

**Franklin Ebenezer Hewitt
(1825-1909)**

by Franklin K. Wilson¹

The Trial

In the 1869, the Caledonia circuit of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Episcopal covered northern Clearfield County and southern Elk County. While the early conference journals do not name the appointments on each charge, the circuit appears to have included the following the preaching places: Bennezette, Johnson's, Mill Run, Mount Pleasant, Penfield, Webb's. In 1878 the circuit was split in two: Penfield and Benezette. Franklin Hewitt was a local pastor on the circuit. He never served under appointment, but he was authorized to preach at the various appointments on that circuit.

According to the family Bible, Franklin Hewitt was actually named Ebenezer Franklin Hewitt. As his father's name was Ebenezer, however, the child was commonly called Franklin – and it was just a matter of time until he became known as Franklin E. Hewitt. His mother was the former Sarah Bliss (1787-1854) – a sister to Isaac Bliss (1797-1864), the father of singer and gospel song writer Philip Paul Bliss. And so the noted P.P. Bliss (1838-1876) and Franklin Ebenezer Hewitt (1825-1909) were first cousins, and they grew up together in the Penfield area.

In the fall of 1869, Franklin's brother Thomas filed formal charges against him for violations of church law. The Central Pennsylvania Conference archives house the original documents pertaining to these charges, the trial, and the aftermath. Along with other information on Franklin and Thomas, the documents provide interesting insights into the Hewitt family and the Methodist Episcopal Church in nineteenth century Clearfield County. The original charges are as follows.

August 30, 1869 - Huston²

Charges preferred against Rev. Franklin Hewitt

Charge specification: Violating the Sabbath. Late in the fall of 1866, making a contract or bargain with John Tyler, he sold hay to said Tyler and received money in payment at the same time.

Charge specification: Falsehood. In April 1867, settling before William Hewitt and Charles Webb, Frank said he did not say that John Hewitt should not have anything to do with our settlement.³ And two nights before this, he said plainly that John should not have anything to do with our settlement.

Charge specification: Changing his name. For some object, I know not what, Franklin has written his name differently. Sometimes he writes it E.F. Hewitt and sometimes he writes it F.E. Hewitt. And this change is making great trouble in the neighborhood. It certainly is wrong to write his name two ways.

(signed) Thomas Hewitt

A formal church trial was held at February 22, 1870, as part of the Quarterly Conference for the Caledonia circuit. The trial was conducted by the presiding elder (now called the district superintendent) Thompson Mitchell⁴. A.B. Hooven⁵, the preacher appointed to the Caledonia circuit, served as secretary. A series of witnesses was called, and Franklin was found guilty as charged and expelled from the church. A full transcript of the trial is given in the Appendices.

While the charges and evidence may seem unworthy of a guilty verdict by today's standards, one can only assume that such was normal for 1870. If such had been otherwise, surely such a presiding elder as Thompson Mitchell would have guided the quarterly conference toward an acquittal – especially considering the first-year status of the appointed preacher. As noted at the conclusion of the recorded proceedings, Franklin determined to file an appeal with the Annual Conference. Following is his letter asking a ministerial colleague to arrange for his case to be heard by the Conference.

March 10, 1870 – Mill Run

Dear Brother Chandler⁶,

With a feeble and trembling hand I attempt to address a few lines to you. I have been confined to my room for near two weeks and am now scarcely able to walk about in my room. Brother Hooven has not come to see me. I have no one to advise with me or comfort me. I am in an enemy's land.

You have heard about the result of my trial, that I was condemned and expelled from the Methodist Episcopal Church in which I have labored conscientiously all my ministerial life. I am innocent of the charges brought against me. They were sustained, it is true, but not by the church members – by outsiders, by my enemies, by wicked men, by my relatives which have envied me ever since the church gave me license to preach.

Dear brother in the ministry, is it right, is it just? Shall I be tramped down by that class. I appeal to you. At the time of my own damnation I signified my determination to appeal. The grounds on which I wish to urge or press the appeal is that I do not think it right by such evidence to condemn a tried man for the term of fifteen years.

For envy was I delivered up. In the case of the charge of Sabbath breaking, I was smeared by one evidence: Mr. Tyler, a wicked man, his word against mine. The accuser did not pretend to know anything about it himself –

and the witnesses in the whole, not one a member of the M.E. Church. The Good Book says that saints shall judge the world, but in this case is it not reversed?

Brethren – will you not take this and reconsider it. I think there are brethren in the conference that know something about the spirit that was manifested after he failed to get license to preach. He blamed me and Brother Chandler for inflaming Elder Hamlin⁷ against him. And out of this has grown up all this trouble. O envy, thou wicked principle of perdition, thou art cruel.

Brother Chandler – As it is impossible for me to be at Conference in person, will you see that this be properly presented. Will not Brother Lewis Chandler⁸ take this responsibility, or Elder Hamlin?

May the Spirit of the Lord go with this.

