

150th ANNIVERSARY OF AIMWELL CHURCH

Sunday was the occasion for the celebration of the 150 years of existence of Aimwell church on Cedar Creek. Many gathered at the church of their forefathers to enjoy the program.

An interesting feature of the program was a list of the pastors from 1790 to 1940 printed on the back of the leaflet. This will be a keepsake for the 193 persons in attendance. The oldest member present was Mrs. Cynthia Miller Coleman, who is in her 94th year. During the historical sketch, descendants of the following families were recognized: Roseboroughs, Rebinsons, Craigs, Kennedys, Hoods, Walkers, Goza, Hunters, Campbells, Clevelands, Davis and Means. Children present representing the 6th generation from Mr. and Mrs. John Roseborough, founders of the church, included: Eloise Gettys of Lugoff, Jane Edmunds, Marion Edmunds and Rhoda Johnson of Columbia.

Dr. Barron of Columbia made a splendid talk on "Loyalty." He stated, "The greatest quality of a nation is justice, and the greatest quality of a man is loyalty." Dr. Oliver Johnson of Winnsboro led the devotional in the afternoon. "If our thoughts of the past are right and those of the future are right, then we have peace."

The "In Memoriam," written by Mrs. Herbert Ruff, who attended services at old Aimwell when a girl, was delivered by George Kennedy, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Kennedy. Mrs. Silas McMeekin, nee Mattie Tidwell, very charmingly gave the response to the welcome given by the pastor, Rev. B. H. Franklin. The history, as read by W. R. Goodson, proved very interesting. It is hoped we have a more complete record published in booklet form at some time.

The music was furnished by Mrs. Boyd Johnson of Columbia, a former member of the church, Mrs. George Crawford and George Moore of Winnsboro, the Junior choir under the direction of Miss Elmo Hinnant, James Edmunds and Mrs. Silas McMeekin assisting to make up a quartet and Mrs. J. F. Dobson. The organist was Mrs. H. Weir. Mrs. Jack Threatt was accompanist. Kathryn Dobson was violinist, assisting the Junior choir.

The church was made beautiful with flowers given by the children of the late C. D. Tidwell, in his memory and those given by the Kiwanis club.

A bountiful basket lunch was

served on the church lawn. Every one enjoyed this social feature.

On display in the church were the following interesting articles: a footstool from old Aimwell church in the cemetery; a Bible given to the church by Miss Sallie Means; the silver baptismal bowl, pitcher, two goblets and two plates presented to the church by the ladies in 1859 and the present communion set in use given by Talmadge Bolick in honor of his mother, Mrs. Sallie Bolick. The pulpit furniture was given by the late Miss Leila Brown in memory of her brother, the late Mr. Reid Brown, who was a faithful member of the church for many years. His widow, Mrs. Reid Brown, now of Waco, Texas, was present for the occasion.

The present officers of the church are: Elders Mr. C. R. Spencer, Mr. A. B. Coleman and Mr. C. C. Reed; Deacons Mr. W. H. Kennedy, Mr. Edward Tidwell, Mr. W. R. Goodson and Mr. J. W. Starnes (elect). Mrs. H. Weir is president of the Ladies' auxiliary, Mrs. W. B. Kennedy is vice president. Mr. A. B. Coleman is supt. of the Sunday school with Mr. Edward Tidwell as secretary and treasurer.

As we face the future may we not forget the faith and zealous good works of our forefathers, who with God's guidance have given us such a rich heritage!

HISTORY OF AIMWELL CHURCH ON CEDAR CREEK

When John Roseborough and his wife, Ann Cubit, moved from the Lebanon section of Fairfield county to Ridgeway in 1790, they brought with them a fervent desire to organize a church such as existed in their former community. The old brick church, a church for all denominations, had been organized in 1745. Here in their new surroundings, services were held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Roseborough until land was given for a church site and thus, Aimwell church on Cedar Creek had its beginning.

An old session book has in its minutes this statement: "On the 1st Saturday in January, 1840, the semi-centenary was observed and 63 dollars was subscribed for the board of publication." How proud they were! This little church of 37 members! And now today we are enjoying an anniversary and a home-coming in our 150th year of service. Our roll today numbers

80 members.

The early records of the church were not kept, but in 1841 the Rev. M. Peden, pastor, wrote a history of the church as he gleaned the facts from the older members of the church who remembered its first 50 years. We are using these facts in this paper.

