

The Magnolia Methodist Church

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By H. TRACY BROWN
Methodism had quite an early start in and around Magnolia, even before Magnolia came into existence. It was at first called Stricklands, when the town consisted of a country store and perhaps a post office operated by a Mr. Strickland.

About one mile from Stricklands a pioneer family lived on the south side of Carr Branch, a prong of Maxwell Creek, owning a large tract of land on both sides of the main road, and up the branch and over to near Beasley's Millpond. The owner of this land, James Rogers had three sons, James, Jr., Job and Peleg, and one daughter, Isabella. James Rogers, Sr., died, leaving his estate to his four children. Job came in possession of the home farm, now owned by Mr. John R. Croom. James, Jr., helred the land adjoining to the west, up the branch.

On this tract of land a house for worship had been built on the South side of Carr Branch, some distance off the main road. We do not know the date this church was built, but evidently it was built a number of years before the Rogers estate was divided, and prior to the division of the land. The congregation was planning to rebuild when the church was deeded.

Records show that James Rogers, Jr., deeded one acre of land where the church was standing to "Francis Asbury, Bishop of the Methodist Church in America. Value mentioned was five shillings current money, love for Christ and other valuable considerations. This deed is on the Duplin County Registry, dated August 22nd 1794.

This church was on the New River Circuit, which was formed in 1785, embracing Onslow, Jones, Carteret, Craven, and at least part of Lenoir and Duplin Counties. This circuit took its name from the stream, New River in Onslow County. In 1792 this New River Circuit was divided and two new circuits were formed. The Trent Circuit, which was mostly in Jones and Lenoir Counties, and the Goshen Circuit, which extended from Beaufort to as far west as Sampson County. This Circuit was being served (The Carr Branch Church was in this Circuit.) by two preachers, W. E. and William Beaufort. After the Goshen Circuit was formed in 1792 William Ormond, who was born near Kinston, N. C., was the first pastor to serve this new Circuit. This was his second year in the ministry. Although only 23 years of age, he was a man of great power in the pulpit. He was sent to Pamlico in 1793 and then was shifted each year to a different charge during his twelve short years of ministry. Each Circuit felt fortunate in having him while Methodism was striving for existence and growth in the South. He was stricken with Yellow Fever while serving at Norfolk and Portsmouth in October 1803.

The minutes tell us that "he left a legacy to the Conference, and another to build a house for God in the neighborhood of his native town." The church was built and "Ormond's Chapel" will forever perpetuate the memory of the heroic and sainted William Ormond. This Chapel is located between Kinston and Snow Hill.

Records are not available of all of our preachers who served the Carr Branch Church. Daniel Shines came on the Goshen Circuit about 1794; which was the year that this church was deeded to Bishop Asbury. Thomas Easter, a native of Virginia came in 1795, (father of the writer remembers). W. D. Bradford, of North Carolina, came in 1799. We do not know how many years he served the Goshen Circuit.

Evidently one Rev. D. B. Nicholson pastored this church at a much later date, and was the first pastor of our present Magnolia church. Records show that Francis Poythess was presiding elder of the New Bern district, which extended from Cape Hatteras to Asheville in 1800. Jonathan Jackson was presiding elder of the district which included this church for a wide area, extending over into Sampson County. We do not know at what date this Carr Branch Church ceased being used for worship. Undoubtedly the congregation decided to move to a more convenient location and build a more adequate house of worship. This was the beginning of our present Magnolia church.

In 1856 a devout christian and Methodist, Dr. Milton K. Devane, decided a plot of land 60 1/2 feet by 170 feet fronting west on Carlton Street in the town of Stricklandsville (as it was called at this later date) for a Methodist Episcopal Church. South of the Episcopal Church, a large vestible was laid by Rev. D. B. Nicholson, James Peersall, Richard P. Arish, James Carr, So'oman Turner, Blizzell Johnson, Thomas McGee, Clem Glaspie, and Milton K. Devane, Trustees and their successors. The railroad here had laid by this time. The deed mentions this plot being on the west side of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad. We do not know the exact date this building was begun, neither when was completed. Evidently it was built during the present structure is the original.