*Yours in Christ,
Rev. F. E. Hewitt*

Annual Conference at that time was held in March, and Lewistown was the site of the 1870 Conference. The minutes do not indicate who actually brought the case to the attention of the body, but on page 41 of that year's journal appears the statement that "The select number to whom was referred the appeal of F.E. Hewitt from the decision of Caledonia Quarterly Conference, report that the decision of said Quarterly Conference is reversed." The original manuscript report is preserved with the other documents and reads as follows.

March [16-22], 1870 – Lewistown

The committee in the case of F.E. Hewitt's appeal met this p.m. at 3 o'clock. The roll was called. Present: J.C. Clarke, G.D. Chenoweth, G. Guyer, W.L. Spottswood, D. Hartman, J. Moorhead, E.W. Kirby, W. Harden, R.E. Wilson, S. Barnes, J.W. Buckley, E. Butler.

The papers presented being read, after considerable discussion the committee resolved that the action of the Caledonia Quarterly Conference be reversed. S. Barnes dissenting.

(signed) D.S. Monroe, secretary

Two items of note appear in the original report that were not included in the Conference Journal: that there was "considerable discussion" and that there was a dissenting vote. While one would think that the decision affirmed by the Conference ought to settle the matter, such was not the case. Apparently there was a letter questioning the decision written by Rev. A.B. Hooven of the Caledonia circuit to Rev. William Harden of the conference committee that heard the appeal. And there was a response by Rev. Harden to Rev. Hooven giving some rationale for reversing the verdict of the Quarterly Conference. Those two letters were not preserved. But a third letter, a rather passionate follow-up by Rev. Hooven did find its way into the archival file, and reads as follows.

June 10, 1870 – Penfield

Rev. William Harden⁹

Dear Brother,

It is with diffidence that I address you again on the subject of Rev. F.E. Hewitt's appeal. The only apology that I can make is a sincere desire to remove if possible the obstacles that are in the way of the prosperity of Zion in this place. I debated the question in my own mind for some time as to whether I should trouble you again with the subject. But I think your letter invites if not demands an answer. You say that he was acquitted, or decision reversed, because

1st. Changing one's name does not necessarily carry with it moral delinquency. This I will not dispute. But judging from the tenor of your letter, I am led to suppose that the committee regarded this charge as one of which he was found guilty and upon which he was expelled from the church – not only one, but one of the principal charges upon which he was expelled. This was certainly not the case. Had there been nothing else, he would still have retained his place in the church and in the confidence of the people. If my memory served me correctly, there was a statement in reference to this charge which I suppose was before the committee with the balance of the evidence in the case, as follows: "As to the third charge or accusation, we find it substantially sustained but fail to find any intention to defraud." Certainly this does not look as though he was expelled upon (to use your language) the weak crime of changing his name – neither was he. And I cannot think that the evidence before the committee went to show anything of the kind.

2nd. The charge of selling hay on Sunday should have been prosecuted long before February 22, 1870, if the crime was committed September 1866 – 3 years and 5 months allowed to pass, and his license renewed 3 times (once each year), and his character passed by the same Quarterly Conference 12 times (4 times per year). It is true it ought to have been attended to long before it was. And the reason as far as I can learn why it was not was that the preachers in charge of the circuit, some at least, were under the impression that it was impossible to bring him to trial until in the first place they summoned him before a committee of local preachers – and it was impossible to get them, and therefore he was allowed to remain in the church. I too was under the same impression until in consulting Baker on the discipline I there learned that if the preacher in charge neglected or failed to obtain a committee or failed for want of time, that neglect or failure does not deprive the Quarterly Conference of its legal authority to try a local preacher on charges of immorality, page 137. But even though so long a time elapsed from whatever cause, I cannot see why that should clear him when he was proved guilty of the charge. And this, if I understand correctly, you assign as a part of the 2nd reason why the decision of the Quarterly Conference was reversed when you say 2nd that the charge of selling hay should have been prosecuted long before February 22, 1870, &c &c. Again in reference to the renewal of his license during that period, there is certainly a mistake or a misunderstanding somewhere. I think some of the committee at least was aware of the fact that F.E.

Hewitt was a local deacon, and I don't understand that the discipline requires the credentials of a local deacon to be renewed annually. As to his character passed 12 times, I am not certain about that unless to pass a man's character is merely to remain quiet and say nothing about him. As I have been assured by the Brethren of the Quarterly Conference that no action has ever been taken in his case in any way until he was brought to trial for immoral conduct (he was ordained in the Erie Conference and had lived in the bounds of that Conference until the fall of 1865), so that the Brethren of the Quarterly Conference are not so culpable as you suppose in knowing him to be guilty of Sabbath breaking and yet voting several times to renew his license to preach. You say also that I am guilty in not prosecuting him for crimes that I know him to be guilty of. How can I? You say it is monstrous to expel a man on the testimony of a single witness, and he not a member of the church. If this be the rule, then my hands are tied and I am obliged to recognize him as a Brother in the church (knowing him to be guilty) merely because I have but one witness with which to prove his guilt.

