

# Millennium Church Has Long History

AULANDER — Straddling the line between Hertford and Bertie counties is a church with several unique distinctions.

First of all, the Millennium Pentecostal Holiness Church is the only one of its sect in Hertford County. Second, it is a church with a building in one county and most of its members in another.

But in 1911, when J. B. Williams came all the way from Greenville to hold prayer meetings along the dusty little country road from Aulander to Ahoskie, there was no church at all. Indeed, most of the poor farmers and laborers in the section had never been to church, nor given it much thought.

So the words of Preacher Williams and his companion, George Stanley, fell on virgin ground.

At first, there were only a few listeners in the tent pitched in a grove of pine trees, across the road from the present church site. But enthusiasm grew, and the crowds grew.

The traveling preachers moved on to hold other prayer meetings, but the little group of county-line farmers continued their interest by holding meetings in their homes. They liked the fervent style of the "holiness" preachers, and so banded together to form a Pentecostal Holiness Church.

They called it the Millennium church, since they believed they were living in the "millennium."

## Church Building

Next move was to build a church. But money was always scarce among the little group, and building a church was a big job. Mrs. Harvey Hurdle, whose farm is near the church, remembers how people had to "scrape up" donations of material, labor and a little money.

At 80, Mrs. Hurdle is one of three charter members of the church now living. The others are Mrs. Annie Jacobs and Mrs. Hosannah Outlaw, who were Miss Annie Outlaw and Miss Hosannah Harrington when they joined.

Mrs. Hurdle, who had moved to the community from Virginia when she married her first husband, W. A. Peel, in 1909, was the first church secretary.

It was her husband who gave a half-acre of land for the church site, and she recorded carefully donations from each person. Some gave nails, others lumber, and one entry says "any and everybody, eggs and cash, \$1.50."

Through perseverance, however, the church building went up. Because the members didn't want curious folks looking in the windows, they put the small frame building on high blocks, to raise windows above eye level.

But this led to another circumstance—during a high wind, the half-built building was blown off the blocks, bowing the timbers of the sides.

"They had a terrible time get-

ting the building back on lower supports," Mrs. Hurdle recalls. "And to this day, our church is probably the only one with bowed sides," adds the Rev. Raymond "Potter," the present minister.

But by 1912, the church was built, and J. B. Williams, who had started the movement with his prayer meetings, returned to serve as the first minister of the congregation.

## Charter Members

Only 21 members were the charter members, who labored to build the church. Their names were: W. A. Peel, Mrs. W. A. Peel (now Mrs. Hurdle), H. C. Terry, Mrs. Eula Harris, Mrs. Bettie Lassiter, Mrs. Elsie Farmer Terry, Mrs. Hosannah Harrington Outlaw, Miss Janie Keel, Miss Lucy Outlaw, Mrs. C. M. Minton, Mrs. Addie Riddick, L. L. Matthews, Miss Pearl Outlaw, Miss Bessie Outlaw, Miss Mary E. Minton, J. C. Terry, Mrs. Mettie Lassiter, Mrs. Martha F. Terry, W. J. Terry, E. T. Lassiter, Mrs. Mary E. Outlaw, C. L. Parks, Mrs. Annie Outlaw Jacobs, Mrs. Addie Parks, H. G. Terry, Mrs. Texana Lassiter, J. W. Terry and C. M. Minton.

The first baptisms for the church were performed at the "lightwood knot" millpond east of the church, near the present Oak Grove Baptist Church. The millpond is now just a stagnant pool, but was then a running stream in which candidates were immersed by George Stanley, one of the traveling evangelists. Mr. Stanley is now retired from the ministry in Siler City.

There were times when only the determination of the few members kept the church alive, recalls Mrs. Hurdle.

During the hard depression years in the 1920's, Harvey Hurdle can remember when it took two collections to get enough to pay the \$1 light bill each month. Ministers who came to serve the church then were paid about \$6 for each visit.

Shortly after World War II, however, conditions had improved so that a pasturism was built next to the church, on land donated by Wayland Jenkins of Aulander.

Mrs. Lessie Polston, the first woman minister to serve the church, directed the building of a two-bedroom frame house, which cost only \$800 in labor, since materials were donated. For the past ten years, the house has been able to have a full-time minister.

