

## HISTORY OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH

### Dr. Lee Delves Into Records of Local Baptist Church and Finds Many Things of Interest.

The church some time ago made request that its ancient minutes be found and brought to light. No one could give an information concerning them. Now, however, Bro. Johnny Rogers comes and brings the old church book which was begun in 1822. It was found at the Koger's home, having been left there by a former clerk of the church, Bro. Allman.

The minutes recite how the church was constituted in the Cherokee Purchase, Haywood county, N. C., on the 7th day of May, 1822. The presbytery consisted of Elders, Stephen White and Adam Corne. Twenty members came from different churches to form the body.

The following are the members who entered the constitution:

Thomas Kinsey, deacon; Zachariah Peck, Green H. Freeman, John B. Moore, Benjamin Stiles, John Stuart, and James Bryson.

The female members were as follows:

Nancy Kinsey, Sarah Peak, Nancy Freeman, Milley Moore, Nancy Hall, Charity Stiles, Mary Davis, Rachel M. McConnell, Mary Ann Stewart, Ann Bryson, Elizabeth Brison, Catherine Shields and Elizabeth Redmond.

Thomas Kinsey, having formerly been a deacon of Crabtree church, was admitted as a deacon. James Brison was examined and ordained as a deacon, May 7, 1822.

After being constituted in May, 1822 the church met at Cowee, Sugarfork, and Franklin indiscriminately during the first several months of the life of the body. Bro. Benjamin Stiles was appointed the first clerk of the church at the organization. Elder, Humphrey Posey became pastor of the church in July, 1822.

In 1822 the church was united with the French Broad Association, sending Bro. Posey as messenger to that body. The church was still meeting alternately at Sugarfork and at

Coweta, before locating definitely at Franklin.

The church continued to meet at Sugarfork and Coweta until June 1823 when they agreed to meet at Franklin and decide definitely the place for the church to be located. July, 13, 1823, it was decided to make Franklin the permanent place of meeting for the body. The first communion was celebrated at Franklin Aug. 18, 1823.

The meetings at Coweta were discontinued, but the church met occasionally afterward at Sugarfork. A new meeting house was built at Franklin in 1823.

It is said that the first building erected for the Franklin Baptist church about the year 1823 was located near the mouth of the Cullasaga river near Franklin. It is certain that this church from 1822 onwards became the mother of several other organizations in the county or section. It was in 1824 and 1825 that many members were received at a branch arm of the church located at Dillard's school house, most likely near the present town of Dillard. In 1827 this arm of the church became an independent body.

James Whittaker was a competent clerk of the Franklin church over one hundred years ago. He kept neat records. His records show that Cowee church was organized in 1828 after existing as an arm of the Franklin body for some time.

The Franklin church contemplated the erection of a new building in the year 1828, but it was decided to wait until the grant of land should be secured from the state, which was done in 1829. The records show that the grant called for three acres and 22 poles and cost \$11.15. This is the land on which the present pastorium is located.

Coweta church was organized out of the membership of Franklin in the year 1831.

Close contact was maintained with the pioneer work at Valley Towns among the Cherokee Indians. Rev. James Kinsey was ordained to the ministry at Franklin, about this time. He was afterwards pastor at Franklin.

It was in 1834 that the church first considered the matter of organizing a Sunday School. Rev. Humphrey Posey was pastor at the time. He and others cordially recommended to the church the project of organizing a Sunday School, commenting on the advantages of such an organization. A conference of ministers and laymen was held at Franklin in 1835. It was about this time that a portion of the members resided on Cartoogechaye. The Franklin church permitted them to form a body of their own. A manual labor school was contemplated in 1836. This indicates that there was an appreciation of culture among the early members. Rev. H. Posey was pastor from 1823 to 1835, when he moved his residence to other parts. He preached extensively all over the mountain districts, going as far as Anderson, S. C. on his preaching tours. His evangelistic labors were highly appreciated by the South Carolina brethren, as is indicated by references to his work in church books perused by the writer near Walhalla.

