

a place of meeting larger than private homes. A church of hewed logs was built that summer, but it remained for some time without floor or pulpit. The church was organized with twenty-six charter members. The first elder was Henry Jones, who had been an elder in Oneida County, New York, and, previous to that, in Wales. The first local preacher at Salem was Rev. David R. Williams. In 1856 a frame church was built. It was dedicated on January 18, 1857.

*Nazareth Church, City of Columbus.* This church was started under the auspices of Bethel Church, as a mission branch. Occasional services had been held in Columbus for some years, but those who attended were members in Bethel. There was a church society in Columbus in 1866, and by the next year preaching services were held more or less regularly. The church was organized, probably toward the end of that year, with a membership of twenty-seven. In May, 1868, it was received into the Welsh Prairie Presbytery. The first elder was John Davies, the father of Uriah Davies. When the church was received into the presbytery, Uriah Davies and Robert R. Roberts were added to the session. Nazareth Church, built on the corner of Mill and Church Streets, was dedicated April 12, 1868. Rev. John J. Roberts preached at the dedication service and continued to preach there once a month until his death.

Uriah Davies came to America in 1843, accompanied by his father, who settled in Union, Rock County, and who was instrumental in organizing the small Calvinistic Methodist church there. John Davies was an elder of that church for seven or eight years. In January, 1846, Uriah Davies moved to Columbus and entered business, and for many years was the moving spirit in the Columbus Church. He was one of the strong pillars of the Wisconsin Gymanva and held offices of trust and responsibility as treasurer of its several funds. He was also for many years treasurer of the Welsh General Assembly, succeeding the Hon. W. W. Vaughan in that office. Mr. Davies was a man of great integrity and was zealous for the welfare of the gymanva.

*Moriah Church.* Although Moriah was the last of the churches in the Columbus community to be organized, that neighborhood

was one of the first to hold local services after Bethel, the mother church, had been established. Sunday School and prayer services were held in the Moriah neighborhood as early as May, 1847. The first Sunday School was held in the home of David G. Evans, the father of Mrs. Elizabeth Evans Garland, who for many years was a missionary among the Negroes in Austin, Texas. After worshiping in homes for ten years, the people came to feel the need of a meetinghouse, and in 1856 a building for Sunday School and other religious services was erected. However, there was no thought of having a church organized, for the worshipers were all members of Bethel Church and always attended preaching services and Communion service there on Sunday afternoons. David G. Evans and John Williams, of the Moriah neighborhood, were elders in Bethel and, as such, were appointed to supervise activities at Moriah. Having worshiped for twenty years in the little church, they built a new church in 1877, which was dedicated on December 30 of that year. It was not until the new church was dedicated that the Moriah Church was actually organized. Welsh Prairie Presbytery appointed a committee for the purpose and Moriah Church was organized on June 18, 1878, with thirty-seven charter members. John Williams was elected elder.

#### THE CHURCHES OF THE WELSH PRAIRIE COMMUNITY

A company of sixty Welsh people left Wales in May, 1847, and landed in Quebec. From there they sailed down the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes to Milwaukee. David Jones, "the carrier," of Waukesha, brought some of them to the vicinity of what later became the Welsh Prairie community. Religious services were soon organized and were held in private homes in the summer of 1847. The first Sunday School was held in the home of Robert Closs. In the winter of 1847-1848, the first unit of the old Zion Church was built, and all the Welsh of the Welsh Prairie community assembled there for worship. The dimensions of the church were twenty-eight by twenty-two feet. The Welsh continued to come, and the church was no sooner built than it proved to be too small. The following winter a fourteen-foot addition

was built, making the dimensions forty-two by twenty-two feet. The building was long and narrow and low.

Early in 1848 the church was formally organized. At that time, there were twelve men in the community who had been elders in Wales before coming to America. Nine of them—Richard Jones, Robert Williams, Elias R. Williams, Thomas Rowlands, Robert T. Rowlands, David Owen, Edward Williams, Evan Edwards, and Jabez Lloyd—were made elders when the church was organized. Of the other three, Owen J. Williams and Robert L. Williams were called to be elders later; and the third, William Roberts, became a minister of the Welsh Congregational Church. The first preachers were Rev. William Jones, of Snowdon, and Rev. Griffith Roberts, who came from Watertown but formerly had been at Racine.

As the community grew larger, people walked many miles to the preaching services, but Sunday Schools were started in other local neighborhoods very early in the history of the community. The Welsh Congregationalists also worshiped with the Calvinistic Methodists at the beginning, but with the increase of Welsh population a sufficient number of them had come to organize their own church, which was done in July, 1848.

*Jerusalem Church.* Because of the distance from Zion Church, a Sunday School was held in what later became the Jerusalem Church neighborhood as early as 1847. Services were held in the various homes until 1855, when Jerusalem Church was built. Those who assembled there were considered a separate group from Zion, the mother church. There were forty-five charter members at the organization of Jerusalem Church, and David Owen, Edward Williams, and John J. Evans were elected elders. Daniel T. Rowlands and John J. Evans were candidates for the ministry from this church.

*Cambria Church.* The first public school in the village of Cambria opened in 1852. The Welsh in the vicinity were permitted to use the school building for worship until Cambria Church was built. One record indicates that the church in Cambria was organized in 1852; another gives a later date—1856 or 1857. If the 1852 date is to be accepted, the church was in all proba-

bility organized as a branch of Zion Church, with services held in the neighborhood for the accommodation of those who felt that the distance to Zion was too great, for services had been started in the Cambria neighborhood as early as 1849. Cambria Church was built in 1856, and it had then about one hundred members. It was at the time considered the finest church edifice in the gymanva. Rev. Rees Evans, then of Chicago, was called as pastor and moved to Cambria in July, 1857. He spent the remainder of his life as pastor of this church.

Rev. Rees Evans began his career in America in the Skunk Grove community near Racine. It was there that he began to preach, and he became one of the ablest ministers of Wisconsin Gymanva. Observing, keen, practical, and endowed with an uncommon amount of common sense, he was a man of sane judgment and with a practical outlook upon the life of the minister. As a preacher he was forceful, by reason of his terse, epigrammatic sentences and telling phrases. He was looked upon as one of the foremost men of the denomination in America and was esteemed by the whole Church. He was elected moderator of the Welsh General Assembly in 1877.