## Ahoskie Building and Loan Met Big Need; Begun in '23

AHOSKIE—Entering an era of great business activity and growth in Ahoskie, a select group of business and professional men met on April 27, 1923, to form the Hertford County Building and Loan Association.

J. Roy Parker, in his book "The Ahoskie Era," lists R. H. Jernigan as president, W. L. Curtis as vice president, F. P. Meadows as secretary-treasurer, and L. C. Williams as attorney. Among the charter members were Dr. A. W. Greene, Dr. L. K. Walker, J. I. Crawford, V. D. Strickland, O. W. Hale, George J. Newbern, S. M. Applebaum, W. A. Thomas, the Rev. E. J. Isenhower, and Parker.

First loan recorded went to Dr. L. K. Walker for construction of a back building to house a new drug store. Loans that first year

totaled only slightly more than \$5,000. Stock in the association proved valuable as the years went by, and most of the stockholders bought more when their original serial stock matured automatically after seven years.

Stockholders are particularly proud of the fact that \$33,000 in dividends was paid out, during the same week that banks closed during the depression. Activity has decreased slightly in more recent years, but during 1958 a total of \$128,800 was loaned by the association.

After the death of President Noah S. Garrett in 1957, Roberts H. Jernigan was elected president. During his recent illness, the position has been filled by N. S. Godwin, acting vice president.

## Ahoskie Business Empire Built From Scratch by Noah S. Garrett

AHOSKIE—Furniture, a funeral home and a jewelry store—all these were the domain of the late Noah S. Garrett, one of the biggest boosters Ahoskie ever knew.

His business interests almost seemed a sideline, however, in the light of the many civic services he rendered.

Noah Garrett came from Elizabeth City, where he had been a furniture salesman, to own a quarter-interest in the new furniture company formed by Archie Browne, H. S. Basnight and J. L. Sawyer in 1924. The firm opened in a small store, 26x32 feet, that October. This building burned, however, and in June, 1925, the company moved to its present location at Mitchell and Main Streets, in a three-story building with offices on the mezzanine.

In 1927, Basnight and Garrett purchased the stock and changed the firm name to Basnight-Garrett Co., Inc., with Garrett as secretary-treasurer and manager. At Basnight's death in 1936, his son, the late W. H. Basnight, and daughter, Mrs. Louise Lyon, inherited his stock.

During 1941, the second floor of an office building behind Garrett's was rented, and a connecting entrance was built so that the space might be used in 27 separate dis-

play rooms. With other display space, the firm advertised 32 display rooms—"Our best advertising," Garrett said.

On July 3, 1943, Garrett bought the entire interest in the store, and the name became Garrett's, Inc. Miss Maggie Pierce, who had been with the company since its organization, was elected secretary.

At the time of his death in 1957, N. S. Garrett had served as chairman of the building committee for the Roanoke-Chowan Hospital, was president of the Hertford County Building & Loan Association, a director of the Bank of Ahoskie, vice president of WRCS radio station, and a trustee of the Ahoskie Methodist Church. He had also been president of the Southern Furniture Retailers of North Carolina.

## Funeral Business

In spring of 1931, as an adjunct to the furniture store, Basnight-Garrett opened a funeral business, which was located on the third floor of the furniture store building.

The first licensed embalmer and manager was H. M. Purviance of Boykins, Va., who was succeeded by Ed S. Williams of Greenville. When Williams left, J. G. Lumsden became manager from 1935 to 1940, when he left to operate another

funeral home. Williams returned then, and continues as manager.

In 1937, Garrett's Funeral Home moved to its present location on Railroad Street. It is operated by Garrett's, Inc., of which Norvin W. Garrett is president, and owns six vehicles, including the latest in ambulance hearses.

Third division of the Garrett enterprises is the jewelry store, which N. S. Garrett purchased in 1944 from Mr. and Mrs. D. L. Myers, who had operated it since 1897. Mrs. Maggie Hobbs has been manager since 1946. Garrett's Jewelry Store is the sole property of Mrs. N. S. Garrett.