This edifice, 36 feet by 50 feet, was built of fat pine, with plastered walls. It's designs and fittings show the most skilled workmanship, which very few buildings of that date have. A large vestibule with the entrance with a stairway leading up to the gallery, which seated the colored people in slavery time, also later when any chose to attend a service. The outer materials show much age, but not a slightest bit of decay. Doubtless it would stand for more than another century. In 1904 a large lot was secured on Main Street. A new parsonage was erected on part of the lot. In 1905 the church was moved from the original location, which was directly back of the John F. Croom factory, to the present site on Main Street, where it is now being used for worship. During that year the gallery and the vestibule were removed. The walls were refinished with the best clear pine ceiling that could be obtained. A large vestibule with clear varnish which showed the beautiful grain of the pine.

The pastor, Rev. M. B. Martin, supervised the entire building program and was the first to occupy the new parsonage. Dr. Martin did a great part of the actual work himself, often working alone. During the year of 1945 Sunday School rooms were built inside the auditorium where the vestibule and gallery were. A space of sixteen feet being between the floor and the ceiling gave ample room for two below and two rooms above. The roof was recovered with metal and the outside repainted. Two years later in 1947 the inside was repainted and new carpet laid. All added much to the beauty of the auditorium.

Complete records are not available of this present church, but as far as can be obtained in 1917 and 1918 the official board of stewards consisted of W. R. Newbury, M. B. Taylor, W. L. Merritt, L. C. Chestnut, W. H. Croom and Alton Gaylor. W. H. Croom and Alton Gaylor and M. B. Taylor moved away. L. C. Chestnut and W. L. Merritt retired from the board. The following board was then elected; W. H. Croom, Alton Gaylor, J. L. Southall, W. D. House and H. Tracy Brown.

W. H. Croom who was a life long member until his death in 1923, retired from the board in 1923; W. F. Pickett was then elected, and served generously and efficiently until his death in 1925. The present board of stewards are L. M. Sanderson, Sr., C. H. Pope, treasurer, Mrs. C. H. Pope, H. H. Rouse, H. L. Pippin, C. J. Thomas, L. M. Sanderson, Jr., and H. Tracy Brown. A member of this board, F. N. Barden recently passed away. The church feels its loss very keenly.

The present board of trustees are L. M. Sanderson, Sr., C. H. Pope, Mrs. Marjorie Pickett, C. J. Thomas, Mrs. Elizabeth C. Pippin and Mrs. Mora C. Brown. A member of this board, J. Lester Matthews, of this board, who has recently passed away, he is very much missed. We also wish to mention the late J. C. Horne, who was a substantial and loyal member and officer of this church until his death in 1915.

Four or more buildings have housed the pastors of this grand old church. Three of them yet stand on Main Street and the other, or fourth, is on Faison Street directly across from Mr. Homer Taylor's residence. In this house the beloved Rev. W. A. Forbes resided during his pastorate here in the years 1886 and 1887.

A beautiful home wedding took place there when their charming daughter, Mollie, became the bride of Davis C. Bryant of Wallace, N. C. She is the mother of Mrs. Norman M. Carr of Rose Hill, N. C.

The new parsonage which was built in 1904 was the home of each pastor thereafter until the church was transferred to the Warsaw Charge in 1932. The pastor then

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resided in Warsaw until 1945. The Duplin Charge was then formed of Kenansville, Magnolia and two other churches of that community, with pastors residing in Kenansville to date.

Our records of pastors are incomplete during the early days of the church to the time of the Rev. Randall who was followed by the Reverends Harris, Durant, Betts, McFarland, Forbes, Sawyer, Parker, (father of our past General Supt. A. S. Parker), Warlick, Geddie, Etheridge (who was the first pastor the writer remembers), Wallace, Brothers, M. B. Martin, who was the first pastor to reside in the new parsonage, W. E. Brown, J. E. Wright, J. C. Wheedbee, C. T. Rogers, E. C. Cell, H. M. Jackson, R. F. Munns, J. W. Autry, J. W. Fitzgerald, S. E. Ragland, Chaffin, Futreal, McD. McLamb, W. E. Houtch (who was the last pastor to reside in Magnolia) M. E. Cunningham, G. W. Blount, W. F. Walters, C. J. Andrews, C. T. Thurt, A. M. Williams, pastor in 1945 until June. The Magnolia Church was then grouped with the Duplin Charge.