*Carmel Church.* In the Carmel neighborhood a Sunday School was started in 1850 in the home of Rev. William Jones, of Snowdon. In 1851 a fellowship meeting was started, with a membership of fifteen. Rev. William Jones was the only officer in the church at the time. When he built his new house, in 1855, he planned a basement twenty-seven by eighteen feet for holding services, until such time as a church edifice might be erected. By 1855 the membership had increased to forty. The church was regularly organized in 1856. Up to that time, Carmel had been a branch of Zion Church. At the organization Hugh R. Hughes and William R. Williams were made elders.

Cambria by this time had a resident pastor, and it was arranged that Zion, Jerusalem, and Carmel Churches become a Sabbath's journey—the same preacher preaching at one service in each of the churches. In 1859-1860 the Snowdon society (Carmel) built a church upon the land of Rev. William Jones. Zion Church, previous to withdrawals to start the churches of Jerusalem, Cambria, and Carmel, had a membership of almost one

hundred and forty, which was large for a country community in that early day, and in less than a dozen years the combined membership of the churches was three hundred and fifty.

*Caledonia Church.* This church, in Caledonia Township, Columbia County, was about six miles west of the city of Portage. This Welsh community was associated more closely with Baraboo, in Sauk County, than with Portage in the early days of settlement. Religious services were begun there in 1847, when there were only two Welsh families, but by 1849 there were eleven families. The first families were those of Robert Owen and Hugh Roberts. The church membership in 1849 was twenty-seven and the Sunday School had a membership of forty-five. The first elder was Hugh Roberts. Robert Owen was made an elder in 1850. Hugh Roberts, Jr., was made an elder in 1879. The first resident minister was Rev. Thomas J. Phillips; following him, Rev. Thomas Rice lived there many years. The church was dissolved in 1917.

#### THE WINNEBAGO COUNTY WELSH SETTLEMENT

About a dozen Welshmen settled in Winnebago County before the end of 1847, and by the end of 1849 a total of seventy-five or eighty families had come into the settlement.

*Bethesda Church.* The first church to be organized in this settlement was Bethesda. A frame church was built in 1848 on Section 30, Nekimi Township, the first church built in Winnebago County by any society. There were twenty charter members. A new church was built in 1856. The first resident minister was Rev. Thomas Foulkes. The first elder was Abel Williams; soon John Hughes was also elected. The church continues active.

*Sharon Church, Neenah.* Sunday School and prayer services were started at Neenah, then known as Winnebago Rapids, in 1848. The first Welsh sermon was preached there in August, 1849, by Rev. Thomas Foulkes, in the home of Robert M. Owens. A Calvinistic Methodist church was organized in 1850, and a brick church was erected in 1856. The first elder was Thomas Richards and, at an early day, Watkin Gittins and William Price were added to the session. The church has long since been dissolved.

*Salem Church, Oshkosh.* This church, built on Light Street in

the city of Oshkosh, was organized in the summer of 1855, in the home of Ebenezer Watts. Later the society purchased a school building on Division Street, and, after the necessary changes were made, it was dedicated toward the end of 1856. In 1883 a new church was built on the corner of Light and Wood Streets and was dedicated on May 24, 1884. The first elders were David R. Jones and Ebenezer Watts. David Davies, D.D., was for many years pastor of this church. The church has been dissolved.

*Peniel Church.* This church is located on Section 6, El Dorado Township, Winnebago County. Peter Jones gave the land for a church site, and it was in his home that the first sermon was preached in the Peniel neighborhood by Rev. John H. Evans, then of Waukesha. The first fellowship meeting was held in the home of Owen Hughes. Peniel Church was organized on July 17, 1856, in the home of David Roberts, with a charter membership of thirty-one. The first elders were David Roberts and William Edwards. The church continues to serve.

*Union Church, Rock County.* A group of Welsh people went from Racine County to Union, in Rock County, in 1845. Among them was John Davies, the father of Uriah Davies, later of Columbus, Wisconsin. A Calvinistic Methodist church was organized in the Union settlement but was never strong. In 1859 the members sought permission to unite with the Presbyterian Church (Old School), but without losing their standing (*hawl*) with the Welsh denomination, so that they might be able to secure Welsh preaching. The first elder was John Davies. Mr. Davies left for Columbus after seven or eight years, and the church, as a Welsh church, gradually declined.

#### THE CHURCHES IN WAUSHARA COUNTY

*Tekoa (Teco) Church.* The first settlers in Pine River, once known as "the Indian land," were the family of John Hughes, who went there from Waukesha County and settled in Springwater Township. Mr. Hughes was joined by three or four others in 1851, among them Owen Owens and Richard J. Davis (later Rev. Richard J. Davis). Immediately upon their arrival these families began to hold Sunday School and prayer services in their

cabins. They were far from other Welsh centers and preachers were scarce. These men met the condition by reading a sermon by one of the great preachers of Wales in their prayer service. Richard Davis was a good reader, so the sermon-reading generally fell to his lot. From reading the sermons of others, he himself developed the taste for preaching and soon began to preach. The first church organized in Springwater Township, Waushara County, was received into the presbytery in May, 1852, and Rev. Richard J. Davis was received as preacher in March, 1853. The church had been organized in 1851 with, no doubt, Richard J. Davis as elder, although the records do not so state. Soon thereafter Ebenezer Davis and Hugh Jones were made elders. The church was dissolved about 1860.

*Mount Zion Church.* With the growth of the community another church, called Mynydd Seion (Mount Zion), was organized and the church was built in 1856. The first elders were Evan Evans, Richard Jenkins, and Rees Davis. The church was dissolved about 1860.

*Caersalem Church.* When the Tekoa and Mount Zion Churches were dissolved, following the revival of 1859, they united in organizing Caersalem Church, which was located about halfway between Tekoa and Mount Zion. The church was later moved to a location on what is now Highway 22, one mile north of the village of Wild Rose. The church was dissolved in 1925 and consolidated with the Horeb Church in the village.