But he was not expelled merely upon the evidence of one man on the charge of violating the Sabbath, nor yet for changing his name. There was another – a more serious charge, if possible, than selling hay on Sunday. But you do not mention it in your letter. It may be possible that the committee did not have all the evidence taken before the Quarterly Conference. But it was all placed in the hands of the Presiding Elder Dr. Mitchell. I refer to the charge of falsehood. It was proved by at least two competent witnesses, besides his own acknowledgement, that he had made a certain assertion. It was then proved by three good reliable witnesses that he denied ever making such an assertion. The evidence was such that it not only sustained the charge of falsehood, but to my mind proved more – that of absolute lying. I was under the impression at first that the committee could not have had all the testimony taken before the Quarterly Conference, and after reading your letter I was more fully persuaded that such was the case – as you did not say anything about the charge of falsehood, and further say that “Hewitt may be unworthy of membership in our church, but I frankly say to you that in my judgment that fact did not appear in the proceedings of your Quarterly Conference.” I cannot think that you could come to such a conclusion if in possession of all the testimony taken before the Quarterly Conference on the charges of Sabbath breaking and falsehood, for these are the charges of which he was found guilty and for which he was expelled from the church, and not that of simply changing his name.

I regret that I am obliged to trouble you again about the matter, but I am anxious to know if the committee had all the testimony taken before the Quarterly Conference. If so, why did you not mention the charge of falsehood. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain

*Yours in Christian bonds,
A.B. Hooven*

While it is unknown whether there was further correspondence between A.B. Hooven and any members of the committee that heard the appeal, one significant observation can be made concerning the matter. While Franklin Hewitt was vindicated by the Conference, he chose not to (or could not?) immediately restore his status as a local pastor. He later (c. 1888) followed his daughter and son-in-law to Kansas and eventually settled in Colorado, and it appears that he served as a local pastor in those states. Given the lingering animosity of Rev. Hooven, and likely of his own relatives that testified against him, he probably would not have been able to receive a local pastor's license and/or to serve effectively in that position in the Penfield area.

The Man behind the Trial

Rev. Franklin Ebenezer Hewitt was born in Clearfield County PA on August 27, 1825. He was one of twelve children, six boys and six girls, of Ebenezer Hewitt (1782-1871) and Sarah Bliss Hewitt (1787-1854). Ebenezer and Sarah were married in New York in 1807 and migrated with the Bliss family to the Penfield area in 1819. They were farmers, spent their entire lives in the area, and are buried in the Hewitt cemetery in the village of Hollywood – a few miles north of Penfield.

Franklin Hewitt was converted in 1840 at the age of 15 during revival meetings at the Methodist church. In 1901, at the age of 76, Rev. Hewitt prepared a short sketch of his life and remembers those revival meetings as follows:
The writer commenced his Christian career in a protracted meeting under the supervision of a young minister named Rev. Ransom Goodell¹⁰. In this meeting there were seventy precious souls happily converted and added to the church. It was a meeting of wonderful power – so many souls being saved it aroused the Devil and his followers, and they went to work to break up the meeting. Six or eight men of the baser sort, the worst in the community, clubbed together to effect their purpose. Of course they did not intend to have their plan reach the ears of the church, but it leaked out in some way and the meeting folks heard of it. One night they came. We were in the midst of a precious testimony meeting. We recognized them, and received them. We went on as though nothing had happened. After hearing one or more testimonies, they commenced – some stamping, others talking and whistling. The pastor arose and talked to them and asked them to be quiet. Two or three were on the floor for testimonies when, in a few moments, they began again worse than before. Then they uttered profanity in the house of God. The pastor was just rising to his feet, when a little girl of thirteen years arose quickly, and then climbed up on the seat where she had been sitting, and commenced to speak. The pastor took his seat. She had been, a few nights before, happily converted to God. With her childish voice she preached to those wretches, and her words were just dripping with the love of God and with power. Everything was as still as death. Her face shone like an angel's face. She

talked three minutes or more and sat down. All was quiet for a few moments. Then they arose, one after another, and walked quietly out of the house. The Devil, I think, hurried them out as soon as possible, for if they had stayed there the Holy Spirit would have brought them to Jesus for salvation.

All his life, Rev. Hewitt was a believer in the power of revival meetings and conversion experiences, and he tried to instill those values in his family.¹¹ On May 3, 1846, he married Hannah Taylor¹² (1826-1900) and they had six children as follows.

Elizabeth Jane, 1847 – married Robert McCray Wilson
Samantha, 1849 – married James A. Pearsall
Thomas Winfield, 1854 – married Matilda Iddings
Hezekiah P., 1856 -
Silas J., 1864 -
Olive M., 1867 – married Alexander Benson

The family appears to have moved across the mountain to the Dagus area of Fox township in Elk County about 1850, for it was there that the four later children were born. That area was within the Erie Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the A.B. Hooven letter in the previous section stated that F.E. Hewitt was originally licensed in the Erie Conference. It also appears that the family moved back to that area following the trial and family difficulties in the Penfield area — for the 1880 census places the family as farmers back in Fox township. Son Thomas died in 1887¹³ and is buried in Earlyville in Fox Township, and a surviving 1888 family letter was written from Dagus Mines. By that time, most of the children had moved to western states.

