



# Yesteryears

Vol. 4, No. 24

Tuesday, May 9, 1995

Section of The Salem News

## Salem Methodists formed in 1820

By Lois Firestone

**B**ENEATH COLORFUL bunting and criss-crossed streamers suspended from the town hall's ceiling, the diners conversed back and forth across the long tables running the length of the room. The evening was Thursday, December 10, 1857 and the event was the first day of the Methodist Festival, a benefit to make money for the new brick church the parishioners hoped to build along South Broadway.

One hundred dollars was netted from the gala which featured carnival games and treats, ending the next day when 300 of the town's boys and girls were treated to a sumptuous dinner.

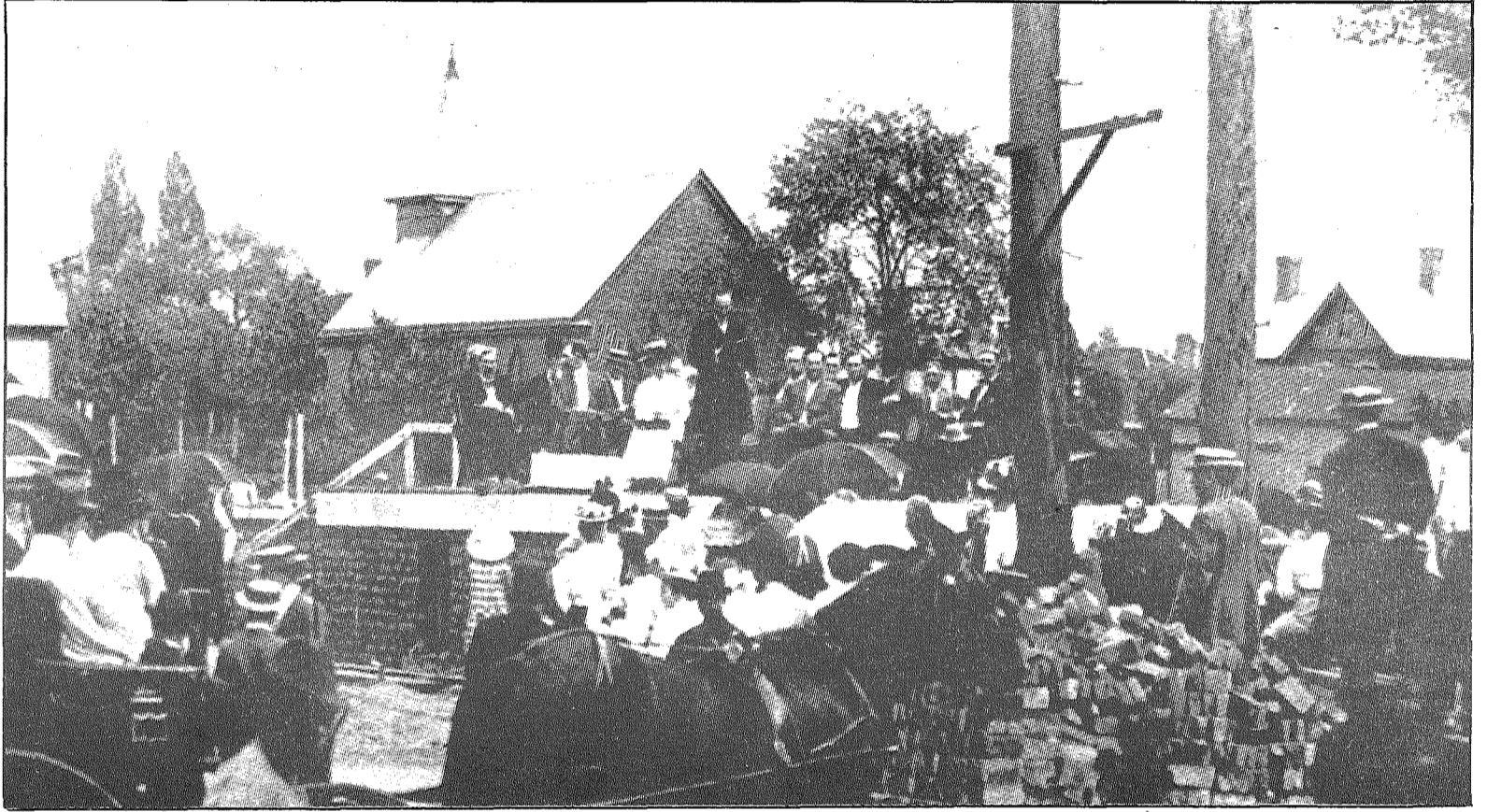
Other events followed in the months ahead — one was the July 3 benefit picnic the women of the church hosted during the sultry, wet summer of 1858. The outdoor affair luckily fell on a day with no rainfall.

