

HISTORY OF THE MAYSVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

The writer of this sketch wishes to acknowledge that valuable assistance in compiling data for these pages was rendered by Miss Florence Wooten. It was only at her suggestion that the work was commenced.

H. LeRoy Harris

Maysville, N. C.
August 14, 1941

THE MAYSVILLE METHODIST CHURCH:
A SKETCH

By H. LeRoy Harris

**

Country Church

Set like a jewel in this wind-swept plain,
Its clapboards rising upward from the sod,
The country church stands staunch through
wind and rain,

And there they come for miles to worship God.
And now they find him waiting for them there,
Far from the city's clamoring din and strife,
Among their own fields, swept with clean sweet air
That is fragrant with the essence of life.

Within these walls life has its sacred part;
Bright drops of water bless the very young,
And many a heart has here been joined to heart,
And many a farewell hymn has here been sung,
And neighbor joins his neighbor, clear of eye,
In praising God beneath this country sky.

— Grace Noll Crowell

There is uncertainty as to the exact date when the Methodists held their first service in Maysville. An old Register of the Onslow Circuit, the oldest record book the writer of this sketch has been able to examine, lists, the very last thing in the book, 32 names under the head "Maysville Class." The other churches on the Circuit at the time, as listed, were the following: Queen's Creek, Swansboro, Tabernacle, Jacksonville, Bethlehem, Hopwell, Stella and Mt. Lebanon.

The oldest entry under ^{the} "Maysville Class" is of the date 1891. Twelve of the names are listed as having been

received by Rev. F. S. Becton, the first being that of Sallie Collins. The list is as follows:

Sallie Collins	S. S. Warters
Abrum Collins	Lara Warters
K. R. Hay	W. F. Mattocks
Lin Mattocks	Julia Mattocks
Elizabeth Waters	Frank Mattocks
Mary Willis	John B. Dixon
Anie Dudley	Jenie Dixon
Ryanza E. Weeks	E. S. Dixon
Ernest L. Mattocks	Joseph ^{ine} R. Dixon
Bena Mattocks	Robart B. Dixon
A. C. Foscue	Sarah E. Maides
Martha Baker	Sardenia Maides
J. M' Foscue	Anie Hay
Sula Foscue	D. J. Watson
E. H. Waters	Laura Watson
Marvend ⁱⁿ Warters	Annie Collins

F. S. Becton is described as a local preacher who resided out of the County who served Onslow Circuit about the year 1891. He held his first services in the School house, a building now converted into a dwelling and generally known as the Worsley House.

The auditorium of the present church was the first structure erected in Maysville by the Methodists. This building was commenced about 1901 and completed in 1904 at a cost of about \$1,200.00. About this time C. H. Mattocks began work on the parsonage. This building was completed and

accepted by the building committee, September 1, 1904. The cost of the parsonage is given as \$1,000.00

The building committee was composed of the following: A. C. Foscue, Chairman, K. R. Hay, and J. T. Henderson. The following assisted with the actual work of construction: G. H. Mattocks, James Koonce, John L. Henderson and Edgar Whitty. The dedication was held in June 1904, at the time of holding the Second Quarterly Conference. The Presiding Elder of the Wilmington District, R. B. John, was in charge of the services. The pastor at this time was Rev. B. C. Geddie. The total debt of construction had not been paid at the time of dedication. K. R. Hay had in hand a number of pledges. For the amount of these pledges Mr. Hay became personally responsible.

This one-room building, quite adequate for worship services but totally inadequate for educational purposes, continued to serve the congregation until 1939 when the educational unit as it now stands was completed.

In November 1937, H. L. Harris was sent to the Maysville Charge. He discovered upon his arrival that a more adequate building was needed for the educational work of the church. The enrollment of the church school at this time was 89. Classes were compelled to use the cars or the outdoors for their meetings. An Adult Class for ladies with Mrs. Harris as teacher, met in the pastor's study in the parsonage. This arrangement at best was a poor makeshift

but in cold, inclement weather, it was most impossible.

There was, the pastor soon discovered, much sentiment for building an educational unit. Actual steps had already been taken in this direction. Miss Lillian Foscue, president of the Womans' Missionary Society, in her report to the Fourth Quarterly Conference at Belgrade, November 4, 1922, said: "We are planning larger things for the future. Expect to hold our annual bazarr in December to add to our S. S. Room fund."

Sometime previous to November 1937, under the leadership of Rev. C. A. Andrews, pastor, Mr. H. N. Haines supervising architect with the Duke Endowment, had visited Maysville with the object of drawing plans for the new unit. But no formal request had been made to the Endowment Board for help to this end.