About 1890, and possibly for reasons of his health, Franklin and Hannah left Pennsylvania for good and went to join their children in the west. The journey took that eventually led them to settle in Denver CO is described in the 1901 autobiographical sketch as follows.

On our way west, we tarried a few months in a small town named Tekonsha¹⁴, in Michigan, with our son H.P. Hewitt. During our stay in Tekonsha, we met one of the severest trials in our lives. Our youngest daughter¹⁵ came with us, myself and wife. Our daughter, soon after we arrived, was seized with that dread disease, quick consumption, and was soon gone. We needed Divine help to endure the trial. But we did not mourn as those that have no hope, for she told us a few hours before her departure that she could not weep any more. Her tears were wiped away, oh, yes, by the great Master. Jesus says all tears shall be wiped away from the faces of his children. After taking leave of our two sons H.P. and S.J. Hewitt, in Battle Creek, Michigan, we went on Plainville, Kansas, to our daughter Mrs. E. J. Wilson. We spent four years very pleasantly, most of the time in the little village of Plainville, a beautiful little city. The kindhearted and loving people of Plainville and surrounding neighborhoods, we could never forget. Our

stay here is noted in our memory as one of the pleasantest spots in our lives. My now absent wife so often called to mind the names of loving friends in Kansas.

Rev. Franklin and Hannah Hewitt then moved on to settle in Denver CO, the home of their other daughter, Mrs. James A. Pearsall. They became active members with their daughter and son-in-law at the Grant Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church. Rev. Hewitt continued to function as a local preacher until about 1900, and he was listed in the weekly bulletin at Grant Avenue as a “local deacon” until his death. Mr. Pearsall died in 1896, Hannah Hewitt in 1900, Rev. F.E. Hewitt in 1909, and finally Samantha Hewitt Pearsall in 1923. They are buried in the Pearsall plot in Denver’s Fairmount Cemetery.

¹ Franklin Kent Wilson of Wylie TX is the great-great-grandson of Franklin Ebenezer Hewitt. His 2009 book about Rev. F.W. Hewitt, Further on and Deeper, is available online at blurb.com.

² Huston is the name of the township which includes Penfield – as well as the communities of Mill Run (where Franklin was living at the time), Hollywood (where father Ebenezer is buried) and Tyler (the family name of the man who purchased the hay on the Sabbath).

³ The reference to “our settlement” remains a mystery, but it seems to be a matter only between the brothers Franklin and Thomas – and not involving the estate of their father, who didn’t die until 1871.

⁴ Thompson Mitchell (1817-1897) had just stepped down as president of Williamsport Dickinson Seminary to become presiding elder of the Williamsport District, which then included the Caledonia circuit, in September 1869. A distinguished churchman, he is the subject of an article in Simpson’s 1891 Cyclopedia of Methodism.

⁵ Andrew Bozorth Hooven (1833-1904) was completing his first year in the ministry. He served the Caledonia circuit 1869-72 and later returned to serve the Penfield charge 1878-81. He is the father of Miss Minnie Hooven, who served 8 years in Georgia and Florida with the Freedman’s Aid Society and later joined the faculty at Williamsport Dickinson Seminary.

⁶ Abram S. Chandler (1813-1887) was also a local pastor in the Williamsport District. At the time of this letter, he was serving under appointment at Wesport & Farrandsville. He is the father of Ira L. Chandler (1839-1920) of the Central Tennessee Conference and Levi W. Chandler (1849-1927) of the Oregon Conference.

⁷ Benjamin Bair Hamlin (1823-1904) was presiding elder of the Bellefonte District, which then included the Caledonia circuit, 1862-66. A distinguished churchman, he is the subject of an article in Simpson’s 1891 Cyclopedia of Methodism. While Franklin’s brother Thomas was rejected at this time, he succeeded in obtaining a local pastor’s license in 1876.

⁸ This Lewis Chandler is likely Abram Chandler’s son Ira L. Chandler, who was admitted to the Conference in 1865 and transferred to Tennessee in 1874. Franklin Hewitt and his friend Abram Chandler were local pastors, with no official status in the Conference. It would take an ordained ministerial member of the body to present such a matter to the Conference.

⁹ William Harden (1828-1873) was serving Williamsport Pine Street 1869-72. Since he was only one of the several ordained elders that heard the appeal, it is unclear why Rev. Hooven chose him as the committee member with which to correspond. He may have been the chairman of the committee, or he may have been chosen simply because of the proximity of Williamsport to Penfield.