*Zoar Church, near Wild Rose.* Zoar Church was organized about 1881 and received into the Welsh Prairie Presbytery at a meeting held in Salem Church, Columbus, on November 21, 1882. It was dissolved in 1908, and the furnishings were turned over to the newly organized church in the village of Wild Rose.

*Horeb Church, in the village of Wild Rose.* Zoar Church, in the country, was on the decline and was dissolved in 1908, but in anticipation of its dissolution a new church, called Horeb, was organized in the village in November, 1907, with a charter membership of thirty-six. The elders elected at the time were William E. Evans, Evan O. Jones, and William Hughes. Rev. Daniel Thomas was pastor of the Waushara County churches for twenty-five years. The church is active.

*Berlin Church, Green Lake County.* A Sunday School, held in an old shed on the river bank in June, 1855, was the beginning of Berlin Church. Soon afterward fellowship meetings were held in the home of John Davis, and Rev. Edward T. Evans came to live in Berlin. Mr. Evans remained but a short time, but during his stay the Berlin Calvinistic Methodist Church was organized. At the time there was but one Welsh person in Berlin who was not of the Calvinistic Methodist persuasion. After the people had convened in the homes of the members for a season, Berlin Church was built in the summer of 1857, with a membership of sixty. The first elder was John A. Evans, and soon Humphrey Evans was made an elder. Later, Welsh Congregationalism prevailed in Berlin, and the Calvinistic Methodist church was not of long duration.

*Randolph Church, Columbia County.* The first prayer service in Randolph was held early in April, 1868, and this was followed by a fellowship meeting on April 16 of the same year. On June 19 Rev. Rees Evans and William Williams were appointed to organize the church. On September 2 a schoolhouse was purchased, and in 1876 a new church was dedicated. The present building was erected in 1904. William Davies was elected elder in 1868, and the following year Joshua Roberts was chosen. The church was supplied by circuit preachers for a number of years, and in 1879 Rev. Thomas Foulkes became resident minister. The church in Randolph continues a flourishing church.

*Utley Church.* There was a small church organized at Utley, a quarry community, but it lasted only about a year.

*Redgranite Church.* Quarrymen also came to Redgranite, and for a time it was thought that a strong church might be established there. Redgranite began as a union church and came under Calvinistic Methodist auspices. But as a Calvinistic Methodist church it ceased to function many years ago.

#### THE CHURCHES OF PRAIRIEVILLE<sup>8</sup> (WAUKESHA) PRESBYTERY

Those who came to Waukesha County previous to 1842—the John Hughes (Nant-y-Calch), Thomas Jones (Maesmawr), and

<sup>8</sup> Prairieville was the original name for Waukesha.

John Jarmon families—worshipped with American churches in Waukesha. But, with the arrival of Richard Jones, of Bronyberllan, and his company in the early spring of 1842, worship in Welsh under Calvinistic Methodist auspices was established. By the end of 1842 there were ninety-nine Welsh people in the Welsh community of Waukesha County. Among them was one elder, Hugh Elias. In 1843 came Griffith Roberts, a second elder.

*Capel Log (the Log Church).* The first religious meeting, which soon led to the organization of the Capel Log Church society, was held on June 12, 1842, in the home of Richard Jones, of Bronyberllan. Prayer services were held regularly thereafter, with the people meeting in the house of Richard Jones in winter and in his barn during summer months, the house being too small to accommodate summer audiences. Sunday School was started on July 2, 1842, and the first fellowship meeting was held on October 6 of the same year, with fifteen members present. In the month of June, 1843, Rev. William Matthews and Rev. Richard L. Jones, two Congregational ministers, preached in the settlement; these were the first preaching services. In August, 1843, Rev. John H. Evans, a Calvinistic Methodist, came and preached on two Sundays. At this time the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper were administered for the first time in the community. On May 16, 1844, Rev. William T. Williams settled in the community as its first resident minister. From the time of his arrival the preaching of the gospel has continued without interruption in this Welsh community, though many changes have taken place since that early day. By the beginning of 1846 there were five Welsh churches in the community—one Baptist, one Congregationalist, and three Calvinistic Methodist churches.

Capel Log society was organized on October 6, 1842. The first elder was Hugh Elias, and in 1843 Griffith Roberts was added to the eldership. Capel Log was built in the spring of 1845 and was dedicated on July 20. Rev. William T. Williams preached the dedicatory sermon. As the name implies, the church was built of logs; its dimensions were twenty by eighteen feet. The pulpit was of basswood. There was a window on each of three sides. The seats were of planks placed against the walls, with a few benches in the middle; the gable ends were boarded with

slabs. It was lighted with tallow candles. In this church the first continuous Calvinistic Methodist society ever organized in Wisconsin worshipped for fifteen years. In 1859 a new frame church was built on the site of the old Capel Log and was given the name Jerusalem. This church entertained the fall gymanva of 1859, and it was described as "a large and commodious house of worship." But this too proved too small and, in 1870, the church was enlarged by adding twenty feet to the frame building. Here the people worshipped for forty years, until in 1913 a new and modern church with a seating capacity of about four hundred was erected in the village of Wales.

The community grew rapidly, and the distance to Bronyberllan, and later Capel Log, was too far for many to frequent the services as often as they desired; so Sunday School and other services were organized in other local neighborhoods. The moving of the meeting place from Bronyberllan to Capel Log, a mile farther west, was no doubt the occasion for the beginning of worship in other neighborhoods.

*Zoar Church.* As early as 1844 neighbors began to assemble for worship in the Brandy Brook schoolhouse. Newcomers who settled east and northeast of Bronyberllan found that location more convenient. In 1844 a church was organized with David W. Roberts as elder; upon his arrival in 1846, Roderick Rice was made an elder. Mr. Rice had been an elder in Wales. The Rice family was very influential in Zoar Church. Here it was that Rev. Thomas Rice began to preach, as a young man, in 1852 or 1853. With the Rices came Miss Ann Griffiths, a sister of Mrs. Roderick Rice, from Wales. She became the wife of Rev. Owen Hughes, the first minister ordained to preach the gospel in the Welsh community of Waukesha County. Zoar Church was built in 1857. It was dissolved about forty years later.