Norvin W. Garrett, N. S. Garrett's only son, purchased the entire interest in Garrett's Furniture Company from his father in 1955. Since that time, Garrett's has continued its widespread reputation for quality furniture and home accessories. Quality Furniture Company on Main Street, managed by W. A. Garrett, brother of the late N. S. Garrett, is also owned by Norvin Garrett.

Starting with four employees in the first Sawyer-Browne Company, the Garrett-related businesses now employ 13 in the furniture stores, three in the funeral home, and three in the jewelry business.

## Ahoskie Meat & Provision Benefited from State Fund

AHOSKIE — The first firm in North Carolina to receive a loan for construction from the State Business Development Corporation is now six years old and doing fine, thank you.

The Ahoskie Meat and Provision Company has weathered its shakedown cruise on the sea of competition, since its incorporation in 1953.

The firm was founded by Roberts Jernigan, Jr., with William J. Miller in 1953. Jernigan had a colorful career including a stretch in China as an oil company office manager at the beginning of World War II, and was interned by the Japanese for two years.

A native of Ahoskie, he joined the Navy after his release from prison camp internment. After the war, he managed the building division of Peeden Steel Company in Raleigh before returning here in 1950, when he joined Eric Garrett's meat house on Mitchell Street.

In 1951, Jernigan became a partner in the Garrett firm. In 1952, Miller, a native of Union who had been an insurance agent

and farmer, came to work for Garrett's. In March, 1953, Jernigan and Miller incorporated their present business, and purchased Garrett's interest.

The company remained on Mitchell Street until September, 1956, when it occupied a new concrete building on Catherine Creek Road. The structure was built at a cost of \$50,000, for which the \$25,000 loan from the State Business and Development Corporation was obtained, payable in ten years.

Ahoskie Meat and Provision distributes canned and packaged meats, poultry, canned goods, Kraft cheeses and products on a wholesale basis to stores in the Roanoke - Chowan area and Southampton County, Va.

The firm began with six employees, and has doubled that to a staff of twelve. Jernigan is president and treasurer, and Miller is secretary. Mr. and Mrs. Jernigan, the former Linda Williams of Sanford, have three children. Mr. and Mrs. Miller, the former Betty Armstrong of Minnesota, are parents of three daughters.

## Indian Motif at Tomahawk

AHOSKIE — One of Ahoskie's newest, most modern businesses—the Tomahawk Restaurant—has capitalized on the Indian background of the town, and the Roanoke-Chowan area.

Built by Craig Vaughan, the Tomahawk is decorated in Indian motif, with Indian articles (imported, not homemade) for sale as a by-line. "Tourist trade makes up about 75 per cent of our business," says Odie Bracy, who with his brother Randolph leases the restaurant from Vaughan. And tourists like those extra touches, like the cowboys - and - Indians scenes and war clubs which decorate the restaurant.

Odie Bracy started in the restaurant business in 1946, with his own cafe in the old Talmage Baker building opposite the Ahoskie post office. This building burned in 1948, and was replaced by a brick structure. Bracy reopened his cafe there, in the same location occupied until last month by the Shamrock Cafe, and continued there until 1950.

At that time, he took over operation of the Garrett Hotel coffee shop, which he ran with his brother, James W. Bracy, until 1952. Tired of the constant pressure of restaurant operation, Odie Bracy then went to work as a shipping clerk for the Ahoskie Fish and Produce Company, Craig Vaughan's firm.

The Tomahawk restaurant was opened on November 20, 1954, but closed in January after it opened. On February 1, 1955, Odie Bracy leased the restaurant, and the following year, Randolph Bracy joined him in its operation. A new feature, curb service, was added by Bracy soon after he became manager.

The Bracys are proud of the cleanliness and pleasant atmosphere of their restaurant, which draws many return visits from tourists of the north - south highway. There are now 16 employees, including waitresses and kitchen workers.



## A 200th Anniversary Is Really Something to Crow About...

These folks at your Colonial Store in Ahoskie join the CS Rooster in saluting the citizens of Hertford County as they approach a Milestone in the history of North Carolina... the 200th Anniversary of progressive Hertford County. Over the years we have tried to give the people of Hertford County food values worth crowing about. We appreciate your patronage and we will continue to supply your table with good things to eat.



# COLONIAL STORES



BASNIGHT-GARRETT STORE MAIN STREET SHOWCASE