¹⁰ Ransom Goodell (1818-1855) was just 22 years old and in the midst of a fast track to the ministry. He was converted and received into the Methodist Episcopal Church on probation in 1837, licensed to exhort in 1838, and licensed to preach in 1840. This was while the area was within the Genesee Conference, and he operated as a local pastor. He emigrated to Michigan in

1847 and finally was received into the ordained ministry by that conference – being admitted on probation in 1848, ordained deacon in 1849, and ordained elder in 1853. In 1869, the Caledonia circuit was located where the Erie, Genesee and Central Pennsylvania Conferences came together. It appears to have been moved from the Genesee to East Baltimore (predecessor to the Central Pennsylvania) Conference when the latter was formed in 1858.

¹¹ Two other revealing references to revival meetings and conversions appear in the Rev. Hewitt's autobiographical material. (1) When he first moved to Plainville KS, he was asked by the host pastor to preach one night during their revival meetings. *He then said, "We want you to preach a short sermon." I said, "I don't know about that. I am in the habit of giving myself to the Lord when I preach." Then he said, "We have made it a rule in this meeting to have short sermons, short prayers, short exhortations, etc." The pastor's wife spoke then, and said, "If you preach too long, we will sing you down." "Well, I am in for it now," I said to myself. "I see what is the matter – the pastor is running the meeting and not God." I went to the Lord about it and said, "Lord, I never needed Divine help as much as I need it now. Lord, take charge of the meeting tonight." All worked out well, and there were seekers at the altar for salvation. (2) When he first moved to Denver, he was involved in the following conversation. "Do these people have revival meetings?" "Oh, yes. They have accessions to the church, but they don't think it necessary to make so much about conversion as they used to." I said, "That is what Nicodemus thought, but Jesus answered him and said, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'" *Where is the spirit and power that attended the preaching of the Wesleys. Has God changed his plan?**

¹² Some sources give the maiden name of Mrs. Hewitt as Ann Moyer. The author believes that Hannah Taylor is the correct name, and that there is no Ann Moyer associated with this Franklin Ebenezer Hewitt.

¹³ The 1901 autobiographical sketch comments on this as follows. *The reader, with us, will please bow his head while we tarry a few moments at our dear Thomas' grave. He was taken so suddenly from us. The writer's oldest son passed away in the midst of life. He died January 21, 1887, being only 38 years and 2 months and 30 days old, leaving a very enterprising and lovely family – a wife and five children to mourn their loss. But we feel assured that it is well with him, and we do not mourn as them that have no hope. While it is our loss, it was his infinite gain.*

¹⁴ Tekonsha is a small village about 15 miles southeast of Battle Creek.

¹⁵ The youngest daughter is Olive M., who supposedly married Alexander Benson a few years previous on February 22, 1887. There is no mention of what happened to Mr. Benson, but he appears not to have been with them in Michigan. A June 1888 letter from Rev. Hewitt to his daughter Elizabeth in Kansas seems to refer to Olive as still living at home. The conclusion must be either that the reference to Alexander Benson is erroneous, or that he died or otherwise removed himself from the family.

Appendix I. Minutes of the Caledonia Quarterly Conference of February 22, 1870, in response to the question “Are there any complaints?”

The case of F.E. Hewitt was brought up. A.B. Hooven appointed secretary to take down regular minutes of the evidence on the trial. Secretary read the charges. Accused pleads not guilty as the charges stand. See paper. Accuser calls up witness.

John Tyler called and testified as follows. I bought hay from Rev. J.E. Hewitt. Contract for 3 tons. I made a payment at the time of buying it. I paid him fifty dollars, I believe. It was a fifty dollar bill, I think. This took place on the Sabbath. It was on public highway near where Mr. Leaghy lives. No person present. We had talked about the hay sometime before. I think we spoke about it some twice before that. The first time in the road before Mr. Thomas Hewitt’s house. The second time near where the bargain was concluded. According to my recollections, we had not agreed on the price of the hay until the Sabbath that the money was paid. I recollect that at our second interview I said I would take the hay if we could agree on the price. I am pretty positive that this conversation took place at our second interview. I think I was to have the three ton of hay for \$70. I recollect that Mr. Hewitt spoke to me about this matter since the charges since the charges were preferred against him in front of his house.

Cross question. This transaction happened about three years ago. I am positive that the bargain was concluded and the money paid on the Sabbath.

Brother Arnold Lucore¹⁵ called and testified as follows. I heard Franklin Hewitt say in Thomas Hewitt’s house that John Hewitt should have nothing to do with their book settlement. I heard this early in the spring, perhaps 3 years next spring, a few days before their financial settlement. I never heard Brother F.E. Hewitt say anything to conflict with this statement.

Ezekiel Hewitt¹⁵ called. Testified as follows. I was present when Arnold Lucore and Franklin Hewitt came down to settle with Thomas Hewitt. Franklin Hewitt chose Mr. Horning his referee for settlement. Thomas Hewitt chose John Hewitt as his referee. Franklin Hewitt said that John should not have anything to do with his books.