*Bethesda Church.* Neighbors assembled to worship in the vicinity of Bethesda Church, at Cilmaenan, the home of John Hughes, in 1845. Cilmaenan is now Keystone Farm, located near the church. Services were held there for nine years until John Hughes moved to Winnebago County in 1853 or 1854, and thereafter in the home of David Jones (Y Parc) until the first

Bethesda Church was built in 1857. A new church was erected, not far from the site of the old, in 1877, and has since been remodeled. It is now a modern rural church edifice, adequate for the need of the community. The first elder was John Hughes, of Cilmaenan; and soon John Williams (Y Wern) was elected. The church was organized in 1845.

*Salem Church.* Salem Church was a branch of Capel Log. It was organized in 1851, and the church edifice was built in 1853, on the present Highway 83, about a mile north of the site of Capel Log. Salem had a charter membership of twenty-four and was for many years the most flourishing church in the settlement. Its location was unfortunate—less than a mile north of Jerusalem—and the organization of Moriah Church later claimed some of its members on the north and west. It was dissolved in 1878. The first elders were Hugh Elias, previously an elder in Jerusalem; William Ellis; and Morgan Williams.

*Bethania Church.* The organizing of the Blaenydyffryn Sunday School in the home of Hugh Williams,<sup>4</sup> in 1846, was the beginning of Bethania Church. Services were also held in the homes of Owen Hughes and John B. Jones. The home of Hugh Williams was the most central and, in the winter of 1852, the neighbors met in his log cabin to elect trustees and plan the erection of a church. The Bethania Church society may be dated as of 1849 or 1850, when John W. Thomas came to the neighborhood from Anglesey, North Wales. Trustees were elected in February, 1852, and Bethania Church was built in the spring of the same year, on what is now County Road G, one and one half miles west of the original site of Capel Log. Bethania still stands on the original site of eighty-five years ago. Changes in it have been few; a basement and vestibule were added in 1922. It is the only church in the Welsh community of Waukesha County where worship services in Welsh are still held—one Welsh sermon each month. The first elders were John Thomas and Thomas Swancoat.

*Moriah Church.* In the northwest corner of the settlement many families lived who were members in Bethania and Salem, but because of their distance from these churches they used to assem-

<sup>4</sup> Hugh Williams was the paternal grandfather of the author.

ble for worship in the late 1850's, in a public schoolhouse known as *Schoolhouse Las* (the Blue Schoolhouse), later called the Moriah School. It was located in the very northeast corner of the town of Genesee, across Highway 18 from the present Moriah Church. About 1860 a church society was organized, and in 1871 Moriah Church was erected—a brick church, well and substantially built. The first elders were William Hughes and Richard Parry.

*Bethel Church, Bark River.* Services were held in the Bark River neighborhood as early as 1847, in the home of John Williams (Llwynmwyn). The services were at first held jointly by the Calvinistic Methodists and Welsh Congregationalists. The union church became Congregational in 1859, at which time the Calvinistic Methodists withdrew and formed a society of their own. It was dissolved about forty years later. The first elders in Bark River were Owen Owens and Joseph Jones.

*Zion Church.* Zion Church, located in the northeast corner of the Waukesha County community, was organized in May, 1868, with a charter membership of fourteen, in the home of Mrs. John Thomas, of Snail Lake. Many of the people of Zion Church worshiped with the Congregationalists in the old Tabernacle Church, but when it was moved to its present site, in 1866, some of its families withdrew and formed the Zion society, a more convenient place to assemble for worship. The first elders were John J. Williams and David Morris.

#### THE IXONIA AND WATERTOWN CHURCHES, IN JEFFERSON COUNTY

*Ixonia Church.* After the arrival of Robert Williams, Hugh Parry, and the Lewis brothers, Edward and Thomas, and others in the Ixonia-Watertown settlement, they came together to hold Sunday School for the first time on the west side of Rock River in the home of Robert Williams, and on the east side of the river in the home of Hugh Parry. A church was built in Ixonia Township in 1866. The first elder was Edward Lewis. The church continues active.

*Watertown.* There was, for many years, a small church in

Watertown. John Jones (Emmet), who lived on a farm a few miles out from the city, was a prominent officer in this church. The church was dissolved many years ago.

#### THE RACINE COUNTY CHURCHES

*Pike Grove Church.* When the first Welsh arrivals reached Racine in August, 1841, they immediately assembled for divine worship, but in the course of a few weeks they moved away from the city, a distance of five or six miles, and settled on farms in the Pike Grove neighborhood. There, in 1842, the first Welsh church organized in Wisconsin was located. It was known as the Pike Grove Calvinistic Methodist Church. In later years it became a Welsh Congregational church.

Reasons for believing that the Pike Grove Church was organized as a Calvinistic Methodist church are many: The eleven Welsh families who came to Racine in the summer of 1841, and left for Pike Grove in the autumn of the same year, "were all, or almost all, Calvinistic Methodists," and they would naturally organize a church of their own persuasion. Rev. Richard Davies, the first resident minister who was present and organized the church, was a Calvinistic Methodist and later wrote as follows: "After they had settled on their farms, a church was organized belonging to the Calvinistic Methodists . . . consisting of fifteen members including the minister." Pike Grove Church was reported in early statistics of churches in Wisconsin as a Calvinistic Methodist church. The Welsh Congregational Church statistics record that "in the year 1844 [in Delafield, Waukesha County], by the Rev. Richard Morris, the first [Welsh] Congregational church in Wisconsin was organized." Furthermore, in 1868, Thomas Lloyd Williams, of Racine, wrote: "For some reason unknown to me the Pike Grove Church changed from a Calvinistic Methodist to a Congregational church." These statements are sufficient to establish the fact that Pike Grove Church was organized, in 1842, as a Calvinistic Methodist church, and that it was the first Welsh church of any denomination to be organized in the State of Wisconsin. The first Calvinistic Methodist church society to have continuous existence was the Bronyberllan, or

Capel Log, society, the present Jerusalem Church, Wales, Wisconsin, which was also organized in 1842, but later in the year.

