

EDITOR'S PREFACE

On behalf of the Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church, I present volume XXV of *The Chronicle*. Since 1990, the society has produced an annual volume designed to be a mix of scholarly, entertaining, informative and inspiring stories of United Methodism – all united by a common theme. For this silver anniversary issue we present the annotated **Journal of William Colbert for the Northumberland, Wyoming and Tioga Circuits of Early Methodism**.

While an annotated publication of Colbert's entire journal, or at least all the sections that involve territory now within the present Susquehanna Conference, might be preferable, considerations of time and space (not to mention the lack of expertise and resources for territory outside the Susquehanna Conference) necessitate limiting the scope of this project. Covering the Northumberland, Tioga and Wyoming circuits seemed like the best compromise. In addition, lifting out those portions of the Harford MD or Strasburg PA circuit journal entries, for example, that relate to the Susquehanna Conference would break the continuity of the narrative.

Included with the journal are a surname index and two appendices. The surname index includes every reference to every surname – and except as noted, an explanatory footnote accompanies the first reference for each surname. Appendix A discusses the unique history of the Wyoming Valley, particularly the Pennamite-Yankee Conflict that stretched from 1760 to 1799 and the Wyoming Massacre of July 1778, that had a profound effect on the people of the Northumberland, Tioga and Wyoming circuits and shaped the development of every aspect of society. For that reason, one may wish to read Appendix A before starting the journal proper. Appendix B, which gives family details for William and Elizabeth Stroud Colbert, is a reprinting of a rare and valuable document containing information not readily available from any other sources.

This volume of *The Chronicle* gives insight into the early Methodist itinerant system in America and the lives of some of the itinerants and the people they served. By a happy providence, the final chapter, chapter 9, concludes the journal selections by revisiting many of the people and places introduced throughout the narrative in order to provide a satisfying summary and sense of closure to Colbert's work and the development of Methodism on the Northumberland, Wyoming and Tioga Circuits. May these selections from the journal of William Colbert inspire each one of us as we identify and serve our own God-given appointments.