Ezekiel Hewitt still on the floor. Don’t recollect that F. Hewitt requested Thomas Hewitt to choose some member of the church as his referee.

John Hewitt¹⁵ called and testified as follows. I was present at the time that Thomas and Franklin Hewitt’s account was settled by William Hewitt and Charles Webb. I think I recollect that at the time that Thomas Hewitt said that Franklin had chosen Brother Horning and he had chosen John Hewitt as referees. When Thomas said that, Franklin cut that short by saying that I, John Hewitt, should not settle his books. Then Franklin said that he did not say any such thing.

I was not present by request. I don't remember any previous meeting at Mr. Webb's for settlement. Was in the room when this took place. I remember when F. Hewitt denied refusing having me on the settlement, Thomas Hewitt charged him with lying.

John Burley¹⁵ called and testified as follows. I was present at Mr. Webb's at the settlement of the account of Thomas and Franklin Hewitt. I heard Franklin Hewitt say that he never refused to have John Hewitt have anything to do with their settlement. I was in the same room where the settlement took place, in the kitchen. Not there by request.

Ezekiel Hewitt recalled and testified that he was present at the settlement. I heard F. Hewitt deny having said that John Hewitt should not have anything to do with the settlement. Thomas Hewitt then said to him that he lied and that he meant to lie, that he had not forgotten it that soon. I think that William Hewitt and Charles Webb were in the room at the time, but I am not positive.

William Hewitt¹⁵ called and testified as follows. I helped to settle the account between Thomas and F.E. Hewitt. I remember that Thomas Hewitt told Franklin Hewitt that he lied. I think that Franklin Hewitt had just previously said that he had not refused to let John Hewitt take part in the settlement as referee. I recollect that Franklin had spoken to me about this matter since the charges were preferred. It was when we were coming down from Penfield. Had not a clear recollection of these things when first spoken to, but have been able to recall them after some reflection.

Charles Webb¹⁵ called and testified as follows. Thomas Hewitt told Franklin Hewitt that he lied during the settlement at my house. Don't recollect the conversation previous. Did not take much note of the talk. Was occupied with the books.

John Hewitt called on third charge. Family Bible produced, belonging now to John B. Hewitt. Bought this Bible and gave it to Mother in 1848. Was taking care of her and Father at the time. Father and Mother had kept the family record on a piece of foolscap paper. This record she requested me to transcribe into this book. I accordingly did it, making the record here in word and letter as it was on the loose piece of paper. The record in reference to Franklin is as follows: "August 27th A.D. 1825 a son born named E. Franklin." This transcript was made soon after I gave her the Bible. Lately he writes his name F.E. Hewitt, which as I have a son of the same name creates serious trouble.

William Hewitt recalled. Testified as follows. That Mother called him Ebenezer Franklin. Father has said many times lately that his name is E. Franklin, that he named him.

Caroline Webb¹⁵ called and testified as follows. I was near Franklin's age. Don't recollect distinctly, but thought his name was F.E. I suppose that the family record as found in the Bible is correct, since I remember he was called in the family Franklin.

Deposition of Aurilla Hewitt¹⁵ was read. See paper marked A. [Given in Appendix II.]

A note bearing date March 17, 1847, in favor of E. & W.F. Irwin for nine dollars sixty-six cents, signed Ebenezer F. Hewitt, was presented, which Brother F.E. Hewitt acknowledged to be his own signature. A copy of Ladies Repository for September 1850 presented to T. Hewitt as a new year's gift for the year 1852 from E. F. Hewitt was shown.

Ransom Kyler¹⁵ called and testified as follows. When he first came to our neighborhood he was called Franklin Hewitt. I have since then seen him write his name as F.E. Hewitt. I have brought letters and papers from the Post Office directed to Rev. E.F. Hewitt which he claimed as his. I think I remember him claiming a letter directed to F.E. Hewitt. He now claims that F.E. Hewitt is his name. Brought letters to him about the year 60 or 61, or might have been before that time, directed to E.F. Hewitt.

F.E. Hewitt¹⁵, son of John Hewitt, called and testified as follows. I have had trouble within two or three years last arising out of the confounding myself with the Rev. E.F. or F.E. Hewitt, my name being F.E. Hewitt and he claiming to be F.E. Hewitt and sometimes E.F. Hewitt. He has taken a good many letters from the Office having my name and after having opened them brought them to me. He at one time retained for two or three months a package which came by stage directed to me. I got the package by sending a boy for it after my brother-in-law informed me that he had sent such a package. Before that, nothing about his having sent it. A letter with money was sent me which I did not get for some time, it having fallen into the hands of the Rev. F.E. Hewitt. I think I got all the money enclosed. I had also some trouble with Mr. Woodward's book account, our names being in the books.