When the matter was presented to the secretary of the Endowment Board, Rev. J. M. Ormand of Durham, he offered every encouragment. When a formal application had been made, after canvassing our membership, things began to move. Our people responded very satisfactorily. The Board of Stewards composed of the following, B. L. Mattocks, Thos. H. Foscue, Rudolph Pelletier, R. L. Mattocks and S. W. Howard, resolved itself into a building committee. Rudolph Pelletier was elected treasurer. Our people pledged \$1,142.75 as their part of the project. The Endowment Board promised \$1,050.00. This amount to be paid in installments as the work progressed.

The last installment to be paid when that amount would complete the building free of indebtedness.

Mr. Haines submitted the plans which the congregation accepted and the actual work of construction commenced in the spring of 1939. The pastor reported to the Fourth Quarterly Conference, October, 22, 1939, "The Maysville project is practically completed." I. H. House and Edgar Whitty, the latter had part in constructing the older unit, had charge of the work. There was no volunteer labor. In December 1940 the central heating unit was installed. At this time the interior remains to be painted and there is a small amount of about \$200 to be paid on the heating unit.

II.

Few institutions can boast of a history that is more interesting than the church. And when this history is traced down to the local church it becomes something more than interesting because those who play the parts are our friends and our neighbors and often our kinsfolk. Pity it is we do not preserve more of this history as we go along.

The Onslow Circuit of which Maysville was a part, existed until as late as 1915. Among the earliest Quarterly Conference records, that of the First Quarterly Conference, January 9, 1909, we find the following line-up of officers: W. L. Cinningim, presiding Elder, J. T. Stanford, pastor, J. M. Foscue, E. H. Waters, K. R. Hay and E. L. Mattocks were stewards and trustees. E. H. Bell was trustee at this time, an office he continued to hold until his death. A. C. Foscue was superintendent of the Sunday school. In response

to question 29, "Who are confirmed as officers of Epworth League?" the following answer was given: "Clarence Mattocks, Gertrude Ward, Mrs. Rena Whitty, Mrs. Dinnie Mattocks." In the pastor's report he said, "We have no Leagues...Our Sunday Schools number 6."

In the official roll for next year, 1910, we find the presiding Elder and pastor of the preceding year continued. C. M. Mattocks succeeds A. C. Foscue as superintendent of the Sunday School and continued to serve until 1913 when he was succeeded by B. L. Mattocks, the present incumbent. At the present time Brother B. L. Mattocks has served 28 years in this honorable office, a record for the Maysville church. His example for faithfulness and loyalty is entitled to honorable mention in any history of the Maysville Methodist Church.

The stewards for the year 1913, were: E. L. Mattocks, J. M. Foscue and K. R. Hay. Rev. L. E. Thompson was Presiding Elder and R. L. Carraway was pastor. Rev. Thompson succeeded Rev. N. H. D. Wilson who in turn succeeded W. L. Cunningham. Rev. Wilson held his First Quarterly Conference at Maysville on January 30, 1911. He only served the District two years.

The number of Sunday schools on the Charge varied from time to time, season to season. Sometime the pastor would report one, sometimes 6. We note, however, that whatever happened to the others, the Maysville School continued to function. Rev. E. C. Sell in his report to the Quarterly Conference of March 2, 1914, said: "Our Sunday Schools in the County have suspended. We now have but one on the Charge."

This school is at Maysville. It is well attended and doing good work." In spite of that formidable list of officers that was sometime before confirmed as directors of the Epworth League, the pastor, E. G. Sell, said, on this same report, "We have no Epworth Leagues." In October of this same year the pastor in his report to the Fourth Quarterly Conference complains of no marked interest in the Sunday Schools, yet the school at Maysville, he says, is well attended and in good condition.

The next year at the First Quarterly Conference, February 22, 1915, the pastor reports 3 Sunday Schools. Edgar Whitty was elected steward at this conference in place of K. R. Hay, resigned. At the Fourth Quarterly Conference the pastor reported five Sunday Schools. But at the First Quarterly Conference of the next year, February 21, 1916, there were only 3 Sunday Schools, Maysville, Belgrade and Tabernacle. This was in that period, doubtless, when many of our schools followed the old practice of going into winter quarters, a practice, we are glad to say, that no longer obtains on the Maysville Charge. At the Third Quarterly Conference the pastor said, "Our school at Maysville is well attended. The others are not doing as well as we desire."

From time to time there are little interesting references to the work at Maysville like the many we have already cited and that of the pastor, Rev. J. G. Harmon, in his report of February 6, 1927, "There were 80 present at Maysville Sunday School January 31."

