask whether he was an elo-

quent man, I should say that, if the effect produced upon an audience be the true test of eloquence, he was surpassingly so. His articulation was distinct, his emphasis correct, and his thoughts well arranged and well expressed; but his very rapid and vehement mode of utterance sometimes produced an unpleasant guttural sound, as if he were gasping for breath. But there was an unction about his manner that rendered his preaching quite irresistible. On several occasions, I witnessed large congregations completely bowed and overwhelmed by the alternate tenderness and pungency of his appeals. Arrows that pierced to the centre of the soul seemed to be flying in every direction. Some were weeping, trembling and praying; others falling prostrate and crying for mercy; others struggling into the liberty of God's children; while others were singing or shouting for joy....

Mr. Cook read, prayed and reflected much. He was familiar with the writings of Wesley, Fletcher, Watts, Stackhouse, Prideaux, Baxter, Bunyan, Young, Milton, and several of the most distinguished German authors, who flourished about the time of the Synod of Dort. He was well acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel, as held by his own Church, and always seemed ready to engage for their defense; but, on some other subjects, I used to think that he sometimes evinced a lack of discrimination and good judgment....

In the summer of 1819 he felt a premonition he would not live much longer, so he decided to make a trip alone by horseback back East where he began his ministry and then visit his boyhood home. He left that fall and returned the spring of the next year.

He preached at many places as he traveled, including Lexington, Kentucky; Cincinnati, Ohio; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; New York City; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Baltimore, Maryland, where he spent most of the winter. A revival broke out in the city that lasted many weeks. On his way home he stopped in Greenbrier County, West Virginia, visiting friends, and relatives and the graves of his parents.

In 1822, after preaching at a campmeeting near his home in Logan County, he returned home where he was attacked by a severe fever. Shortly before he died, he exclaimed, "When I think of Jesus and of living with Him forever, I am so filled with the love of God that I scarcely know whether I am in the body or out of the body." He then lost consciousness and soon expired.²⁸ He was buried on the Harold Frogge Farm, Logan County.²⁹

On Sunday, July 29, 1934, The Louisville Annual Conference Historical Society, Methodist Episcopal Church, held a celebration in memory of Rev. Valentine Cook and of the beginning of Campmeetings at Muddy River, near Russellville, Logan County, Kentucky. At the morning worship service, Bishop U.V.W. Darlington preached, and at the afternoon service, Rev. Summers Brinson read a biography of Valentine Cook.³⁰

The climax of the afternoon service was the unveiling of this inscription:

In Memory of Rev. Valentine Cook, A.M.

1763-1822

Pioneer Methodist Preacher

Admitted on Trial 1788

Ordained Deacon 1790, Elder 1793, Located 1800

He was a man of great learning and genuine piety.

Due west of this place 500 yards is the site of the first

Camp Meeting held in the world in July, 1800.

Erected by the Louisville

Annual Conference Historical Society

July 29, 1934

NATHANIEL HARRIS

Unfortunately, information about Rev. Nathaniel Harris is limited, though he might be termed the unsung hero of Bethel Academy. Without his faith and persistent efforts, the school would surely have ended in 1804, but his vision was not blinded, he was instrumental in raising a new Bethel Academy from the abandoned frame of the original structure.

Nathaniel Harris was born August 29, 1759, in Powattan County, Virginia, of well-to-do Presbyterian parents. In his youth he indulged in the popular sins of his day. He served his state in the Revolutionary War and was at the battle of Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina.

Nathaniel was converted in August 1783 and joined the Methodist Church. He soon felt a call to preach and served the church for many years as a local preacher. He moved to Fayette County, Kentucky, in 1790, in the section that later was to become Jessamine County. As a local preacher he was active throughout the area and on March 14, 1799, he had the honor of marrying the first couple in the newly formed Jessamine County. He continued to marry and bury many people, and preach many sermons throughout more than sixty years of ministry.

