

## CHAPTER I

### OUR ASSOCIATE BEGINNINGS

Reverend James Lyle

1825-1834



ethel congregation was organized in Winnsborough, South Carolina, and first appears on the roll of the Associate Presbytery of the Carolinas in 1823. It was not affiliated with the Associate Reformed Church which had been organized in Philadelphia, but was connected with the Associate Church which still had some ministers in the South.

It was in December, 1823, that a petition appeared in the Legislative Journal of South Carolina. It was addressed to "the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of South Carolina" by "sundrie inhabitants of the town of Winnsborough and others praying to be incorporate by the name of Bethel Church of the town of Winnsborough."<sup>1</sup>

The following is the petition:

"Your petitioners, members of the Associate Church, having formed themselves into a religious society, and organized a church in the town of Winnsborough, Fairfield District, under the care of the Presbytery of the Carolinas, in behalf of themselves and others who now or may hereafter become members of said church humbly pray to be incorporated by the name and style of 'Bethel Church of the town of Winnsboro' with the usual rights and privileges annexed to Societies incorporated for similar purposes. "And your petitioners will ever pray."

Signed by:

"James Elder  
Robert Cathcart  
John Sterling  
R. Barkley  
C. Beard  
Jno. McMaster  
Hugh McMullan  
Wm. M. Gowan

James Elliott  
William Smith  
John Barber  
Robert G. Barber  
Alexander McDowell  
James Cathcart, Junior  
Hugh Barkley  
Isaac Walker"

The name Bethel means "house of God." As recorded in Genesis 28:11-22, Jacob said, when he beheld the angels ascending and descending the ladder which reached from earth to heaven, above which the Lord himself stood, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