**Workers push on**

Despite continuing cloud-bursts, bricklayers and carpenters pushed forward and had, by the first of June, nearly completed the walls. The Methodist Church was under roof by September 8 and craftsmen shifted their labors high above the building to the tower.

The first services were held in the lower story on Sunday, January 23, 1859, and the new church was dedicated on Sunday, June 12. The event was reported in a local newspaper: "Bishop Simpson preached a most excellent discourse from Isaiah II: 2, 3. A great many strangers were in attendance and the auditorium was filled to repletion. Even the space about the pulpit and doors was occupied. The aisles were blocked up and many persons remained standing during the whole time of the sermon.

"While the bishop was preaching in the audience room on the second floor, Rev. D. P. Mitchell preached

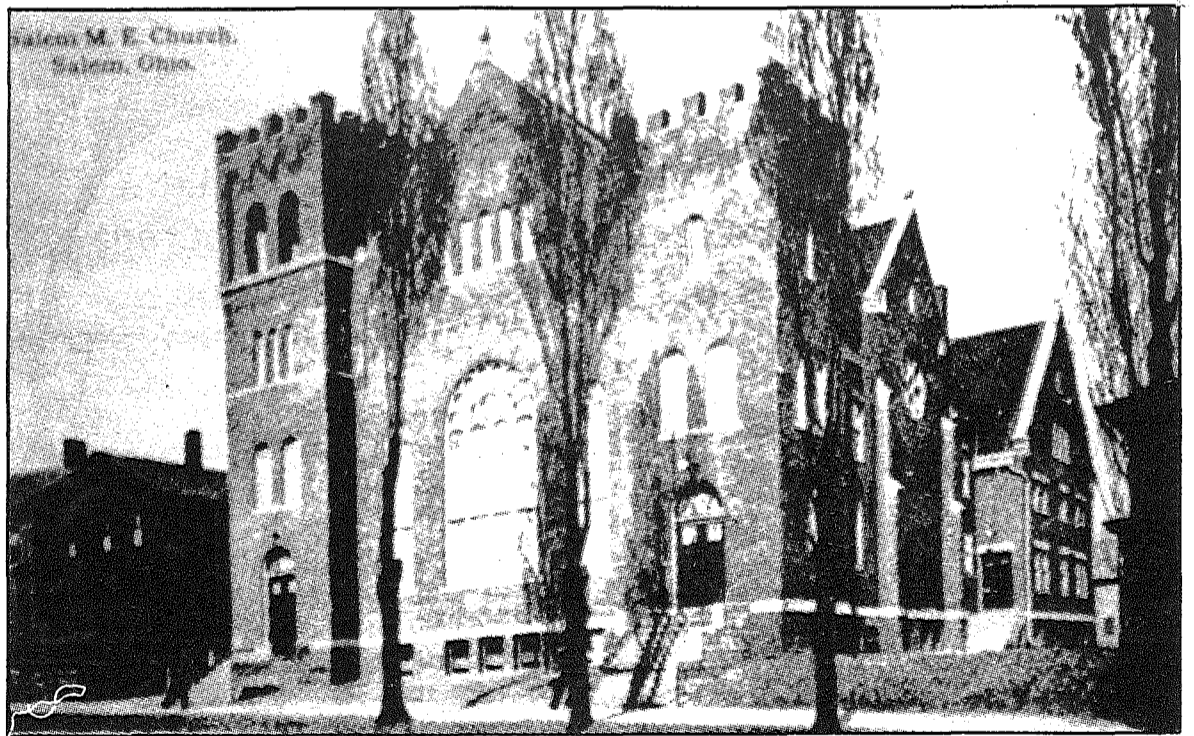


Salem Methodists gather for the laying of the cornerstone for their new church in this photo taken in October 1910.

to a large audience in the lecture room below. In the afternoon Rev. Pershing of McKeesport, Pa. preached an excellent sermon and in the evening Rev. Burkett of Canton. In the course of the day about \$2,300 was raised for the benefit of the church."