B.H. Young honors him with these words:³¹

He preached in the various towns of Central Kentucky, and in administering to the afflicted and the sick none ever excelled him. At marriages and funerals his presence was always sought, because of his tender sympathy and because of the love and confidence manifested towards him. He founded several Methodist churches in Jessamine County.... He was a faithful, earnest, devout man of God. Some might call his sphere humble, but his influence on the religious and moral condition of Jessamine County will long be felt, and in it he has a monument, which should be both to his church and to those of his name, a cause of unflinching pride.

From the beginning of the operation of Bethel Academy in 1794, he was appointed a trustee of Bethel Academy and in a few years became the president of that Board. In 1800 he and his family moved to Bethel Academy and conducted school until 1803 and possibly through the spring of 1804. He was chairman of the committee that

brought charges against Rev. John Metcalf for removing furniture in late 1803 or early 1804 from the abandoned Bethel Academy and won a judgment from the Methodist Quarterly Conference at Lexington, Kentucky, that Metcalf should be suspended from ministerial duties for twelve months.

As chairman of the trustees of Bethel Academy, Harris oversaw the buying of four lots in Nicholasville, the razing of the Bethel Academy building, the moving of materials from that site to Nicholasville, and the construction of a structure for a revitalized Bethel Academy. This event happened from 1818 to probably 1821. During this time, Harris lived on a 200-acre farm on Hickman Creek which he bought for \$800 in 1811.³² Harris joined the Ohio Methodist Conference in 1820 and was appointed to the Lexington circuit.³³ In 1822 he was transferred to preach on the Frankfort-Danville circuit, then was appointed to Paris, Kentucky in 1823. The 1824 minutes lists him as having located, i.e., he ceased to serve as a pastor but could preach as he had opportunity.³⁴ He moved to Versailles where he lived with two unmarried daughters. His will is dated May 25, 1848, and in it Harris mentions two sons and four daughters: Nathaniel, Asbury, Jane Harris Wright, Elizabeth A. Harris Griffin, Ann and Mary. Harris died August 12, 1849, lacking a few days of being ninety. His will was probated at the September Woodford County Court, 1849.³⁵

RICHARD MASTERSON

Mr. Masterson was born in Virginia of a prominent family and married Sarah Shore July 29, 1784, and brought his family to Kentucky soon afterwards. In 1786 he came under the ministry of James Haw and Benjamin Ogden, was converted and built a log structure that became the first Methodist church in Kentucky. The place was called Masterson Station near Lexington, Kentucky. The first Methodist Conference held in Kentucky was conducted by Bishop Francis Asbury in May 1790. It was at this conference, in his building that the decision was made to build Bethel Academy. Several other annual conferences were held at Masterson Station during that decade.

In 1796 Mr. Masterson sold his farm and moved to Carrol County on the Ohio River near Carrollton, but he continued to buy and sell property in Fayette County.³⁶ The congregation at Masterson Station scattered soon after their move and the building fell in disrepair.

His home in Carroll County was a resting place for many Methodist preachers, however, he was also the owner of many slaves. He died March 31, 1806, and his wife, Sarah, died September 12, 1834.³⁷

JOHN LEWIS

Information provided by a descendent of John Lewis, Dr. F. Willard Robinson, Lake Hughes, California, is the source of some of the data in this biography. This information is found in the article, "The Lewis Family," pp. 91-117, *The History of the Robinson Family*. This volume was both authored and published by Dr. Robinson in 1993.

The ancestry of John Lewis goes back to a grandfather, also called John Lewis, who lived in Virginia on lands at Difficult Run in Loudoun County. The family was of

Scotch/Irish heritage.

The John Lewis of interest here was born in 1738, fourth son of Thomas and Elizabeth Mealy Lewis. When John married a girl named Elizabeth, between 1760 to 1762, he was given part of the family property. Here their three boys: William, Thomas, Joshua and probably daughter Ann were born.

John with his father served as Episcopal Churchwardens in the Shelburne Parish and heard Bishop Asbury preach when he visited the area between 1776 to 1781. John was converted and joined the Methodist church.

John Lewis and his father were among those who resisted the rule of the British over Virginia³⁸ and served on the Revolutionary Committee of Loudoun County in 1774 and 1775. Two years later, John joined the Loudoun Militia, and on May 15, 1777, was commissioned captain of the Continental Line.

