

Appendix: Exhibits Presented at the Trial of L.R.B. Rhodes

Exhibit A. New Washington¹ Quarterly Conference Report: October 28, 1869

To the Presiding Elder of the Altoona District, Central Pennsylvania Conference
Dear Brother,

The undersigned members of the Quarterly Conference of the M.E. Church, New Washington Circuit, would respectfully represent that our junior preacher, Brother Rhodes, is not acceptable to the people generally on this Circuit.

He has so frequently failed to fill his preaching appointments that, at some points, there can scarcely be a congregation had to hear him. He neglects his pastoral work, and the revival meetings which have been held within the bounds of the Circuit, and manifests such a general indifference to the interests of the Church, and the saving of souls, that we believe this Circuit would suffer no loss by dispensing with his services.

October 28th 1869

(signed)

A. White²

Adam Breth³

John F. Lee⁴

A.B. Pate

James Dowler⁵

T.A. McPhee

James Riddle⁶

John Hoffman⁷

¹ New Washington is in Clearfield County. It was part of the Central Pennsylvania Conference from the conference's creation in 1868 until it was transferred to the Western Pennsylvania Conference in 1970 as part of the state-wide reorganization subsequent to the Methodist-EUB denominational union.

² Asa White (1795-1886) is listed in the 1850 agricultural census of Clearfield County as owning 163 acres of land in Burnside township.

³ Adam Breth (1833-1915) was a blacksmith married to Margaret G. Lee (1832-1869). Just three months before this letter, on July 28, 1869, she died one month after giving birth to twins. During their 15 years of marriage, Adam and Margaret had had ten children, six of whom died in infancy. He later (1883-1902) worked as the business manager for the Clearfield and Cambia Coal and Coke Company. He also at various times filled a variety of other appointed and elected positions in New Washington – including school director, town council, borough auditor, justice of the peace, and postmaster.

⁴ John Fletcher Lee (c1816-1887) is listed in the 1850 agricultural census of Clearfield County as owning 102 acres of land in Bell township. He is the son of local preacher Timothy Lee (1778-1860) and the brother of Joseph S. Lee (1808-1864) of the East Baltimore Conference [predecessor to the Central Pennsylvania Conference]. Joseph's conference obituary describes their father, who was a first cousin to the eminent missionary Jason Lee (1803-1845), as "Rev. Timothy Lee, once an itinerant Methodist preacher, and a man of great power, long and favorably known as the champion of Methodism in his day." Timothy Lee is reported to have been ordained by Francis Asbury, and Asbury is critical of him in a 9/3/1812 letter to Jacob Gruber for making only four complete rounds on his large circuit in 1811. Timothy Lee located in 1812 and is buried in the Methodist Cemetery at New Washington. The relationship between these Lees and those with the Breth-Riddle connection has not been determined.

⁵ James Dowler (1826-1903) was born in Ireland. He was to married Cornelia Patton (1832-1909), sister of General John Patton (1823-1897) – the noted Curwensville businessman and philanthropist who for many years was considered the leading layman in Central Pennsylvania Conference.

Exhibit B. Letter to J.S. McMurray from L.R.B. Rhodes: December 20, 1869

New Washington
Rev. J.S. McMurray
Dear Brother,

December 20, 1869

I received no letter from you while in Maryland. The one sent to Glen Hope has been received. It is not true that I have not been acceptable to the people generally here, for I have everywhere been received cordially and treated with the greatest kindness.

In reference to filling my appointments, I would briefly say, I arrived early on the circuit in the spring. From that time until the middle of last month when I was badly hurt, there were five Sabbaths on which I did not preach. Last summer it was necessary that I should return home (as I told you at the first quarterly meeting) – intending to stay two weeks, but on account of sickness I was compelled to stay four weeks. And one other Sabbath I was too unwell to labor.

As to the pastoral work, I would say I visited considerably. And had they provided me a home, I could have had some system about my work and visited much more. “Neglected revival meetings.” In reference to this I simply say that it is a falsehood, for I attended every protracted meeting held on the circuit up to the time I was hurt. I was absent a few nights on account of sickness. It is not true that I have been indifferent to the interests of the Church. On the contrary, I have tried hard to do my duty.

And further, what right have these few men to speak for the quarterly conference? They do not represent the people. I will venture to say they never consulted the people. I think I ought to present charges against these brethren.

While attending Brother Buckley’s quarterly meeting on the 14th of last month, I met with an accident near Penville (not on my way home as you were informed) and have been a cripple since – caused by the falling of my horse. I have been home trying to get well, but am still far from it. I have been advised by physicians to go out but little this winter. I have taken cold in my limb by riding in a snow storm last Saturday. I have slept none for three nights. If it gets any worse I shall return home. If so, I will notify you.

Yours fraternally,
L.R.B. Rhodes

⁶ James Riddle (1821-1874) was a justice of the peace for many years. He is a first cousin to Margaret G. Lee Breth.

⁷ John Hoffman is listed in the 1850 agricultural census of Clearfield County as owning 75 acres of land in Burnside township.