F.E. Hewitt still on the floor. From this confusion of names I think at one time I had paid 18 or 20 dollars for things that I never got at Mr. Woodward's. I was not aware that he had given in his F.E. Hewitt until after I had settled the account. I think this was about the spring of 65. The package contained a pair of pants for the boy whom I sent after the package. I had no knowledge of the letter containing the money until he brought it to me. The letter contained between one and two dollars. I recollect having received letters with

my name on them which I found were intended for him, and I took them to him. This confusion did not create much trouble for a while until things became too hot.

F.H. Brown¹⁵ called and testifies as follows. I went to Mr. Woodward's to settle up a book account for the Rev. F.E. Hewitt some years ago. I found the book posted. I don't remember what Mr. Woodward's claim or balance were. I had money in my possession to settle. The account was posted up against him. I got a settlement with Mr. Woodward so that he gave me a receipt. I supposed it to be final. I paid him between 7 and 8 dollars. I had some money left. Mr. Woodward said that he found a mistake in the account. I can't say whether I had a bill of items from Franklin or whether he told me about how much he had gotten there. Don't recollect that I told anybody how much the whole account was. I suppose that the balance of the account was transferred to young Franklin E.'s account. I remember his looking at one of the items and saying that he knew that young Franklin had gotten this.

John B. Hewitt recalled. Never knew Rev. F.E. Hewitt to write his name F.E. Hewitt before he moved from Elk County to Clearfield County in '65, but presumed he has done so.

Rebutting testimony. F.H. Brown called and testified as follows. [Question.] Do recollect of Mr. Tyler telling you that Rev. F.E. Hewitt told Mr. Tyler that F.E. Hewitt depended on Mr. Tyler taking the hay? Answer. Yes, sir. Don't know what time he referred to, whether it was the first, second or third time.

Brother Arnold Lucore called and testified as follows. [Not allowed.]

William Hewitt called and testified as follows. Have no recollection of going down to Mr. Webb's but once. It may be so, but I have no recollection.

Caroline Webb called and testified as follows. I think Brother F.E. Hewitt and William Hewitt came to settle but Mr. Webb was not at home. Don't recollect that John Hewitt was there at that time.

Depositions of Hiram Woodward¹⁵ and F.C. Bowman were read. See paper B. [Given in Appendix III.]

Accused produced deed and marriage certificate signed F.E. Hewitt with signed papers signed Franklin Hewitt, F.E. Hewitt and E. Hewitt.

Closing argument by accuser Thomas Hewitt.

Closing argument by accused F.E. Hewitt.

Closing argument by Thomas Hewitt

The undersigned approve the minutes of evidence as correct.

David Horning

F.C. Hoyt

W.W. Johnson

James Overturf

A.B. Hooven, secretary

Specification under first charge sustained. Charge itself sustained.

Specification under second charge sustained. Charge itself sustained.

We find the third charge or accusation substantially sustained, but fail to find from all that we have seen any intention to defraud.

The above being our finding in the case of the Rev. F.E. or E.F. Hewitt, we hereby express our judgment that he ought to be expelled from the Methodist Episcopal Church and do declare him so expelled.

David Horning

W.W. Johnson

F.C. Hoyt

A.B. Hooven

The above are all the members present at the Quarterly Conference.

Thompson Mitchell, presiding elder

A.B. Hooven, secretary

In making the finding in the case to the excluded party, he signified his intention to appeal.

Thompson Mitchell, presiding elder

All done the by the Quarterly Conference of Caledonia Circuit. February 22, 1870.

Thompson Mitchell, presiding elder

A.B. Hooven, secretary

Appendix II. Paper A: Disposition of Aurilla Hewitt.

I Aurilla Hewitt do testify and say that I believe that the record in the Bible now in the possession of John B. Hewitt to be the same as was written formerly on a sheet of paper. I have frequently seen the old record, kept on a half sheet of fools cap paper, said Bible being presented to Mother Hewitt by J.B. Hewitt. And having seen both, I believe the names and ages recorded in the Bible to be like the record formerly kept on the sheet of paper verbatim. I know the Bible was in Mother Hewitt's possession from the time it was presented to her until her death, and I never heard her say that the record was not correct. Never heard her say that there was anything wrong with the record.

Question. Have you ever known any of the children to come and examine the record?

Answer. I don't recollect positively.

Question. Have you ever known any of the children whose names are recorded in the Bible dispute their names?

Answer. No, sir. None but this one, namely F.E or E.F. Hewitt. And I have not heard him dispute it myself, but I have heard that he did and that he wrote it differently.

Question. You say that this is not the original record?

Answer. No, sir. It is not the original record.

Question. You say that you think this to be like the original?

Answer. Yes, I am positive that the name and age is like the original.

Question. Do you know who wrote this record?

Answer. I think I have no reason to doubt who wrote it, but I could not say that I saw it written. Nor could I say that I did not see it written.

Question. Do you know whether Mother was present when it was written?

Answer. I could not say positively.

Question. How long before Mother's death was this written?

Answer. I don't know exactly, but I think not long after the Bible was presented to her. It was presented February 8, 1846, and she died January 25, 1854.