**1820 was the beginning**  
The seeds of Methodism in Salem had been sown 39 years earlier by a migrant from Delaware, a devout follower who was determined to organize a formal church. Thomas Kelly led the worship services in the parlor of his modest home alongside an alley off 141 Main Street — years later, W. A. Lease operated his bakery and confectionary on the site. At the core of the movement were nine people, including the Kellys: John Flitcraft, the Edward Rinears, the Thomas Webbs, David Hum and James W. Leach.

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The new Methodist Church building was dedicated on April 3, 1911. The original brick church built in 1895 was torn down in 1909 to make way for the new one pictured here.



AP photos



AP photos

German chief of staff Col. Gen Gustaf Jodl, right, signs the unconditional surrender to the Allies on May 7, 1945 in Reims, France. His aide Wilhelm Oxenius watches the solemn ceremony ending World War II in Europe.

German dictator Adolf Hitler, right, with his adjutant Julius Schaub surveys damage to his chancellery in Berlin in April 1945. First published by the Berlin magazine Illustrated Telegraf, the picture is among the last photos showing Hitler alive near the end of World War II.

## 50-year romance for Vera and Boys

By Audrey Woods  
Associated Press

WHEN VERA LYNN sings "The White Cliffs of Dover," even people born after World War II feel a pang of nostalgia.

Veterans of some of the worst battles in modern history sit misty-eyed when Dame Vera, looking impossibly young, croons another of her signature tunes: "We'll meet

again, don't know where, don't know when."

She may be 78, and a Dame of the British Empire, but "our boys" remember her as the "Forces Sweetheart" they chose in 1939.

It was Vera Lynn they listened to, often furtively, on their scratchy radios in lonely, dangerous places across Europe, Africa and Asia. She went to see their new babies and broadcast messages from their families on her weekly program. She visited them in Egypt, India and Burma.

Vera Lynn and her "boys" have been true to each other for half a century. Harry Lewis, a former band musician and her husband of 54 years, doesn't mind at all.

It is Lewis who answers the door at their home in a quiet village in East Sussex. Dame Vera appears quickly and pulls a chair close to the fire.

Her short hair is wavy and blonde and her eyes china blue and direct. But her hand is a little tired. She has been autographing envelopes to raise money for one of the service charities she supports.

"If I can do that just by going somewhere and mixing with people or signing letters, that's the sort of thing I hope to be

able to. Not necessarily have to get involved with singing. I've done enough singing," she said with a laugh.

Dame Vera played an important part in the 1989 campaign that won a better pension deal for World War II widows. Her

immediate concern is Tribute and Promise, a campaign by 130 charities to help the war generation.

"The money is going to go to help the people who were

See Vera, page 8

**Yesteryears**

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# Two enemies named Henry become friends

**T**HIS STORY IS ABOUT two Henrys, enemies who became friends despite fighting on opposite sides in a war that ended 50 years ago.

Air Force T-Sgt. Henry "Bucky" Kale was in charge of a prisoner of war camp in northern Italy after recuperating from a bout of Malaria in a European hospital. In 1945 as World War II was wrapping up on the European front, his 101st Airborne was readying equipment to be shipped to the Pacific theater.

Henry Kale of Berlin Center, Ohio and Henry Wiedman of Berlin, Germany first met when Wiedman was interned in the camp in Livorno, Italy. Wiedman was a paratrooper in the German Luftwaffe and was captured in Italy.

Eleven years after the war, in 1956, Henry Wiedman migrated to Wisconsin where he went into business for himself, purchasing a Sohio station. Later he moved to Daytona Beach, Florida where he opened a muffler shop. Today, he's retired, still living.

Henry Wiedman's only son joined the U.S. Air Force and retired in 1983 after 20 years service.

That was the same year Henry Kale and Henry Wiedman were reunited. For years, the two men had shared Christmas messages and telephone conversations but they hadn't seen each other in 38 years. Kale was living in Greenford with his family then, and Wiedman and his wife came in the fall to visit Gloria and Henry Kale. Kale

brought Wiedman to Sunday services at the Greenford Christian Church and introduced the former paratrooper to the pastor.