*Tabernacle Church, Racine.* While religious worship was begun by the Welsh in the late summer of 1841, in the home of Robert Owen, the continuance of the worship services in Racine was interrupted by the removal of the early families from the city of Pike Grove. The following year (1842) a union church was organized in the city, with the people assembling for worship in the homes of John Roberts and others. This church ceased to exist as a union church and the Calvinistic Methodist church in Racine was organized in the fall of 1843. It is of interest to note that the present beautiful church in Racine stands on the same site as did the original church built in 1844. David Jenkins had taken preëmption on several lots in Block 6 of the school section. Jenkins turned over his claim to Lot 7 in this block to Humphrey Evans, in trust, that the Welsh people, when ready to build, might erect a church upon it. In 1849 the Commission of Schools and University Lands deeded the lot to the trustees of the church. The lot, located in a beautiful part of the city, has been in the possession of the Calvinistic Methodist church ever since, and its several churches with their additions and changes have been built upon it. The Racine Church continues a flourishing church.

The first resident minister in Racine was Rev. Richard Davies, and he was followed by a succession of some of the ablest men in the denomination in America. The first elder in the Racine Church was Thomas Jehu, and soon William W. Vaughan and David Richards were added to the session. William W. Vaughan was an able and useful man; his usefulness extended over the entire Church. When the Welsh General Assembly was organized, in 1869, Mr. Vaughan was elected its first treasurer and continued in office until his death many years later. It was in the Racine Church that Llewelyn Ioan Evans, D.D., LL.D., spent several years of his boyhood and youth when his father, Rev. Edward T. Evans, was pastor of Tabernacle Church in the early 1850's. Dr. Evans was for twenty-nine years professor in Lane Theological Seminary, Cincinnati, Ohio.

*Skunk Grove (Mount Pleasant) Church.* Mount Pleasant Church

was about six or seven miles northwest of Racine. Among the first to settle in this section were Hugh Roberts, Richard Pierce, and Roderick Evans. Rev. Rees Evans, one of the most distinguished of Welsh ministers in Wisconsin, began his career in America there. He was the son of Roderick Evans. Hugh Pierce, an able musician, was the son of Richard Pierce. Mount Pleasant Church was organized in 1843. Services were at first held in the log cabins of Hugh Roberts, Roderick Evans, and Richard Pierce. After thus worshipping in the homes of the people for twelve years, the members resolved to build a church, which was dedicated on February 5, 1855. The church was dissolved many years ago.

Rev. Richard Davies, who came to Racine in 1842, from Centerville, Gallia County, Ohio, was the first resident minister of the Calvinistic Methodist denomination to settle in Wisconsin. Mr. Davies was born in Montgomeryshire, Wales, in 1804, and came to Ohio early in 1837. He was present at Moriah Church, Jackson County, when the Ohio Gymanva was organized in 1838, and was one of the signers of the important vow and pledge which instituted that gymanva. Mr. Davies began to preach in 1840, in the Jackson and Gallia settlement.

At the close of the gymanva held in Cincinnati, Ohio, April, 1842, Richard Davies started for Wisconsin. He made the entire trip by water and landed in Racine early in June. His writings tell us that there were eleven Welsh families and one bachelor in the Racine community when he arrived. After remaining a few months, during which he organized the Pike Grove Church, Mr. Davies returned to Ohio. At the end of fifteen months he came back to Racine, bringing his letter of transfer from the Ohio Gymanva. This was in 1843. In those fifteen months great changes had taken place. The Welsh population had more than doubled and a union church had been organized in the city of Racine. The Calvinistic Methodists were in the majority and held the balance of power. There were two other preachers in Racine at the time: Mr. Matthews, a Congregationalist, and Mr. Meredith, a Baptist. They failed to organize churches of their own persuasion and soon withdrew, and the Calvinistic Methodists had possession of the field for a number of years. "We had three

churches," wrote Mr. Davies, "and I labored in them for six years" (Pike Grove, Skunk Grove, and the Racine Church). Richard Davies preached in Chicago one Sunday, and this, he believed, was the first Welsh preaching in the State of Illinois. He visited the Welsh settlement in Waukesha County and agreed to preach there once each month. He was instrumental in forming a union between the Racine and Waukesha settlements, and this was the beginning of the Wisconsin Gymanva. In this gymanva, which opened December 31, 1843, there was present but one preacher, Richard Davies, and the Wisconsin Gymanva at the time had but four elders: Hugh Elias; Griffith Roberts, of Capel Log, Prairieville; and Thomas Jehu and Morgan Williams, of Racine. Three of the elders were present at the first gymanva.

At the end of six years Rev. Richard Davies left for La Crosse County, where he labored among churches in general—Congregational as well as Calvinistic Methodist—when the religious work there was in its infancy. From La Crosse, in 1855, he moved to South Bend, Minnesota, where, in 1856, he organized the first three Calvinistic Methodist churches in that state. His name appeared in the list of Calvinistic Methodist ministers in Minnesota in 1859 as the only ordained minister there at the time. Two others are named as preachers—John Roberts and David Davies. Rev. Richard Davies later united with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

*Milwaukee Church.* There were occasional, but very irregular, services held by the Welsh in Milwaukee previous to 1845. Cadwaladr Jones came to the city in 1845, and it was in that year that services were regularly held. Mr. Jones was among the foremost in starting the religious work in Milwaukee. In 1847 a Calvinistic Methodist society was organized and in 1850 the first church was built. In 1857 a new church was purchased. Other changes have taken place since. The Milwaukee Church has occupied a place of prominence in the Wisconsin Gymanva for many years. The first elder was William Davies. Soon John J. Thomas and John James were added to the session. The church continues to serve the Welsh community of Milwaukee.