The church on Cedar Creek, known by the title of Aimwell, was recognized as a church under the care of the Presbytery of South Carolina and was received under its care on October 25, 1799. The first church building was built about the year 1799 on a piece of land given for that purpose, the year previous by Mr. Francis Robinson, who owned land on Cedar Creek in the section where Mr. John Hood now lives. The membership then is supposed to have been thirty. Shortly after the erection of this first church, the Rev. George Reed became pastor and continued his services for 7 years. Mr. John Roseborough was ordained as the first elder. Two years later, Mr. William Robinson was made the second elder.

In the two years following the resignation of the Rev. George Reed the church was without a supply, receiving an occasional sermon from the Rev. William G. Roseborough or the Rev. Porter, when it received a stated supply from the Rev. Anthony W. Ross. He served Aimwell, Winnsboro and Salem from 1808-1822 (14 years). The church must have been feeble and the services quite infrequent for it is tradition that the pastor preached only twice one summer, and that at Mr. John Roseborough's house. During this period of neglect the church building caught fire from the old straw field and was entirely consumed.

A log building was then erected on the site across from the N. Z. Crumptions as near as we can learn. This building was used until 1833 when the frame building was erected in the present Aimwell cemetery on land given by Mr. Edward G. Palmer of Valencia. During this period the Rev. M. A. McKennie served as pastor for a year. He was succeeded by the Rev. William Brearly, a graduate of Princeton seminary, who also served Sion church in Winnsboro, giving Aimwell church only one fourth of his time. His 14 years of service must have meant much to the community.

The old session book, which we prize, was first used under the pastorate of the Rev. Mitchell Peden, beginning in 1838. He wrote, "We have endeavored to collect all facts as accurately as possible and record them that future members may have some trace of this church in its origin." "The kind hand of providence has preserved and kept alive this little

vine through almost a half century. The only regular preaching was supplies one Sabbath in the month. The smallest and most destitute portion of his Zion is not forgotten by him." At that time there were 37 members of the church including two black members.

The building erected in 1833 was the third church building for the congregation and was dedicated to the service of Almighty God by the Rev. G. W. Boggs on November 18, 1859.

At this point we wish to read a description of Aimwell church written by Mrs. Herbert Ruff. "On the highway winding from Winnsboro to Ridgeway there is an old cemetery and in the center of the grave yard proper stood an old church, white, four-square, with a recessed porch and columns. There were two doors opening on the porch and in the enclosed ends were concealed the steps leading up to the gallery where the servants sat. In the body of the church were three rows of pews. A melodian, given by Miss Sallie Means, stood near the pulpit. The choir was composed of Mrs. Henry Davis, Miss Anne Thomas, Miss Mattie Roseborough, Mrs. Billy Roseborough and Mr. John Roseborough with Miss Sallie Means at the melodian. Behind the church, built of sturdy logs, was the session house, with a huge fire place. This picture is still fresh in the memory of some of our older members.

Going back to the year 1842, we find recorded the loss of four members of the church. Mr. John Roseborough, the founder of the church, who had been an elder more than 30 years; his wife, Ann and two sons, Dr. J. T. Roseborough and William Roseborough. Special mention is made of the vigilance of Mr. Roseborough and his love for his church. "He died a servant of the Lord, full of grace and lamented by the entire community." In this year 1842 we read that Presbytery, lasting 6 days, met at the church for the first time. Rev. M. Peden preached the sermon from Malachi 11-7. At this time the elders were: John E. Robinson, Alex. Robinson, John M. Goza and Geo. K. Hunter. Mr. Goza lived in the Goza home still standing on the Longtown road. Maj. George Hunter, a son of a Presbyterian minister of North Carolina, lived in what we know as the Hudson home on the Longtown road. The Robinsons resided in the Cedar Creek section out near the now John Hood property.