The minister, M. Dean Hammond was so impressed with the German's reminiscences and the close friendship he saw up close that he quoted the former prisoner's words in the church's weekly bulletin: "I was a captured prisoner held by the Americans in Italy when I first met this man," Hammond wrote, "I owe him so much for how he treated me. I couldn't speak English and he couldn't speak German, but we both could speak a little Italian. He began to talk to me.

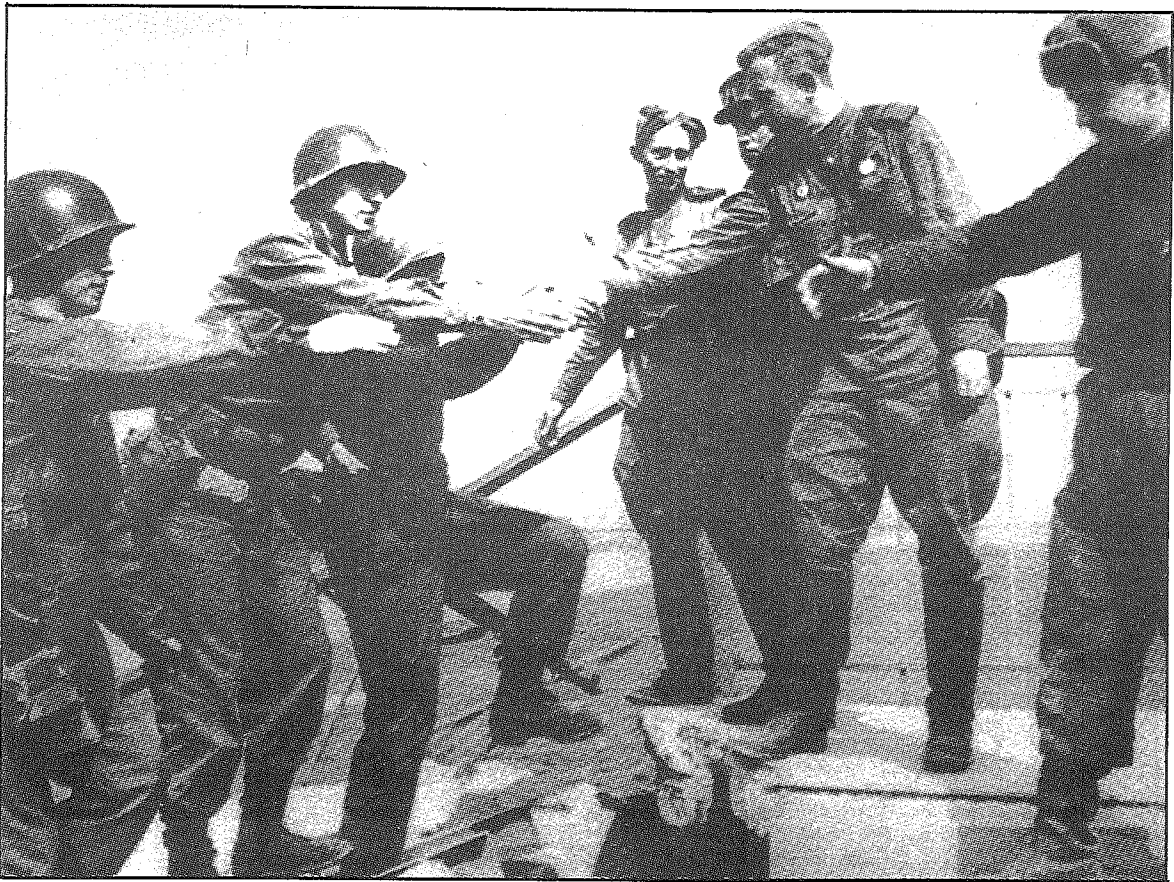
"I learned his name was Henry, too. Then he said he was a paratrooper, as was I. He was from Berlin Center, Ohio and I was from Berlin, Germany. We had a lot in common and he treated me real good. He would always sneak in extra food to me and drink, too."

The two men were enjoying their reunion, Hammond wrote, and referred to the "big robust German" who told the minister that "I just had to come here and let him know how much I appreciated what he did for me back then when I was his prisoner."

Rev. Hammond ended the story with the thought that "that German friend is inseparably bonded in friendship for a lifetime because of a little conversation, a little food and a lot of kindness given him when he needed it most."