*Lennon Church, Waukesha County, Wisconsin.* A church was

organized in Lennon, among the quarrymen and stonecutters, in the early 1890's. It was a small church and never had a resident minister. It has long since been dissolved.

#### THE CHICAGO CHURCHES

*Hebron Church, Chicago.* In 1845 there were twenty-four Welsh people in Chicago who assembled in the home of John Davies for worship, holding Sunday School at 9 A.M. and prayer service at 6 P.M. In 1845 Rev. Richard Davies, then of Racine, preached the first Welsh sermon in the city. July 24-26, 1852, a church costing seven hundred dollars was dedicated. In 1866 or 1867 the old Hebron Church was built. In 1894 or 1895 the present new church was started, in the pastorate of John C. Jones, D.D. Who the first elder or elders were is not stated. John Davies was perhaps the first to serve.

*South Side Church, Chicago.* The church on the south side was organized in 1893. This church when built was located about five miles south of the old Hebron Church. The church continues to serve.

*West Pullman Church, Chicago.* This church was about fifteen miles south of Hebron Church and was organized in 1893, with seventeen charter members. It has long since been discontinued.

*Humboldt Park Church, Chicago.* There is also in Chicago a Welsh church known as the Humboldt Park Church, but this is a union congregation.

#### THE DODGEVILLE PRESBYTERY

The first recorded meeting of the Dodgeville Presbytery, as such, was held on October 24-25, 1857. The name of the moderator is not reported, but the clerk was Elder D. H. Foulkes. The presbytery convened three times each year for a long period, but in the early part of the twentieth century the meetings were reduced to two in the year.

The Dodgeville Presbytery at one time was far more extensive than in later years. It included the churches in La Crosse County, to the northwest of Dodgeville, and churches in the State of Illinois to the south. The two or three little churches in Illinois

were not reported after 1858. In 1859 the La Crosse churches were constituted a separate presbytery, and the Dodgeville Presbytery was confined to the ridge district, in Iowa County, from Blue Mounds to the Picatonica settlement near Mineral Point.

*Dodgeville Church.* Divine worship among the Welsh in the Dodgeville vicinity was begun in October, 1844, when three families from Blossburg, Pennsylvania, arrived. There were three or four Welsh people in Dodgeville before this, but upon the arrival of Jonathan Davies, David Jones, and John W. Jones, with their respective families, religious services were started. Other Welsh people soon followed, and the growth of the community was rapid. The people assembled in their cabins at first for Sunday School; in the early spring of 1845 a prayer service was added. By the summer of 1845 the colony had so increased that no private home was large enough to accommodate the audience and a meetinghouse was planned. Every man took his ax and went to the forest to prepare logs for the church building. It was soon erected in what was then known as Welsh Hollow, located about one and one half miles west of the present city of Dodgeville. The erection of this church was a union effort, for the Welsh of all religious persuasions assembled together for public worship. But while they thus met for public worship, members of the different denominations convened separately for their fellowship meetings (*seiat breifat*).

In the summer of 1845 Hugh Roberts came into the settlement from Anglesey, Wales, and worked both in Dodgeville and Picatonica. When working in Picatonica he frequently came to Dodgeville for week-ends to enjoy the Welsh services. He was inclined toward the ministry and was urged by the brethren in Dodgeville to begin to preach. He became a candidate and at the spring meeting of the gymanva held at Columbus, in 1846, was received as a preacher into the Wisconsin Gymanva. He was the first Calvinistic minister in the Dodgeville settlement, but soon left Dodgeville for Oneida County, New York, where he labored for a number of years; he then went to Ohio, laboring in Newark and Radnor. Rev. Hugh Roberts was ordained in Moriah Church, Jackson County, Ohio, in the gymanva of 1856. In 1869 or 1870 he came to the Welsh community of Waukesha County, Wiscon-

sin, and preached on the circuit for twenty years. He died in 1895 at the age of ninety-eight years.

In January, 1847, Rev. John H. Evans from the Waukesha community visited Dodgeville. It was cold and he missed connections with the stage in Madison on Saturday, so he walked the forty-three miles to Dodgeville by Sunday morning and preached twice that day. The log church in Welsh Hollow was soon outgrown, and the Calvinistic Methodist constituency in a certain fellowship meeting discussed the building of a new church. Two sites were considered, one costing ten dollars and the other fifty dollars; the latter site, where the circus located when it came to Dodgeville, was the more desirable. One old saint, more zealous than the others, remarked during the discussion: "Let us purchase the fifty-dollar site, for here is where the Devil displays his wares. Let us purchase the site to display the power of the blood that flowed from Calvary, then the Devil will have to go somewhere else to pitch his tents." That remark settled the question: the circus site was purchased and the Dodgeville Church was erected upon it. The church, of twenty-eight members, was dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1849. The elder in the original union church in Welsh Hollow was John W. Jones, who left Dodgeville for Picatonica in August, 1849. The first elders in the newly organized Calvinistic Methodist church were William Owens and William Jones. In 1852 H. D. Foulkes and Thomas Roberts were made elders. An addition to the church was built in 1858, and a new church was erected in 1882. The church has been dissolved.

*Salem Church.* Salem Church, located about three miles southwest of the city of Dodgeville, was organized in 1858, with fifteen charter members. Services were at first held in the home of John Williams (Ty Mawr). A small church, known as Caergybi, had been dissolved, and some of the remaining members joined Salem in 1860. The church never had an installed pastor, but depended upon supply preachers, some of whom were: Thomas Holland and John Davies, of Picatonica; Griffith Jones, Richard Jones, and Owen Morris, of Blue Mounds. Rev. John H. Evans moved from Waukesha to the Salem neighborhood in 1868. The first elders were John Williams and Richard Parry.