John Lewis, his wife, Elizabeth, and family left their 250 acres in Loudoun county in 1783 and followed the Wilderness Trail to the Bluegrass region of the western part of Virginia. They settled on Jessamine Creek in Fayette County, in a section later to become Jessamine County. John built the first paper mill west of the Allegheny Mountains on this creek, according to the Lewis family tradition.

The extent of John Lewis' wealth is indicated by the number and size of grants of land accorded him, in recognition of his services in the Continental Army. The grants were in several of the counties in the Bluegrass area, only the instances in Fayette County are noted here:³⁹

January 1, 1783, 1,000 acres surveyed on a branch of the Kentucky River.⁴⁰

January 17, 1784, 3,000 acres on Elkhorn Creek.⁴¹

June 16, 1784, 8,347 1/2 acres on Elkhorn Creek but surveyed as 6,847 1/2 acres.⁴²

June 5, 1786, 100 acres on Jessamine Creek.⁴³ This was probably the acreage he gave the Methodist Church through Bishop Asbury on May 17, 1790, for a site on which to build Bethel Academy. John Lewis also gave land for a church known as Lewis Chapel, near the Academy. This was the second Methodist church built west of the Allegheny Mountains. In 1794 the Methodist conference was held in this chapel. Other grants were the following:

June 28, 1774, 2,000 acres on Elkhorn Creek in partnership with Charles Lewis.⁴⁴

June 30, 1774, 2,000 acres on Elkhorn Creek.⁴⁵

June 30, 1774, 2,000 acres on Elkhorn Creek.⁴⁶

January 28, 1783, 1,000 acres in Fayette County, Tismon Creek.⁴⁷

March 1, 1785, 1,000 acres in Fayette County.⁴⁸

April 11, 1785, 600 acres in Fayette County.⁴⁹

March 26, 1784, 164 acres in Fayette County, Stoners Creek.⁵⁰

When Bishop Asbury visited Bethel Academy for the last time in 1800, holding the annual conference there, he visited in the Lewis home. At the time John Lewis was disabled with a broken leg.⁵¹ In the article, "The Bethel Academy Story" reference is made to deeds in which John Lewis transferred slaves to some of his children and several other people, and that he seemed to forget he had given a quit claim deed to the trustees of Bethel Academy for the 100 acres on which the school was built. He willed the 100 acres to his son William in 1816 but when he was alerted to his mistake, he

gained by some means, repossession from the trustees of the Bethel Academy property and willed it again to William in 1822. At that time, the transaction was done by an attorney, for John was in Arkansas.

The Lewis' oldest son, William, was a colonel and commander of United States soldiers at the "Battle of River Raisin" during the War of 1812 and later captured by the British. William was released in 1814 and settled in Lewisburg, Arkansas, where he gained the rank of general. He returned to visit his father, but died on the trip back to Arkansas. A bronze plaque was placed in his memory in Little Rock, Arkansas.

John Lewis' son Thomas was a captain of a company in the Kentucky Militia in the War of 1812 and was killed in the battle called "Dudley's Defeat" at Fort Meigs south of Detroit, Michigan, in 1813.

Lewis' son Joshua was a prominent lawyer in Jessamine County and member of the Kentucky House of Representatives in 1799, 1801 and 1803 and rose to the rank of judge. In 1805 he was appointed by President Thomas Jefferson as a Territorial Judge in charge of land claims in the recently acquired Louisiana Territory, and in 1812 became a judge of the Supreme Court of Louisiana. In 1816 he ran for Governor of Louisiana but lost by sixty-one votes. He died June 5, 1833.

The Lewis' daughter Ann, who married Thomas Henning, was the mother of one girl, and died at the age of twenty-five. The youngest daughter, Mary, married a man whose surname was Shortridge. She died in Missouri in the 1830s.

The exact date of the death of John's wife is not known, but seems to have been sometime between 1813 and 1819. Likewise, the exact date of John's death is unknown, though it was sometime between 1825 and 1827.