Paratrooper T-Sgt. Henry 'Bucky' Kale of Berlin Center celebrates the end of World War II with Air Force buddy R. C. Costello, a Columbus, Georgia native, in this photo taken at Livorno, Italy on May 8, 1945. Kale was in charge of 25 German prisoners in the internment camp at Livorno; a lasting friendship with one of the prisoners took root then. (Photo from Henry 'Bucky' Kale)



Infantrymen of the U.S. First Army, left, extend welcoming hands to Russian troops on a damaged bridge over the Elbe River at Torgau, Germany on April 25, 1945. The historic meeting of soldiers from both fronts in World War II cut the Third Reich in two.

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The skeleton of the bell tower juts upward in this 1909 photo taken when the Salem Methodist Church was torn down to make way for a new building.

### Methodists

Continued from page 1

Equally intent on establishing a church was the Thomas Webb family who had converted to Methodism at a summer camp meeting near Laughlin's Mill on the Mahoning River. The Bible class started meetings shortly afterward.

Probably the most influential was John Flitcraft who had come from his native New Jersey and settled in the town of Lexington in Stark County. The dates are uncertain but some time during the winter of 1819 or 1820 Flitcraft arrived in Salem, intent on helping organize a Methodist church. He brought with him Thomas Wood and Rinear.

#### Meetings in shops

The first meetings were held in shops and dwellings. When the Baptists built their first house of worship, the Methodists lent a hand, and were, in return, permitted to use the house for preaching. Circuit riders were the ministers until 1852 when Salem was made a station. Before that Salem was included in the Hanover circuit and later the Salem circuit.

Everyday living was rough for these itinerant ministers. One account tells of the experiences of Rev. Crawford, a circuit rider who frequently stopped in Salem. "In one


instance, he was obliged to pass the night in the woods with his portmanteau for a pillow, his horse hitched to a tree nearby. Before he could get to sleep, he was surrounded by a pack of howling wolves. By the snorting of his horse and his hallowing, they were scared away."

Methodist ministers in those days dressed very plainly and lived simple lives, avoiding "luxuries." Their coats were similar to those worn by Quakers, and because of that they were sometimes mistaken for Friends.

In 1824 they bought a lot on West Green Street and put up a hewed log house with lumber furnished by Thomas Webb. The Baptists furnished nails, glass and other building materials from David Gaskill's store. Money was scarce and a lot of business was barter, especially store orders, work and farm produce.

#### Build frame church

William Kidd and John Flitcraft built a frame church on North Ellsworth Avenue (today the site of the Broadway Plaza) in 1836 and the congregation sold the Green Street cabin to the Second Baptist Church four years

Turn to next page 



Young women of the Salem Methodist Church, members of the GWC, pose for the camera in these photos taken in October 1911, possibly at the dedication of the new building.



Their teacher W. H. Matthews stands at the far right in this 1940s photograph of the Wesleyan Class members of the Salem Methodist Church.



Salem Methodists built this handsome brick church along Ellsworth Avenue in 1859. The congregation was known then as the First Methodist Episcopal Church; that was changed in 1939 with the merger of the Methodist Episcopal, Methodist Episcopal South and Methodist Protestant.

Methodists

Continued from page 6

later. Rooms were added to the frame building which was used until the new brick church was completed in 1859.

On June 12, 1838 the church purchased 1½ acres at the corner of Howard and Fourth Street for a church cemetery. However, the trustees sold the ground in 1904 so the city could extend Fourth Street from Howard to Jennings. Although no records of burials exist, a large boulder at Grandview Cemetery marks the grave of 117 people originally buried at the Howard Street Methodist Cemetery.

Two disruptions marred the church — the first was a minor schism which occurred in 1830. A few dissatisfied people left the Methodist Church and formed the Methodist Protestant Church. They held preaching services occasionally in a schoolhouse north of town on the Canfield Road.

Wesleyan movement

Later on in the late 1850s, some parishioners who were

violently opposed to slavery joined the newly-formed Wesleyan movement which strongly denounced the American slave system — while most of the Salem Methodists were straight-out anti-slavery, few were immersed in the Wesleyan movement.

Temperance was a major issue with churches and the general populace and Methodists were no exception. For instance, nearly 3,000 people gathered in Shelton's Grove to hear a stirring speech by the Methodist minister, Rev. William Lynch at a temperance meeting and Sunday School basket picnic on July 4, 1859. The day was climaxed with a dinner and after-dark fireworks.