The Rev. C. G. Logan became pastor in 1845 preaching two Sabbaths a month. The tablet in the church is a memorial to him. Following him Rev. J. J. DuBose served Horeb and Aimwell. At this time we find the names of the Craigs and the Kennedys on the roll. Robert K. Roseborough, grandfather of Mrs. J. S. Parker, Mrs. Heins, Mrs. Nelson and Mrs. McCarrel, was elected an elder in 1850. Rev. G. W. Boggs was pas-

tor when the church was dedicated in 1859. That date is encribed on our baptismal bowl. Mrs. Herbert Ruff was the first baby baptised using this bowl. The Rev. J. G. Richards served one year. He was followed by Rev. J. C. Kennedy who lived in the manse still standing across from the Spence residence. He served during the period of the War Between the States. Presbytery of Harmony met at Aimwell October 2, 1861. J. M. Goza, R. R. Koseborough, G. R. Hunter and A. K. Craig were elders at that time. In 1866 the names of Dr. J. W. Campbell (father of the late Archie Campbell) and Mr. J. F. Kennedy were added to the list of elders.

It is interesting to note that the church was real strict in its dealings with its members. A person was examined by the session and if they gave satisfactory evidence of Christian piety they were admitted to the church. A party absented himself from church one year and was suspended until he gave evidence of repentance. After due notice from the pulpit the session suspended from church privileges any member who was known

to dance or have given a dance.

In 1865 there were 65 white members and 40 colored members. The slaves were enrolled by first names as belonging to Mr. so and so. The trustees of Aimwell church were: Maj. G. R. Hunter, R. R. Roseborough, A. K. Craig, who lived where Claude Youngblood lives, and Col. H. C. Davis, the father of Mrs. Herbert Ruff. The church gave \$250 toward the pastor's salary.

When the Rev. N. W. Edmunds was pastor in 1869-1880 a union Sunday school was organized. Mrs. Ruff tells that the Episcopal children met in pews under the balcony, with Miss Henrietta Thomas as teacher. This class consisted of Mrs. Ruff's brother and sister, Harry Davis, Kate Davis; Ella Thomas, E. G. Palmer, Gertrude Palmer and Louise Palmer, sisters of the late N. W. Palmer and Mattie Black (Mrs. Harry DesPortes).

When the present building was built on this site, it was first used as a chapel for prayer meetings, being more convenient for the town members. The church in the cemetery was taken down and removed to be used again as a

church by the colored congregation of Presbyterians on the Smallwood road. And so this is the fourth church to serve the congregation known as Aimwell on Cedar Creek in its 150 years of existence.

The list of pastors who have served the church are printed on the back of the program for your keepsake. Each one is very dear to us. We would like to mention that it was during the pastorate of Rev. J. G. Herndon in 1899 that the 100th anniversary of the acceptance of the church into the Presbytery of South Carolina was

celebrated. The organ was purchased then, being selected by Mrs. George Moore of Longtown, who was teaching here at that time.

The pulpit, chairs, and table were presented to the church by Miss Leila Brown in honor of her brother, Mr. Reid Brown, husband of our "Miss Pet". He served the church as elder for 23 years in every capacity with zeal, loyalty, and efficiency. He loved the church with his whole heart."

Longtown church, organized 58 years ago, under the care of Rev.

J. R. McAlpin has been served continuously by the same pastor as Aimwell. Rowan chapel at Lugo has been connected with this pastorate since 1924 when Rev. T. B. Hay came to us from the seminary in Columbia. Rowan chapel is using the silver goblet and pitcher presented to Aimwell church by the ladies of the church during the '60's. Our present pastor, Rev. B. H. Franklin, has been with us since 1927. The communion set now in use was given in honor of Mrs. Sallie Bolick, who was a member of the church a number of years. This was a gift of Mr. Talmadge Bolick, her son.

We wish to express our indebtedness for the material in this paper to Mrs. Herbert Ruff and to Mr. R. A. Meares. Our years have been 150-. What progress we have made and the services we have rendered are due in a large part to the faithful pastors, officers, and members of the congregation, with God's guidance. As we look into the future may we not forget the faith and the zealous good works of our forefathers."

E. D. GOODSON

Memorial Presented To Aimwell Church

Aimwell church in Ridgeway is the recipient of a memorial in the form of racks for hymn books on each pew. This gift was given by Mrs. W. B. Kennedy in memory of her daughter, Miss Sarah Kennedy, who was a faithful member of the church a number of years. Miss Kennedy was a gifted musician and gave untiringly of her time and talent in the work of the church. At the time of her death Miss Kennedy was supervisor of music in Parker District and Greenville city schools. The congregation of Aimwell appreciates this gift in memory of one of its most loyal daughters.