WATERTOWN METHODIST CLASS.
Watertown Methodist Class record book and journal, 1829-1843

Emory University
Pitts Theology Library
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Watertown Methodist Class.
Title: Watertown Methodist Class record book and journal, 1829-1843
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 361
Extent: 0.20 cubic ft. (1 box)
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access
Unrestricted access.

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Citation
[after identification of item(s)], Watertown Methodist Class record book and journal, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing
Processed by Brandon Wason, 2015.

Collection Description

Biographical Note
This class book records member information for a local Methodist society in Litchfield County, Connecticut. The records date from 1829 to 1843 and the book refers to Methodist activities in the towns of Watertown, Goshen, Litchfield, and Plymouth. Methodists were organized

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into groups of twenty or thirty at the local level. These groups were called classes. A class
was usually led by a layperson who would be responsible for leading the meeting, collecting
contributions, and disciplining members. Classes would meet weekly on Sundays and then
quarterly with the other classes in the circuit. Fasting often coincided with the quarterly
meetings, as indicated by a note at the beginning of the class book: “A fast is to be observed
every Friday previous to a quarterly meeting.” There was roughly an equal number of both men
and women members in this class book.

This class book not only provides critical information regarding the organization of New
England Methodism in the 1800s, but may be of use for those conducting genealogical research,
or historical research on Watertown or Litchfield County, Connecticut.

Scope and Content Note
The manuscript is bound in a homemade calf leather cover, which reads “Watertown Class Book
July 12, 1829. The first date of recorded activity is August 23, 1829 and the final record is March
12, 1843. Tipped into the front of the book is a four-page pamphlet, “The General Rules of the
United Methodist Societies,” published in the 1820s by N[athan] Bangs and T. Mason, at the
Methodist Book Store, 55 Fulton Street, New York. There is also one manuscript page inserted
into the class book, titled, “Subscription for Preaching, 1839-1840.”

The membership rosters indicate individual members’ statuses in the organization, their status
in life (i.e., married, single, or widowed), their attendance at each meeting, and significant life
events (e.g., death, transfer of membership). In addition to membership information, the book
records data about leaders, preaching elders, and circuit preachers of the Methodist Episcopal
Church.