Anti-slavery was a worrisome subject on people's minds long before the Civil War erupted. John Brown's raid on a federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry, Virginia had repercussions in Salem — the town hall bell tolled on Friday, December 9, the day of his execution. Methodists



The two women identified in this rare photo taken in front of the Methodist Church, possibly in the 1890s, are Mrs. Alfred Stratton (center back) and Mrs. Elizabeth Kirkbride, third from left in front of Mrs. Stratton.

called a rally on Sunday, December 4, 1859, a time for mourning for Brown and his followers and focused on the anti-slavery character of the Bible.

Brown's brother visits

Brown's brother Frederick traveled from his home in Summit County to the town hall lectern for two days in January 1860 to elaborate on his brother's life and the family ancestry dating back to Peter Brown's landing at Plymouth, Massachusetts. Methodists hosted a convention of Christian anti-slavery men and women at the church that same month.

With the start of the Civil War, the Salem Guards Volunteer Company was formed and accepted by Governor Dennison at the end of April 1861. Awaiting the call to Camp Taylor in Cleveland, the men spent their days drilling on the square and accepting tributes from the town's women — ladies sewed flannel shirts and the Presbyterian women stitched a flag for them to carry. The company was invited as a group to divine services at the Methodist Church on April 28 when the minister, Rev. C. H. Jackson gave them a special tribute.

Months passed and pride in their soldiers' bravery was mixed with sadness over the deaths. Methodists, like other churchpeople in Salem, buried their members. Typical of these tragic deaths was that of Theophilus Cook of Company G, 104th Ohio Regiment, who died of battle wounds in a Frankfort, Kentucky hospital on March 12, 1863. His body was brought to his Lisbon Street home and taken to the Methodist Church where the funeral took place. He left a wife and five small children.

President Lincoln dies

President Abraham Lincoln's assassination was devastating. The word reached Salem early Saturday morning, April 15, 1865 but the stunned townspeople refused to believe the tragic news until they saw the official announcement by Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. The Republican newspaper relayed the news in an extra edition, the editors gathering up as many facts as they could. The local newspaper reported that hundreds of people from the country and neighboring towns came to Salem to ascertain the truth. "Many men gave vent to their feelings in tears. All places of business were closed. Public and private houses were draped in mourning. Bells were tolled and flags, shrouded in black, were hung at half mast.

At twelve o'clock on Wednesday, April 19, the churchgoing people of Salem assembled at the Methodist church to listen to funeral discourses on the death of President Lincoln. The audience room was heavily and tastefully draped in mourning, and in the rear of the pulpit, enfolded by the American flag was a fine portrait of Mr. Lincoln.

"At twelve o'clock on Wednesday, April 19, the churchgoing people of Salem assembled at the Methodist church to listen to funeral discourses on the death of President Lincoln. The audience room was heavily and tastefully draped in mourning, and in the rear of the pulpit, enfolded by the American flag was a fine portrait of Mr. Lincoln. The services were opened by Rev. M. Murphy of the Episcopal church. Rev. Dr. Baird of the Methodist church followed in an able and interesting sermon."

In 1909, the 50-year-old building was torn down and a new building, following the

Akron Plan of architecture and costing \$38,542, was erected on the site. The architect, also the founder of the Chatauqua, New York Circuit, encircled the Sunday School classrooms around a common gathering room — the church formed the first Sunday School in 1834, but by the 1900s churches were emphasizing the unified Sunday School teaching approach. Age groups were separated but huge sliding doors could be opened and all the classes addressed at one time.

Bishop Berry of Buffalo spoke at the building's dedication on April 3, 1911, commenting that he had "never seen as nice a one built for the money...this church is easily a \$50,000 church."

The raising of the 1200-pound bell to the tower of the new church had been a landmark occasion in 1865:

it was the first time a church bell was tolled in Salem. Costing \$480, the bell had a 38-inch diameter and was 28 inches high with a clapper 48 inches long.

Its transfer to the new building in 1911 was an important occasion, too, and the bell continued to ring out until 1976. Officials were wary of the weakened tower floor and decided to remove it. Today the bell is in place adjacent to the church, Mounted in a granite base, a tribute to the perseverance and strength of those early Salem Methodists in making their church a strong one. Next issue: Salem Methodist music history

# Week in history Egypt's Step Pyramids an awe-inspiring sight

## Sunday

In 1789, the first inaugural ball was held in New York in honor of President and Mrs. George Washington.