*Peniel Church, Picatonica.* The first church meeting (seiat) in the Picatonica community was held in the home of William H. Jones, with sixteen members present. While Sunday School and prayer services were held on Sundays, and the fellowship meetings on Wednesday afternoons, these Christian people wanted the gospel preached, but they had no preacher. It was observed that one of their number, a young man, was endowed with unusual gifts and Christian grace, and they earnestly besought him to enter the ministry and to become their preacher. He submitted to their persuasion and began to preach. This young man was later known as John Davies, Picatonica, one of the most convincing and eloquent of Welsh preachers in Wisconsin, a minister of burning convictions and of flaming zeal. When he died, in 1877, the Picatonica community erected to his memory a monument costing eleven hundred dollars. He was one of them, and they were proud of their illustrious son. He was ordained in 1850, when the new church was dedicated.

The first elders were William Davies and Edward Williams, who had been elders in Wales; and William H. Jones, Thomas R. Jones, and William Roberts, who had previously been elders in Pennsylvania. In 1868 a new church was erected and dedicated the next year. In 1854 a number of members withdrew to form the Stone Church. Peniel Church still remains a faithful witness.

*Carmel (Stone) Church.* Carmel, or the Stone Church as it used to be known, was dedicated in May, 1854, and this probably was the first service held in Carmel. The community had increased to such an extent that some of the members lived on farms at quite a distance from Peniel, so it was considered expedient to organize another church. For this purpose nineteen members withdrew from Peniel to form Carmel. In 1885 a new church was built, and it was at that time that the name was changed from Stone Church to Carmel. Rev. John Davies preached at Carmel as well as at Peniel. The first and only elder for many years was John W. Jones.

*Bethel Church, Blue Mounds.* Bethel Church was organized in 1850 in the home of Richard P. Jones. The church, built of logs, was erected in 1852 and dedicated the same year. A new church

was built in 1861. The membership at that time was fifty-five. This church produced several ministers: Rev. Owen Morris, in 1860; Rev. Edward L. Jones, in 1868; and John H. Davies, in 1870.

In 1868 quite a number left the Bethel neighborhood for Minnesota, and others left later, so the Welsh were scattered, and in 1885 the church was dissolved. The remaining members united with Goshen Church near Barneveld.

*Goshen Church, Barneveld.* Religious work was begun in the Goshen Church neighborhood in 1858, when Sunday School and fellowship meetings were held in the home of Edward Jones; an occasional sermon was also preached during summer months. The church was organized in the home of Edward Jones, with fifteen members; among them were Rev. Richard Jones and his family. In 1862 Goshen Church was built. The first elder was William Jones, and in 1867 John H. Davies was elected. The coming of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway in 1883, with a station at Barneveld, prompted the people of Goshen to abandon the old church and to build a new church in the village at a cost of twenty-five hundred dollars. The pulpit was supplied by circuit and itinerant preachers until 1889, when Rev. Thomas R. Jones became the first pastor. After the church was moved to Barneveld some services were held in English, and in later years all services were conducted in English. This church was transferred to the Madison Presbytery in 1915.

*The Churches in Illinois.* Apple River Church, in Jo Daviess County, Illinois, was a member of the Dodgeville Presbytery. The Apple River Church was dedicated October 28-29, 1854. Those participating at the dedication services were: Rev. Rees Evans, then of Chicago; Rev. R. G. Jones, of Blue Mounds; and Rev. Griffith Roberts, of Dodgeville. The land upon which the church was built was donated by David Thomas. The church was dedicated free of debt, according to the report of Rev. W. M. Evans, who lived there at that time. In 1856 the Apple River Church reported a membership of twelve to the clerk of the Dodgeville Presbytery.

The Dodgeville Presbytery reported a church at Elizabeth,

Illinois, in 1856. When the church was organized is not stated, nor is the number of its members given. In the Diary of the Calvinistic Methodists in the United States for 1861, Rev. W. M. Evans is reported as a preacher located at Elizabeth, Illinois; but the Apple River and Elizabeth Churches in Illinois are not reported in the statistics of the Dodgeville Presbytery after 1859. They perhaps became identified with some other religious denomination.

There were two other small churches in Illinois: Braceville, once reported as an aid-receiving church; and the church in Coal Valley (Rock Island), mentioned in 1882.

Of the churches in the old Dodgeville Presbytery the only three which now exist are Peniel and Carmel, in Picatonica, and the church in Barneveld.

#### THE LA CROSSE PRESBYTERY

In the beginning, the churches in La Crosse County, Wisconsin, were members of the Dodgeville Presbytery, but distance and inconvenience of travel made it difficult for them to benefit, to the extent they desired, from the meetings of the presbytery. Hence, on December 3 and 4, 1853, the La Crosse churches held a *cysar fod pregethu*, "preaching festival," and at that time there were four different neighborhood preaching stations in the county. Rev. Richard Davies had left Racine for La Crosse in 1849 or 1850, and Rev. Daniel T. Davies left the Waukesha Welsh community for La Crosse in 1853. These two ministers preached on this occasion.

Rev. Richard Davies lived in the city of La Crosse, and services were held in his home. In the settlement eight miles east of the city, services were held in the homes of Rev. Daniel T. Davies, Evan Roberts, and Richard Pierce; in the neighborhood about twenty miles east of the city of La Crosse, the services were held in the home of Evan Jones; and in the most easterly neighborhood, about twenty-three miles from the city, services were held in the home of Robert Roberts. These neighborhoods may be identified as: the first, the city of La Crosse; the second, eight miles away, Fish Creek and Bangor; the third, Blaenydyffryn;

the fourth, Cataract. There were other preaching festivals held subsequently.

Holding such preaching festivals led the La Crosse churches to desire a presbytery meeting and, in June, 1857, such a meeting was held in Blaenydyffryn, although the churches were, as yet, members of the Dodgeville Presbytery. This meeting differed from the preaching festival in that it held official sessions as in a regular meeting of presbytery; but there were no delegates present from churches other than those of La Crosse County. A meeting was held at Blaenydyffryn on June 27-28, 1857, in which Rev. Daniel T. Davies was elected moderator and David W. Jones, clerk, which may be regarded as the first regular meeting of the La Crosse Presbytery, for in it the following statement was issued:

"While the La Crosse Presbytery is a part of the Dodgeville Presbytery, because of the long distance from Dodgeville, it becomes necessary to hold a presbytery meeting of our own; at the same time, this presbytery [La Crosse] is to be under the auspices of the Dodgeville Presbytery, and expresses the hope that the coming of the railroad may make it possible for the bishops and elders of Dodgeville and vicinity to come more frequently to La Crosse."