Through the years the women of the Maysville Church have played a conspicuous part in the life of the

Church. There are good reasons to believe that the members of the Missionary Society, or the Womans' Society of Christian Service as it has come recently to be called, were largely responsible either as a group or as individuals for the final construction of the educational unit of the Church. Perhaps sometime later we shall have a more comprehensive history of the work done by this group of women.

It would seem that the president of the Woman's Society, Miss Lillian Foscoe, who shares honors with Bro. B. L. Mattocks for long years of faithful service, helped to keep this objective before the Church. In her report to the Quarterly Conference on November 4, 1922, she said: "The Woman's Missionary Society at Maysville has 22 members. The attendance isn't as good as it should be, averaging only about 12. Dues up to date \$26.20. Pledge \$19.65 but we hope to make it \$25.00 or more. Have done some local work and raised only about \$25.00. We are planning larger things for the future. Expect to hold our annual Bazzar in December to add to our S. S. Room fund."

It is interesting to compare this report with the one presented by the same president to the Fourth Quarterly Conference at Belgrade, October 20, 1940. It reads:

"On Sept. 9, our Woman's Missionary Society met and with the assistance of our pastor, our Society was re-organized which became 'Woman's Society for Christian Service! For charter members there were 15 members present, with five or six absent members to come in in the October meeting. Each

member pledged hearty support and co-operation in the new Society. Former officers were re-elected.

"Our objective for local work just now is to assist in raising funds for heating plant in our Church. Payment on our annual pledge of \$50.00 is encouraging. We hope to raise this amount."

This department of the Church reported 23 members to the Annual Conference in 1940.

The re-organization referred to in the above report had to do, of course, with the new set-up in this division of the Church following the union of the three branches of American Methodism. It is to the credit of the Woman's division that it was among the first units to effect the new organization in such a manner that it was felt even down into each local group.

The following were present for the initial meeting of the new Society and are listed as charter members: Mrs. Annie Hay, Mrs. Jimmie Meadows, Mrs. G. H. Jenkins, Mrs. C. W. Brock, Mrs. N. N. Mattocks, Mrs. B. L. Mattocks, Mrs. R. L. Mattocks, Mrs. A. J. Taylor, Mrs. J. W. Bullock, Mrs. Ralph Collins, Mrs. H. L. Harris, Miss Myrtle Bynum, Miss Lillian Foscoe and Miss Florence Wooten.

Indications of the interest the Maysville Church has taken in the Young People may be seen in the effort to keep alive the Sunday School and the Epworth League. This interest is further reflected in the educational life of this group extending beyond the confines of the immediate community. The following report has

peculiar interest as we reflect back over the years. The following quotation is taken from the pastor's report to the Third Quarterly Conference at Hopewell, July 15, 1922 and is signed by L. E. Sawyer:

"Of the 10 of our people attending college only 2 have been in our own schools, of the other 8, Cephus Foscue has just graduated at the A and E. Miss Ruby Holland has just graduated at E.C. T. College; Miss Kitty Bell, Clara Foscue and Yetta Brock have been attending the State Normal. Miss Eloise Redd has been at E. C. T. College; Miss Hazel Mattocks has been at the Conservatory in Durham and Carlton Bynum has been at Chapel Hill."

III.

Not the least interesting part of a sketch of this kind is that which has to do with that company of men who have preached the Gospel from the sacred pulpit and have been entrusted with the oversight and supervision of our work in its many aspects. Perhaps the very mention of these names will recall for some a happy experience of other days and make vivid once again some life that is no longer among us.

We list below the names of those who have lead the work in the Wilmington District and who have made regular visits to our community together with the date of appointment and the number of years served:

<u>Date appointed</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Years served</u>
1898	R. F. Bumpas	2 years
1900	R. B. John	4 "
1904	M. Bradshaw	2 "

1906	W. L. Cunningim	4 years
1910	N. H. D. Wilson	2 "
1912	L. E. Thompson	4 "
1916	J. H. Shore	4 "
1920	J. M. Daniel	4 "
1924	H. A. Humble	2 "
1926	H. M. North	4 "
1930	W. C. Martin	3 "
1933	L. B. Jones	2 "
1935	W. A. Cade	5 "
1940	A. S. Parker	

Perhaps those who have entered more directly in intimately into the lives of our people are the preachers who have been appointed to our Church and Circuit.

The first of these is the Rev. F. S. Becton who has already been referred to in this sketch. In the oldest available register there appears the "Maysville Class" with 32 names. Twelve of these are listed as entries by F. S. Becton. Sallie Collins heads the list. This is of the date, 1891. There are 20 other names but no information is given as to the name of the pastor receiving them or the date of their reception. The list of Brother Becton concludes with the name of Mrs. Annie Hay, received by certificate in January 1902.