In 1847, the American Medical Association was founded in Philadelphia.

In 1915, nearly 1,200 people died when a German torpedo sank the British liner Lusitania off the Irish coast.

In 1939, Germany and Italy announced a military and political alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis.

In 1954, the 55-day Battle of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam ended with Vietnamese insurgents overrunning French forces.

In 1963, the United States launched the Telstar II communications satellite.

## Monday

Fifty years ago, on May 8, 1945, President Truman announced in a radio address that World War II had ended in Europe.

In 1794, Antoine Lavoisier, the father of modern chemistry, was executed on the guillotine during France's Reign of Terror.

In 1886, Atlanta pharmacist John Styth Pemberton invented the flavor syrup for Coca-Cola.

In 1944, the first "eye bank" was established, in New York City.

In 1978, David R. Berkowitz pleaded guilty in a Brooklyn courtroom to the "Son of Sam" killings that had terrified New Yorkers.

## Tuesday

On May 9, 1754, the first American newspaper cartoon was published. The illustration in Benjamin Franklin's "Pennsylvania Gazette" showed a snake cut into sections, each part representing an American colony; the caption read, "Join or die."

In 1926, Americans Richard Byrd and Floyd Bennett became the first men to make an airplane flight over the North Pole.

In 1945, 50 years ago, U.S. officials announced that the midnight entertainment curfew was being lifted immediately.

In 1961, in a speech to the National Association of Broadcasters, Federal Communications Commission chairman Newton N. Minow condemned television programming as a "vast wasteland."

## Wednesday

On May 10, 1869, a golden spike was driven at Promontory, Utah, marking the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States.

In 1775, Ethan Allen and his

Green Mountain Boys captured the British-held fortress at Fort Mifflin, New York.

In 1818, American patriot Paul Revere died in Boston.

In 1865, Union forces captured Confederate President Jefferson Davis in Irwinville, Ga.

In 1908, the first Mother's Day observance took place during church services in Grafton, W.Va., and Philadelphia.

## Thursday

On May 11, 1946, the relief agency CARE (Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe) had its start as the first CARE package arrived in Europe.

In 1910, Glacier National Park in Montana was established.

In 1943, during World War II, American forces landed on Japanese-held Attu island in the Aleutians. (The territory was retaken in three weeks.)

In 1944, Allied forces launched a major offensive in central Italy.

In 1949, Israel was admitted to the United Nations as the world body's 59th member.

## Friday

On May 12, 1820, the founder of modern nursing, Florence Nightingale, was born in Florence, Italy.

In 1932, the body of the kidnapped son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh was found in a wooded area of Hopewell, N.J.

In 1965, West Germany and Israel exchanged letters establishing diplomatic relations.

In 1978, the Commerce Department announced that hurricanes would no longer be named exclusively after women.

## Saturday

On May 13, 1981, Pope John Paul II was shot and seriously wounded in St. Peter's Square by Turkish assailant Mehmet Ali Agca.

In 1607, the English colony at Jamestown, Va., was settled.

In 1842, composer Sir Arthur Sullivan, who collaborated with Sir William Gilbert in writing 14 comic operas, was born in London.

In 1846, the United States declared that a state of war already existed against Mexico.

In 1914, boxing champion Joe Louis was born in Lafayette, Ala.

In 1917, three peasant children near Fatima, Portugal, reported seeing a vision of the Virgin Mary.

In 1918, the first U.S. airmail stamps, featuring a picture of an airplane, were introduced.

By David Roberts  
National Geographic

ON THE DUSTY SAQQARA Plateau, south of the Sphinx and the three Great Pyramids of Giza — the most famous monuments of Egypt's Old Kingdom — the Step Pyramid of Pharaoh Djoser rises like a grand mirage.

Shimmering more than 200 feet above the stark Egyptian sands, the sight took my breath away. And that, of course, was its purpose.

When Djoser's subjects first looked upon this giant tomb more than 46 centuries ago, they probably trembled. The colossal monument, begun about 2630 B.C., was designed to awe the ancient Egyptians, to impress them with their ruler's godlike strength.

At the time, it was the biggest and finest monument any monarch had ever commanded; indeed, it was the world's largest building. Its bold shape — six great tiers of decreasing size — announced a divine truth that the humblest passerby in Djoser's time understood.