Exhibit C. Letter to J.S. McMurray from L.R.B. Rhodes: December 23, 1869

New Washington

December 23, 1869

Dear Brother McMurray,

I sent you a letter three days ago informing you of my condition since my fall from my horse. I have taken cold in my leg and it is in a bad condition. I can get out of the house but little and my leg pains me exceedingly when I attempt to ride on horseback. I'm sorry I did not remain at home as I was advised by a physician to do. How I am to get home I do not know. I must try it. I have no home here. I would rather die than be dependent on any man.

I resign my work here to some one who is able to do it. In reference to those complaints, I would rather say that you probably will hear some thing said about the Bower and Miller appointments. Why I was absent from those appointments several times is evident. My appointments were there at the time of holding Brother Beckley's and our quarterly meetings, and also at the time of holding the Glen Hope camp meeting. Once I was absent from those appointments on account of high water.

I doubt not those complainants would take advantage of my absence from the quarterly meeting to abuse me. But as I will not be there to defend myself, I know you will see the propriety of allowing little or nothing to be said on the subject. I think it an honor to any man to be censured by the men who censured me. Having no talents themselves, they know not how to appreciate them in others. I have never known a quarterly conference having so little talent. You had an exhibition of their ability to dispatch business at the first quarterly meeting.

I am sorry to say it, but I believe brother Whitney was the head man in getting up those complaints. I know he does not like me too well. He knows I am appreciated here by the congregations as a minister of much more ability than himself. I say not this boastingly, but in self defense. I am tempted to despise the whole of them. What I said in reference to the talent of the quarterly conference of course does not apply to every member. There are exceptions. But taken as a body it is true.

For eight years I have endeavored to be a faithful minister, and during that time I was not censured by an official member except in this case. And I know I am innocent in this case. In conclusion, thank you for your kindness towards me. From you I have received nothing but kindness. I will ever hold you in grateful remembrance. Any communications from you will be received at Frederick City Md.

Yours fraternally,
L.R.B. Rhodes

**Exhibit D. Letter to J.S. McMurray from Washington Circuit⁸ members:
fall/winter 1870**

To Rev. J.S. McMurray, Presiding Elder

We the undersigned as official members of Washington Circuit, Altoona District, do hereby ask the removal of Rev. L.R.B. Rhodes from this pastoral charge on the ground of inefficiency and unacceptability; and therefore assign the following reasons

1st Refusing to preach at Hecla when requested by the brethren.

2nd Neglecting to preach at Hublersburg⁹ as we believe without cause for six or seven weeks.

3rd Neglect of duty at Washington charge; not attending the class meeting and Sabbath school when he had no other appointments, and not visiting the members.

4th The manner in which he answered brother Kilda when he asked him if he were going to camp meeting; by reminding him of the 11th commandment: "Mind your own business." (We believe the 11th to be "That ye love one another.")

5th While holding a protracted meeting at Hublersburg, by reproving brother Kilda in public, telling him he did not want a rambling prayer.

6th Cruelty to pupils while teaching the public school at Clintonville.

By delivering a discourse last July to the congregation at Washington¹⁰, charging the membership and community with being liars, slanderers and fighters; using very harsh and unchristian-like expressions and evincing a spirituality unbecoming a minister of the gospel and the sacredness of the pulpit, for all which we think there was no call. In consequence of which great harm has been done the church, the congregation broken up, and his influence for good among us as minister has been destroyed. Further, his apology for the above discourse rendered at the 3rd Quarterly Meeting was not satisfactory, and his statement was not in accordance with the facts in the case.

(signed)

John W. McClintick¹¹

Richard Custard¹²

⁸ Washington was the name for the west end of Lamar. Lamar was originally known as Belle Springs, and then as Yankeetown because many of the residents came from Connecticut. Lamar was the name of the post office when it was established in 1832, and that eventually became the name of the Porter township community. Washington circuit existed only for the 1870-71 conference year and included at least three appointments: Washington, Hublersburg and Hecla. The February 25, 1871, Fourth Quarterly Conference of the Salona circuit resolved "that we recommend to the bishop and his council to attach Washington and Hublersburg appointments to our circuit and send us two men as our preachers."

⁹ Very little is known about the Methodist work at Hublersburg. The Evangelical Association erected a church building in Hublersburg in 1873, but it is believed there was never a Methodist building there. The November 23, 1872, minutes of the Third Quarterly Conference of the Salona circuit indicate that members were taken in at Hublersburg and include the following: *The claims of the Hublersburg church were presented and a resolution endorsing the action of the brethren at that place in their efforts to build a church at that appointment. The following were appointed a board of trustees...*

¹⁰ Washington church is now the Lamar United Methodist Church. As there is no cemetery attached to this church, many of its members are buried in the cemetery at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lamar.

¹¹ John W. McClintick (1825-1890) was active in the Washington church. The family is buried in the Lutheran cemetery in Lamar.