The next pastor was Rev. W. A. Jenkins. His first entry in the Register is the name of Octavia LaRoque, received by certificate, February 19, 1903. Eleven names are added by this pastor, concluding with that of Lorena Whitty, October 23, 1903. The Rev. T. R. Jenkins, son of the Rev. W. A.

Jenkins, was born in Maysville and now a member of the North Carolina Conference. The widow and mother lives at 808 Second Street, Durham, N. C.

The Rev. D. C. Geddie, who was pastor when the Church was dedicated, made his first entry in the Register, January 16, 1905, being the name of Daisy Pridgen, received by certificate. Seventeen names altogether are entered by this pastor. The last being that of Josephus C. Foscoe received by vows and baptism, November 1908. Rev. Geddie came to Maysville when there was no parsonage. He lived for a while in the Collins' House. He later moved to the home of Mr. and Mrs. K. R. Hay where he lived until the parsonage was completed. They were the first to occupy the new parsonage erected on the corner ^{Jenkins Ave. & 4th St.} lot now occupied by Miss Scenia Henderson. At a later date this parsonage was disposed of and the present parsonage was purchased. ^{next to Cor}

J. T. Stanford succeeded D. C. Geddie. He made ^{4th St.} his first entry in the Register in 1909, being the name of Edward P. Godwin, received by certificate. The last name is that of LeRoy Hay received by vows in 1912. The Register shows that he received a total of 43 into the membership of the Church. One notes that this pastor was so beloved by certain members of the Charge that the parents gave the name "Stanford" to a son born during this time. I make mention of Stanford Melville, son of Mr. and Mrs. Claude Melville of Tabernacle community.

T. W. Lee came to the pastorate in 1916. His first

entry is the name of Wardie M. Collins, received by vows, July 30, 1917; the last being that of Alma H. McDaniel, received by certificate, November 15, 1919. There was a total of 58 added to the membership of the church during T. W. Lee's pastorate. This seems to be the largest number of additions added to date by any pastor.

M. W. Hester entered his first name on the register, November 7, 1920, being that of Hiram McDaniel, received by vows; his last was that of R. L. Steed received by certificate of the same date. He entered a total of 13 names.

L. E. Sawyer made his first entry on January 10, 1922, being the name of James Thomas Harrison, received by vows. His last entry was that of Mary Gerock of the date August 10, 1924. He added a total of 25 names.

It should be said here that Rev. R. L. Caraway succeeded J. T. Sanford in 1913 and served one year. His only entry in the Register is the name of Mattie Hurst Deloach. No date or manner of reception is given.

E. C. Sell is the only man who has served the Church at two different times. His first appointment was in 1914 when he served for two years. His second appointment was in 1925 when he served one year. During his first term he entered 16 names, beginning with that of Wiley P. Stallins, received by certificate and concludes with that of Albert J. Taylor, received by vows, August 4, 1916. During his second pastorate his first entry was the name of Mrs. George Jenkins received by certificate in 1925; his last was Mollie M. Eubaaks, received by vows, October 3, 1926.

J. C. Harmon came to the work in 1926, following the second pastorate of E. C. Sell. He made his first entry in the Register, February 6, 1927, being the name of Mark Jarman, received by certificate. His last entry was that of Mrs. Ray Gibson, received by certificate, June 21, 1929. His total entries, 58, being the same as that of T. W. Lee.

M. W. Lawrence made his first entry, April 16, 1931, being the name of Mrs. Zena Mills Foscue, received by certificate. His last entry was the name of Mrs. Bryan Gerock, received by certificate, April 4, 1932. Lawrence received a total of 39 into the membership of the church during his two years pastorate.

N. M. Wright succeeded Lawrence and made his first entry, Mrs. Wright, on Nov. 28, 1932. His last was the name of Mary Howard Goodwin, received by certificate, October 24, 1938. He added a total of 5 names to the membership of the church.

Chester A. Andrews made his first entry, Mrs. Andrews, on December 15, 1933; his last was that of Mrs. Paul R. Pittman, received by certificate, July 23, 1937. There was a total of 37 added during the pastorate of Mr. Andrews.

H. L. Harris made his first entry, Annie Lois Bynum, received by vows, May 8, 1938; the total added by this pastor to date is 34.

And so the procession goes on. We have only told a few of the things that ought to be told but we trust some

intimation has been given of the part the Maysville Methodist Church has played in the life of the community. We do not know the nature of the chapters that are yet to be written. We can hope that they will ever be chapters of increasing usefulness under the leadership of the Holy Spirit who has, we believe under God, called this Church into being. May this beginning, imperfect though it may be, have a likeness to Tennyson's poem, in the continuity of its life, going on forever.