Question. Do you recollect ever having Mother say why Father did not write or copy this record?

Answer. No

Question. Do you recollect of hearing Mother ask John to copy this record?

Answer. I could not say, but it was according to her request. I have no doubt.

(signed) Aurilla Hewitt

Appendix III. Paper B: Dispositions of Hiram Woodward and Frank Bowman.

Disposition of Hiram Woodward.

I Hiram Woodward do testify and do say that I have no recollection of any trouble on account of the name.

Question by Rev. F. E. Hewitt. Do you have any recollection of John Hewitt being called to separate F.E. Hewitt's account from mine?

Answer. I have no recollection.

Question by Rev. Franklin. Do you remember hearing of anyone say that it had caused trouble by writing my name F.E. Hewitt?

Answer. None. Excepting that I heard John Hewitt say on Election Day that it had caused a great deal of trouble.

Question by Rev. Franklin. Do you think that Franklin Jr. ever paid for anything that I got of you?

Answer. No.

Question by Rev. Franklin. Do you remember hearing John Hewitt say that I had changed my name since I came over here?

Answer. I do not remember hearing him say that you changed your name since you came over here. But I remember hearing him say that you changed your name.

Question by Thomas. Did they have any rash talk on Election Day?

Answer. Yes. Rather so, especially John.

Question by Thomas. Did Franklin claim that he was writing his name as he always did?

Answer. Yes. And all his papers were written in that way. Won't be positive whether he said his deed or only his papers.

Question by Thomas. Do you recollect whether you had any account with him before you and Mr. Bowman was in partnership?

Answer. Not positive of any account outside of blacksmith bill. Might of had.

Question by Thomas. Has Franklin of the last year said any thing to you about me?

Answer. No, not until the other day. He was near me to be in the store and he asked me such questions as he has today.

Question by A.B. Hooven. Do you have any recollection of Frederick Brown settling a bill for F.E. Hewitt before or after you were in partnership with Mr. Bowman?

Answer. No. I have no recollection.

Question by Thomas. Did you ever hear John's Franklin say that he was troubled about letters or papers or packages being taken out of the Office by somebody else that belonged to him?

Answer. No, I don't remember.

Question by Rev. Franklin. Did John deny that my papers were all written in the name that I then gave in?

Answer. Yes, he denied it.

Question by Rev. Franklin. Did I ever reject any bill or refuse to pay any bill that you presented?

Answer. No.

Question by Thomas. If two men in the same neighborhood deal at the same store in the same name, would it not have a tendency to make trouble.

Answer. Yes, unless they were very careful.

(signed) Hiram Woodward.

Disposition of Frank Bowman.

I Frank Bowman do testify and say that I know of no trouble arising from the two men writing their names the same way. I have had no trouble.

Question by Rev. F.E. Do you remember of John Hewitt being called to separate the two accounts?

Answer. I have no recollection of it. I was requested by the young Franklin to keep his account in a separate book from his uncle's.

Question by Rev. F.E. Do you recollect of me telling you to put "Sr." to my account name?

Answer. Yes.

Question by Rev. F.E. Do you remember of anybody having trouble about my name or his being alike until quite lately?

Answer. I have heard there was some trouble about Mr. Woodward's accounts. I cannot say positively as to the time. Not more than a year or two, although I won't be positive.

Question by Rev. F.E. Do you remember John Hewitt saying on the Election that I changed my name since I came over here?

Answer. No, I don't remember.

Question by Thomas. How did you say you put his name in your book?

Answer. F.E. Hewitt, Sr.

Question by Thomas. Did you commence to do so at the commencement of the account?

Answer. Yes

Question by Thomas. Was it put in that way to avoid trouble?

Answer. To distinguish the accounts.

Question by Thomas. Was there any thing said about troubles about letters, packages and &c. Did he take all letters signed F.E. Hewitt.

Answer. I would not answer positively.

Question by Thomas. Do you remember of his ever having any letters directed to F.E. Hewitt in the office.

Answer. No. Don't remember of any.

Question by Thomas. Did John's Franklin tell you to retain all letters directed to F.E. Hewitt as that was his name and such letters were his, but those directed Rev. F.E. Hewitt he did not claim.

Answer. He did.

Question by Thomas. Did John's Franklin ever tell you that he had paid for things since this house has been used as a store that he never got.

Answer. He said he thought he had.

Question by Thomas. If a man's name is E.F Hewitt, he has no business to write it F.E. Hewitt?

Answer. No.

Question by F.E. Do you remember of ever presenting a bill to me that I ever refused to pay or said anything against paying that you claimed to be mine?

Answer. No. I don't remember of such bill.

Question by F.E. Do you recollect... [apparently withdrawn]

Question by A.B. Hooven. Have you ever anticipated any trouble in reference to the two men writing the name the same way.

Answer. I have not, as I have had the accounts separate in my books.
(signed) F.C. Bowman



Franklin E. Hewitt