Notes

1. Charles Ludwig, *Francis Asbury: God's Circuit Rider*, Appendix, Photo #10.
2. E.G. Swem, *The Virginia Historical Index*, vol. 2 (Roanoke, VA: The Stone Printing and Manufacturing, Co), p. 486.
3. Thomas Scott, "The Rev. Francis Poythress." *Western Christian Advocate* (Cincinnati: April 9, 1841), p. 1.
4. W.W. Sweet, *The Rise Of Methodism in the West* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern), p. 81.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
7. E.T. Clark, *The Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury, vols. I and II* (Nashville: Abingdon Press).
8. E.G. Swem, *The Virginia Historical Index*, pp. 203-204.
9. *Kentucky's Bicentennial Family Register*, eds. J. Winston Coleman et. al. (Frankfort: America's Historic Records, Inc.), p. 269.
10. *Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, pp. 37, 40, 41, 46, 48, 50.
11. See the text of these letters in the article, "The Bethel Academy Story," in this issue of *The Asbury Theological Journal*.
12. B.H. Young, *The History of Jessamine County, Kentucky* (Louisville: Courier-Journal Job Printing Co., 1898), pp. 79-85.
13. N. Bangs, *A History of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, vol. 2 (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane), p. 440.
14. Sweet, *The Rise of Methodism*, pp. 73-207.

15. See the article, "The Bethel Academy Story" in this issue of *The Asbury Theological Journal*.
16. H.C. Teater, *Jessamine County Kentucky Cemetery Records*, vol. 1, p. 93.
17. *Deed Book I* (Jessamine County Court House, Clerk of County Court), pp. 464-465.
18. A. Banning, "Controversy Between Rev. Valentine Cook and Mr. Jamieson in 1792," *Western Christian Advocate*, vol. III, 23(September 25, 1840): 1.
19. *Marriage Bonds 1798-1807* (Mercer County Court House, Clerk of County Court).
20. *Deed Book 5* (Mercer County Court House, Clerk of County Court), p. 68.
21. *Marriage Book* (Mercer County Court House, Clerk of County Court), p. 104.
22. Sweet, *The Rise of Methodism*, p. 145.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 166.
25. Edward Stevenson, *Biographical Sketch of the Rev. Valentine Cook, A.M. with an Appendix, Containing His Discourse on Baptism* (1858), pp. 105-201.
26. *Cook Genealogy*, pp. 31-36.
27. Thomas Scott, "Valentine Cook," *Annals of the American Pulpit*, ed. W. B. Sprague, vol VII (1960), pp. 154-157.
28. Stevenson, *Biographical Sketches of the Rev. Valentine Cook*, p. 154.
29. *Kentucky Cemetery Records*, vol. 1, p. 291.
30. Bulletin entitled, "In Memory of Rev. Valentine Cook, A.M. 1763-1822 and Celebration of the Rise of Camp Meetings" (Louisville Annual Conference [Methodist] Historical Society, Sunday, July 29, 1934).
31. Young, *The History of Jessamine County*, pp. 209-210.
32. *Deed Book C* (Jessamine County Court House, Clerk of County Court), p. 46.
33. Kentucky was a district of the Ohio Conference from 1811-1821.
34. *Minutes of Annual Conferences...* op. cit.
35. *Will Book N* (Woodford County Court House, Clerk of County Court), p. 385.
36. *Deed Book A* (Fayette County Court House, Clerk of County Court), pp. 344, 514, 516, 517 and *Deed Book B*, p. 492.
37. W.E. Arnold, *A History of Methodism in Kentucky*, vol. 1, pp. 46, 47, 178, 179.
38. E.G. Swem, *The Virginia Historical Index*, vol. 2, p. 58.
39. The list of these grants are found in *Virginia Grants*, p. 76.
40. *Ibid*, book 2, p. 25.
41. *Ibid*, book 3, p. 155.
42. *Ibid*, book 3, p. 371.
43. *Ibid*, book 4, p. 300.
44. *Ibid*, book 1, p. 350.
45. *Ibid*, book 1, p. 361.
46. *Ibid*, book 3, p. 3.
47. *Ibid*, book 7, p. 36.
48. *Ibid*, book 8, p. 275.
49. *Ibid*, book 12, p. 36.
50. *Ibid*, book 13, p. 93.
51. E.T. Clark, *The Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury*, vol 1, p. 253.