Evidently the La Crosse churches felt that the Dodgeville Presbytery meeting did not come to La Crosse as often as it should.

Another such presbytery meeting was held in Fish Creek in June, 1858. John Evans, an elder, was the moderator. There were no ministers present at this meeting. Daniel T. Davies had united with the Presbyterians and Richard Davies had gone to Minnesota. By the time of the spring meeting, in May, 1859, Rev. Robert Williams had arrived in the settlement. He was elected moderator, and an overture was sent to the Wisconsin Gymanva, requesting that the churches in La Crosse County be constituted a separate presbytery. When the gymanva met in Columbus, June 7-9, 1859, Rev. Robert Williams was elected moderator of that body, and naturally the request of the La Crosse churches was granted. The La Crosse churches were received and duly recognized as a presbytery of the Wisconsin Gymanva from that time forward. The churches of La Crosse Presbytery then were: the church in the city of La Crosse; Bethel Church, Fish Creek; Bangor and Blaenydyffryn Churches.

*Blaenydyffryn Church.* This church was organized in 1854, when Stephen Jones came to the vicinity from Waukesha County. In the cemetery of Blaenydyffryn Church rests the mortal dust of Rev. Robert Williams. Mr. Williams was one of the ablest and most painstaking sermonizers of the ministers in the Wisconsin Gymanva. He was for many years pastor of the La Crosse County churches. The first elder of Blaenydyffryn Church was Stephen Jones. The church was dissolved in 1930.

*Bethel Church, Fish Creek.* Bethel Church also was organized in 1854. The first church edifice in La Crosse Presbytery was built in the Fish Creek neighborhood. The first elder was John Evans, who had formerly been an elder in Ixonia, Wisconsin, and Richard Pierce was soon added to the session. The church was dissolved in 1924.

*Bangor Church.* Bangor and Fish Creek were for some time regarded as one neighborhood, and the people worshiped together. William Jones came to the neighborhood from Waukesha in 1849 or 1850, and was in the Bangor-Fish Creek settlement for a number of years before any church was organized. Religious services were held in his farm home, called Gwastadedd. When the people came to discuss a central site for locating the church they failed to agree. The result was two churches: one in the Fish Creek neighborhood and the other in Bangor. Bangor Church was built in 1859 and dedicated on January 1, 1860. It was dissolved in 1917. The first elder, in all probability, was William Jones.

*Cataract Church.* The first Welshmen to locate in the vicinity of Cataract were J. Protheroe, Thomas Richards, L. Evans, and their respective families, all of whom arrived there on June 10, 1854. These families, strange to say, were not identified with any church. The first sermon preached in Cataract was by Rev. Daniel T. Davies; the second, by Rev. Samuel Jones, a Congregationalist; and the third, by Rev. Robert Williams in May, 1865.

W. P. Williams and H. Jones bought the Protheroe farm in 1865. It was then that religious services were regularly held in the home of Mr. Jones. On March 10, 1866, the church was organized by Rev. Robert Williams and Elder Stephen Jones,

with seven charter members—three men and four women. Others were soon added. The church was built in 1867 and dedicated on January 25, 1868. In March, 1868, Rev. David R. Williams and his family of six came to Cataract. Mr. Williams remained there many years. In 1890 it was reported that no services had been held in the church at Cataract for several years, and the La Crosse Presbytery was authorized to sell the property.

In the gymanva held at Racine in June, 1917, the La Crosse Presbytery was dissolved, and the Fish Creek and Blaenydyffryn Churches were transferred to the Welsh Prairie Presbytery. They were received into the Welsh Prairie Presbytery in September, 1917. None of the churches of the La Crosse Presbytery now function.

#### THE LONG CREEK (IOWA) PRESBYTERY

The fifth presbytery of the Wisconsin Gymanva was in the state of Iowa and was called the Long Creek Presbytery. There was a small group of churches in Iowa attached to the Wisconsin Gymanva. The gymanva in session at Dodgeville in October, 1869, thought it expedient, because of their distance from Wisconsin churches, to form these churches—Long Creek, Williamsburg, and Welsh Prairie, in the State of Iowa—into another presbytery belonging to the Wisconsin Gymanva. This was done and the presbytery was given the name "Long Creek (Iowa) Presbytery." This new presbytery assembled in session for the first time on May 28-29, and June 4-5, 1870. Evan H. Jones was elected moderator and James Thomas, clerk. The second meeting was held at Welsh Prairie, Iowa, in May, 1871, and meetings were regularly held thereafter. In 1875 three new churches were added to the Long Creek Presbytery; namely, the churches of Dawn and South Gap, in Missouri, and the church in Bala, Kansas. At its organization this presbytery had only three churches, with a total of eighty members, but by 1878 it had twelve churches, with a total membership of three hundred and fifty. Four of the churches in the Long Creek Presbytery were in the State of Kansas. The Kansas churches overtured the gymanva requesting that they be constituted a separate presbytery.

#### THE KANSAS FIRST PRESBYTERY

At a meeting of the Long Creek Presbytery, in session at Osage City, Kansas, on October 20, 1877, a resolution prevailed requesting that the churches in Kansas constitute a separate presbytery. In 1879 the Wisconsin Gymanva reported that "a part of the Long Creek Presbytery was received, separately, under the name, 'The Kansas First Presbytery,' or the First Presbytery of Kansas." In 1883 the Western Gymanva was formed and the Long Creek and Kansas First Presbyteries were transferred to the Western Gymanva, while the Wisconsin Gymanva was reduced to its original four presbyteries, all of whose churches, with the exception of Chicago, were within the boundaries of the state.

The Long Creek and Kansas First Presbyteries will receive further attention as presbyteries in the Western Gymanva.

The Wisconsin Gymanva was dissolved in 1934, and its two remaining presbyteries—Welsh Prairie and Waukesha—were united and became the Welsh Presbytery in the Synod of Wisconsin of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.