Reuben Loveland¹³
L.T. Eddy¹⁵
James M. Milliken

B.F. Miller¹⁴
Jacob Cook
H.D. Loveland¹⁶
J. Gobble¹⁷

Exhibit E. [Apparently there is no exhibit E. There is no exhibit E in the file, and there is no mention in the trial transcript of an exhibit E.]

Exhibit F. Letter to J.S. McMurray from L.R.B. Rhodes: January 31, 1871

Lamar, Pa

January 31, 1871

Rev. J.S. McMurray

Dear Brother,

I desire to resign my charge here, and respectfully ask that you accept my resignation. I desire to be relieved from further duty until conference because I am unwell.

Yours fraternally,
L.R.B. Rhodes

¹² This Richard Custard (1824-1900) was a trustee of the Washington church. The family is buried in Lutheran cemetery in Lamar.

¹³ Reuben Loveland (1811- 1886) was born in Glastonbury CT. In 1832 he and Thomas H. Eddy came from Connecticut to Centre County to work at Mann's axe-factory on Spring Creek. In 1838 they founded an axe factory on the Bald Eagle Creek, in Boggs township, and carried it on until 1846, when they transferred their business to the Washington Furnace area in Clinton County. He apparently was quite religious and thoroughly Methodist for his three children by his first wife were Rebecca, Isaac and Wilbur Fisk Loveland – the latter named for the Rev. Wilbur Fisk (1792-1839), prominent Methodist pastor, educator, theologian, and first president of Wesleyan University. His son Reuben Loveland Jr (1853-1879) was admitted to the ministry of the Central Pennsylvania Conference in 1876. The family is buried in the Lutheran Cemetery in Lamar.

¹⁴ Benjamin F. Miller (1831-1892) was a trustee of the Washington church. They family is buried in the Lutheran Cemetery in Lamar.

¹⁵ Lyman Thomas Eddy (1841-1915) is the son of Reuben Loveland's partner Thomas Hamblin Eddy. He was the Sunday School superintendent at the Washington church. He later moved to Milesburg and became Sunday School superintendent at the Methodist church there.

¹⁶ Henry Dill Loveland (1846-1916) is the first child of Reuben Loveland by his second wife. He was named for Rev. Henry G. Dill (1808-1887), pastor of the Bellefonte Circuit 1845-47 and the one who performed the wedding ceremony for his parents. He is buried in the Lutheran cemetery in Lamar.

¹⁷ Jacob Gobble is from the Hublersburg appointment. He is an uncle to the prominent Rev. Dr. Aaron Ezra Gobble (1856-1929) of the Evangelical Association.

**Exhibit G. Copy of letter to L.R.B. Rhodes from J.S. McMurray:
February 1, 1871**

Tyrone [copy] February 1, 1871
Rev. L.R.B. Rhodes
Dear Brother,

Yours of January 31st (yesterday) is hereby acknowledged; in which you render to me the resignation of your pastoral charge. With no authority to release you from your work, I accept the fact of your resignation and shall proceed to supply¹⁸ your place until Conference as far as it may be practicable. In the meantime, let me suggest the propriety of asking a location.

Yours fraternally,
J.S. McMurray
Presiding Elder, Altoona District
Central Pennsylvania Conference

Exhibit H. Letter to J.S. McMurray from L.R.B. Rhodes: March 9, 1871

Carlisle March 9, 1871
Rev. J.S. McMurray
Dear Brother,

As you did not receive my letter last Monday, I write you this. In looking over the past year, I find that I have not been as fully devoted to God and his work as I should have been. I have repented before the Lord and he has forgiven me. I find if I had preached against slander in a more general way and not in so direct a manner, it would have been better. I should have visited more. I should have been more careful to cultivate the good will of every body. I am now fully devoted to God and his work.

Now give me a chance to save myself. I am a young man and have time for improvement. Give me work in your district and I will be faithful. My enemies acknowledge my ability. All I need is more devotion to the work. I shall voluntarily retire from the work if one year hence I shall not be found fully devoted to the work.

If I have offended you, I repent and ask forgiveness. Forgive me even as you hope to be forgiven. I believe I have never before been censured by a Presiding Elder. Add not grief to a heart now nearly broken by trouble and sorrow.

Censure me not here before my relatives and friends so near my old home. Whatever errors I may have made, I have been sincere and done what I thought best. Strike not a man when he is down, but if he repents let him up. J. Wesley tells us that he sought the truth for twenty-five years before he was prepared to preach to others.

Help me only this once and you will bind me to yourself with cords of gratitude and love. Help me this time and if adversity should befall me in the future I will ask you no more. It is human to err but divine to forgive. There are few preachers able to cast the first stone – that is, few who have not made mistakes. We can only learn by experience.

Yours fraternally,
L.R.B.Rhodes

¹⁸ The name given as the pastor in the March 1871 statistical reports is "G.W. Bell." This is James W. Bell, who was then a local pastor from the Tyrone area. He supplied the Williamsport circuit the following year (where he met and married his wife), was formally admitted to the conference in 1872, was ordained deacon in 1874, and was ordained elder in 1876.