The Step Pyramid was a ladder, an actual ladder by which the soul of the dead ruler might climb to the sky, joining the gods in immortality.

Like the Step Pyramid, ancient Egypt seemed to rise out of nothing. Only a few generations before Djoser's reign, the civilization crowded along the Nile amounted to a mere patchwork of small regional chiefdoms, each with its separate gods and government.

Experts today only dimly grasp the forces that prompted those quarreling provinces to become, with Mesopotamia's Sumer, the most advanced civilization of its time — Egypt's Old Kingdom.

Many believe that the building of Djoser's pyramid complex, accomplished by hundreds of workers from across the land, served to join those provinces into the world's first nation-state.

The popularity of the Sphinx and Giza pyramids makes it easy to forget that basic questions about the Old Kingdom have remained unanswered. Only within the past two decades have Egyptologists begun to fill in the gaps, sifting the Egyptian sands and re-examining tales of the kingdom, which were often written as many as 2,000 years later, for clues to the texture of ancient life.

During the Old Kingdom, which began about 2700 B.C. and lasted some 550 years, each

pharaoh after Djoser marshaled a vast portion of his country's manpower and wealth to build his own tomb and ensure his immortality.

To construct such monuments required a mastery of art, architecture and social organization that few cultures would ever rival.

The kingdom developed a funerary tradition so comprehensive and compelling that the religion, art and thought of the people coalesced around the worship of their divine pharaohs, both living and dead.

Every aspect of life was affected. The Egyptians dug a network of canals off the Nile to transport stone for the pyramids and food for the workers.

From recent excavations and from scenes carved on the walls of tombs, researchers have begun to fill in the details of daily life in the Old Kingdom. Much of the emerging picture is one of arduous and repetitive toil.

On wooden sledges across the sands, workers hauled the giant stones — the largest granite blocks weighing as much

as 70 tons — that built the pyramids.

Many people think of the Old Kingdom as an austere, ascetic age. In reality, its elite were devoted to excess and delight.

At royal banquets, guests ate gargantuan helpings of food and drank bowl after bowl of red wine as nearly naked young women danced to the music of flutes, harps and bone clappers.

Despite such hedonism, life for most ancient Egyptians was grim and tedious. Society was built around the oppressive, preoccupation with the pharaohs' immortality.

"The real mystery is why the Old Kingdom happened," said Mark Lehner, an archaeologist from the University of Chicago, as we stood before Djoser's monument. "This pyramid was the start of it all. But we've focused too much on how the pyramids were built. I'm less interested in how the Egyptians built the pyramids than in how the pyramids built Egypt."

Vera

Continued from page 2

young at that time and now are elderly and worked all through the war in one way or another. ... It's amazing how little thought has been given to them," she said.

Her bond with servicemen and women, forged in the worst of times, has never broken. They write; she attends their reunions.

Although her career prospered after the war with new songs, her own television shows and 14 gold records, it was the songs of the war years that people wanted to hear at concerts.

"You know, I wasn't a film star," she said, trying to explain the affinity. "I was somebody that they could associate with. ... I was an ordinary girl."

Vera Welch — the name she was born with — was a plumber's daughter. She started singing in social clubs at 7, and was a band singer at 17. She first sang Charles Parker's "We'll Meet Again" in 1939. She was 21 when the war started and already a well-known performer.

"The shows didn't stop if a raid started," she said. "We just used to carry on."

The Luftwaffe bombers seemed to turn up just as she was singing "A nightingale sang in Berkeley Square."

"A nice, quiet, gentle song — then the siren would go and you kept on singing till the show was finished," she said. "Then we used to have a bit of a party afterward."

In 1939, the soldiers of the British Expeditionary Force voted Vera Lynn their favorite singer. In 1941, the BBC gave her a half-hour program after the Sunday night news. "Winston Churchill was my opening act," she once said.

"The radio was the link with everyone — everywhere. It was absolutely a war weapon. ... In occupied countries, they were forbidden to listen. If they were caught listening to the BBC they were just shot."

"The Dutch used to listen to my programs in haystacks, and hide themselves away. They'd listen to the 9 o'clock news on Sunday night, it was vital to them to know what was going on. It was their only link with the outside world," she said.

"And then my program used to follow and they used to listen to all the songs that gave them some hope and courage."