The Rev. John M. Cline was pastor until Nov. 1947. Due to the shortage of preachers Annual Conference failed to send a regular pastor. We were supplied by the beloved Rev. A. D. Wood through Mr. Wood. In the absence of Mr. Wood, Mrs. Wood filled the

regular appointment on the fourth Sunday morning in May 1948, with a most inspiring message. Mrs. Wood's subject was "Music and its influence and relation to Christian Religion."

During June 1948 Rev. Murrell K. Glover came from Duke Divinity School and served until Nov. 1951. Conference then sent Rev. Robert H. Collins, who was a student at Emory Seminary in Atlanta, Ga. He made monthly visits to North Carolina and preached at each church on the charge, until March 24, 1952, at which time he had graduated at Emory. Mr. Collins then moved his lovely family to the parsonage in Kenansville, and is serving the Magnolia Church most graciously and efficiently.

Layette Shower For Mrs. Bill Wilson

Mrs. Jerry Smith, Mrs. Roscoe Potter and Mrs. William Potter were hostesses at a Layette shower for Mrs. Kenneth Wilson at the home of Mrs. Smith on Tuesday night.

The guests enjoyed a contest for which Mrs. Potter won the prize. Mrs. Wilson opened her lovely gifts after which the hostesses served punch, salted nuts, cake and gimento cheese sandwiches.

The guests were: Mrs. Lester Matthews, Mrs. Beatrice Quinn, Mrs. Julius Tucker, Mrs. Clifton Guy, Mrs. Clifton Chestnut, Mrs. Paul Tucker, Mrs. Sally Tucker, Mrs. Emmett Sasser, Mrs. Jack Joyner, Mrs. Abbie Smith and the honoree, Mrs. Wilson.

Mrs. L. E. Pope Bridge Hostess

Mrs. L. E. Pope entertained her bridge club on Wednesday night at her home which was attractively decorated with hallias, zennias and marigolds. Mrs. L. H. Fussell was the only guest.

Drinks and mints were served to the guests during play.

Also the other churches of the Duplin Charge.

Shop Warsaw A&P 8:30 a. m. to 6 p. m.—Mon., Tues., Thurs., and Fri. 8:30 a. m. to 12 noon Wed., 8:30 a. m. to 8 p. m. Sat.

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Peanut Butter	12-Gms	29c
Margarine	1-Lb. Pkg.	21c
Milk	3 Gall Cans	40c
Green Beans	No. 303 Cans	25c

ARMOUR'S CANNED MEATS

Corned Beef Hash	1-Lb. Can	35c
Vienna Sausage	1/2-size Can	20c
Deviled Ham	1/2-size Can	19c
Corned Beef	12-Oz. Can	49c
Potted Meat	1/2-size Can	15c
Tripe	1-Lb. 8 Oz.	51c
Roast Beef	12-Oz. Can	55c

Surtana Stuffed Olives - 3 1/4-Oz. Fumbler 23c

Ann Page Preserves

Peach	1-Lb. Jar	29c
Desserts	3 Pkg.	17c
Honey	1-Lb. Jar	35c
Corn	12-Oz. Cans	20c

Nabisco Ritz 1-Lb. Pkg. 35c

PICKLES

Sweet Mixed	16-Oz. Jar	22c
Cold Stream Pink Salmon	No. 1 Tall Can	47c

meats

Smoked Short Shank Skinned Hams

Shank Portion	Lb.	55c
Butt Portion	Lb.	59c
Wilson's Corn King Sliced Bacon	Lb.	49c
Jones Print Sausage	1 Lb.	57c
Armours Pig Feet	14 oz. jar	35c
Frozen Buttered Beef Steaks	7 oz.	57c
Pantail Shrimp	10 oz.	76c
Daisy Cheese	1 Lb.	49c

Tea Bags	15c
Spra-Kill	49c Bot. 79c Qt.
Land o' Lakes	37c
Joy	29c
Woodbury	23c
Bab-O	13c
Palmolive Soap	23c
Palmolive Soap	23c
Cashmere Bouquet Soap	23c
Cashmere Bouquet Soap	23c
Octagon	13c
Super Suds	28c
Vel	29c
Dial Soap	27c
Dial Soap	17c
Lava Soap	19c
Duz	28c

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