He was an enlightened and liberal man of God. He made some enemies but his integrity was unimpeached. He was held in high regard by his Georgia brethren and frequently preached from the same pulpits as Jesse Mercer and others of his type. Rev. Joshua Ammons was ordained by the Franklin church to the gospel ministry. It was he that is said to have taught an Indian how to keep the Sabbath day by boring seven holes in a log, and instructing the Indian to put a peg in a hole every day for six days, and when his six pegs gave out, the vacant hole represented the Sabbath day. It was to be kept holy and no work was to be done.

A small pox scare came to Franklin in the year 1836. This was the year in which Sugarfork church was established, having been formerly a branch of the Franklin church. Burningtown church was organized in 1829. It also had been an arm.

There were only 51 members at Franklin in 1840. This number dropped to 43 the next year. However, many members went out to form the above named new churches. Wautauga was also organized out of the Franklin church. J. D. Franks joined at Wautauga when it was an arm of the Franklin church in 1842.

It was in this year that the church made a great effort to encourage the reading of the bible among her members. The old school house was sold to raise funds for the new Female Academy.

In 1847 Holly Springs was a branch of the Franklin church.

Rev. Joshua Ammons followed H. Posey as pastor at Franklin. He was in turn succeeded by E. Hiden. Seven black members were in the Franklin body in 1855. The black membership was never very large.

Minutes of the church were kept on scraps of paper in 1854 and 55 and they were consequently lost, and are not recorded in the church book. Scraps of paper are usually lost. The church records should be kept up to date and plainly written in the book.

Rev. J. R. Arkons was ordained to the ministry in 1861. He as-

sisted his father at times. Joshua Ammons continued as pastor until about the time of the Civil War. M. Rickman and E. D. Brendle followed him. The building at Franklin was burned about the time of the Civil War, and the body worshiped at Holly Springs for some time, returning to Franklin when the new church was built about 1879. Rev. J. S. Woodard was pastor about 1871. M. Rickman was pastor in 1873.

Francis Elmore was an aged and much respected member at Franklin. He died in 1874, aged 84 years.

A more detailed mention may be given to the members of the church for the past one hundred and seven years at a later time. Many of the most prominent families of the county have been connected with the body during the last century.

### REPORT MADE OF HICKORY TIMBER

Franklin, N. C., April 26 1929.  
Editor Franklin Press.

The tests of hickory specimens taken from Coweta creek and the Ritter logging operation have been completed by the Forest Products Laboratory of the Forest Service at Madison, Wisconsin. Mr. B. H. Paul of the Laboratory spent some time in the vicinity of Franklin last summer collecting material for this study. He published his findings in the April 6 edition of the Southern Lumberman.

According to Mr. Paul.

"The results in the investigation show that, in general, the average strength of Appalachian hickory compares favorably with hickory from other parts of the country. Not all Appalachian hickory, however, has sufficient strength to meet the requirements of the customary uses of hickory. The second growth Appalachian hickory which was tested was as high in shock resisting properties as any hickory tested in the United States."

Old hickory makes up but a small proportion of our virgin stand and the

severe competition with faster growing species has slowed its development and impaired its quality. It was in the slow growth specimens from the old growth trees that defect such as checks, shake and brashness were most apparent.

The present policy of leaving hickory in logging operations will increase the amount of second growth, much of which will be large enough to remove before the competition from other trees becomes too severe.

We quote further from the report. "Because of its usefulness in small size hickory can be grown to merchantable size in a fairly short time. On good soil trees which have sufficient growing space will reach merchantable size in 50 years. Such trees will contain practically all white hickory (sapwood) which will doubtless be an added advantage in marketing it. At present there is very little second growth hickory of merchantable size in Southern Appalachian mountain region."

The article shows cross sections of hickory logs cut on Coweta creek and the Nantahala river and tabulates the comparative tests of virgin and second growth local hickory with that of other sections.

ARTHUR A. WOOD, Forest Supervisor.

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### The Rattlesnake's Age

According to popular belief a rattlesnake acquires a new ring on its rattle each year and hence its age can be told by the number of rings; but this notion is incorrect, biologists say. The rattlesnake adds from 2 to 4 rings a year, usually 3. Under normal conditions a ring is added each time the skin is shed. Soon after birth the last 7 or 8 vertebrae fuse and form a composite bone called the "shaker" around which rings are formed. Terminal rings may be broken off because of wear and accidents, so that in time the number of rings has no relation to the age of the snake.

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