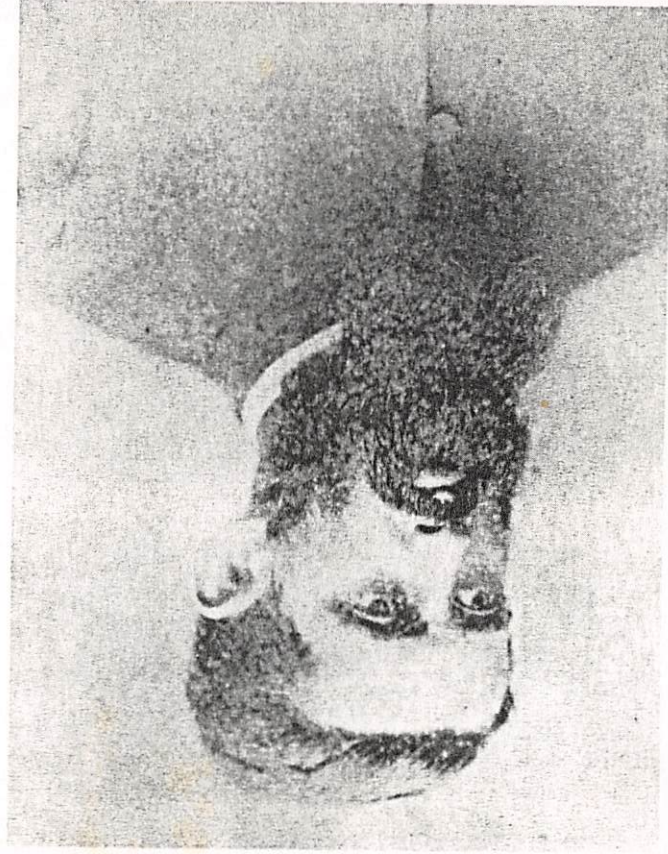


*John McMaster*

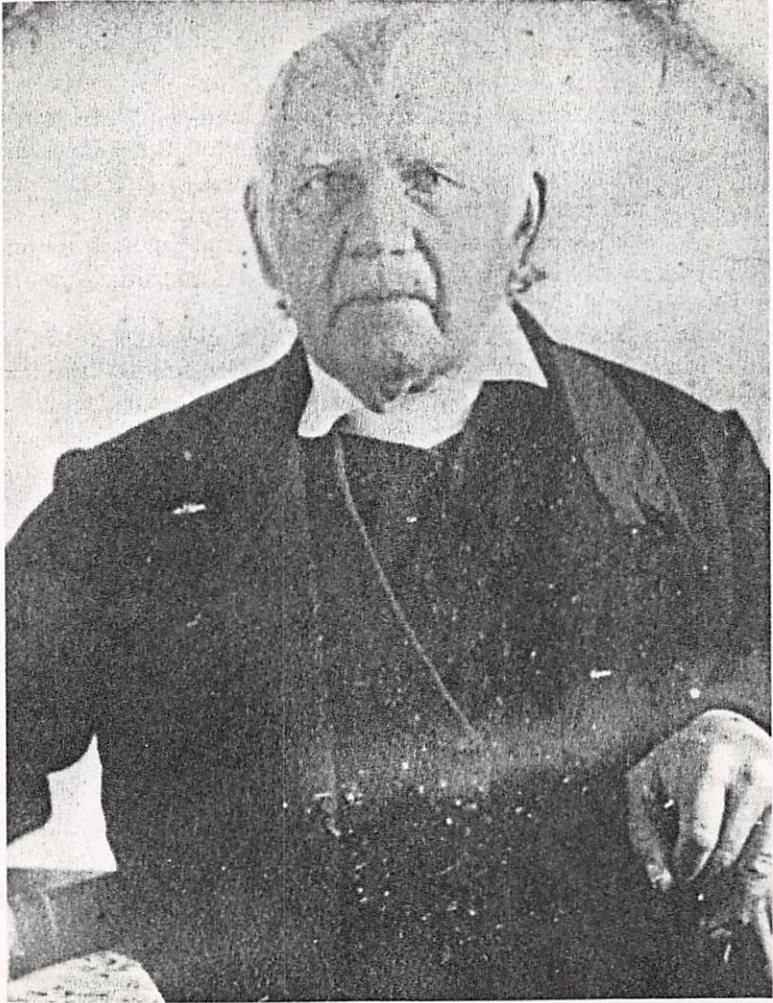
John McMaster



Mrs. Rachel Elliott Rosborough Pressly  
Daughter of Henry I. Elliott



Reverend Neill E. Pressly



James Elliott

## CHAPTER II

### ASSOCIATE REFORMED AFFILIATION

Reverend Thomas Ketchin

1840-1852



In the twenty-eighth day of May, in the year of Our Lord eighteen hundred-forty-two, a group of four men met with the Reverend Thomas Ketchin for the purpose of re-organizing the congregation of Bethel and electing ruling elders so that "Ecclesiastical order may be maintained among us." The minutes of this meeting, the first written records of the church in existence, were recorded by the pastor protem, and stated that "after the breaking dispensations that had passed over them as a congregation, they needed to ascertain who their members were adhering to the Lord's cause as professed by the Associate Reformed Synod of the South, and to consider admitting others who wished to join them." The individuals present at this meeting were "James Elliott, Esquire, Messrs. John McMaster, James Cathcart and John McDowell."<sup>1</sup>

Of the four men who met with Rev. Ketchin, in May 1842, John McMaster and James Cathcart were natives of County Antrim, Northern Ireland. John McMaster had come to South Carolina from Northern Ireland with his widowed mother in 1789, as a child of two. He was a veteran of the War of 1812, an inn-keeper, and the postmaster (a position which he held for forty years).

James Cathcart and his family had come from County Antrim, in 1816. He acquired a great deal of property in Winnsborough and the surrounding area.

James Elliott was born near Richburg, S.C., the youngest child of Daniel Elliott, who was killed by the Tories, in 1780. He was a silversmith and also served as Clerk of Court of Fairfield County.

John McDowell was listed in the census of 1829 as being the head of a family of eight.

Like many of the Scottish folk these men were God-fearing, Bible-reading, education-respecting Psalm singers, often dour and reticent, yet self-reliant and law-abiding citizens. Their forbears having suffered persecution at the hands of Roman Catholics and the Established Church of England, they were ardent believers in the separation of church and state. They were fiercely loyal to the doctrines of their holy faith.

The "breaking dispensations" mentioned above were probably connected with the congregation's affiliation with the Associate

Presbytery of the Carolinas from 1823 until 1834, since when there had been no regular pastor serving them.

Thomas Ketchin was born in Howgate, Scotland March 3 (or 8), 1786. In his youth he served as a shepherd boy. He entered Edinburgh University and after graduation attended the Divinity Hall of his denomination, the Associate Anti-Burgher. He was licensed to preach, July 19, 1815. After 4 years of mission work in Scotland, he was appointed "to go to Nova Scotia, Canada or the United States of America." Declining the call to the Scotch Church in Halifax, Nova Scotia, he was installed at Shiloh Church, Lancaster County, S.C., in December, 1821. He preached at Shiloh and at Neely's Creek Church in York County. In 1833 he gave up Neely's Creek and in May 29, 1839 he demitted Shiloh.<sup>2</sup>

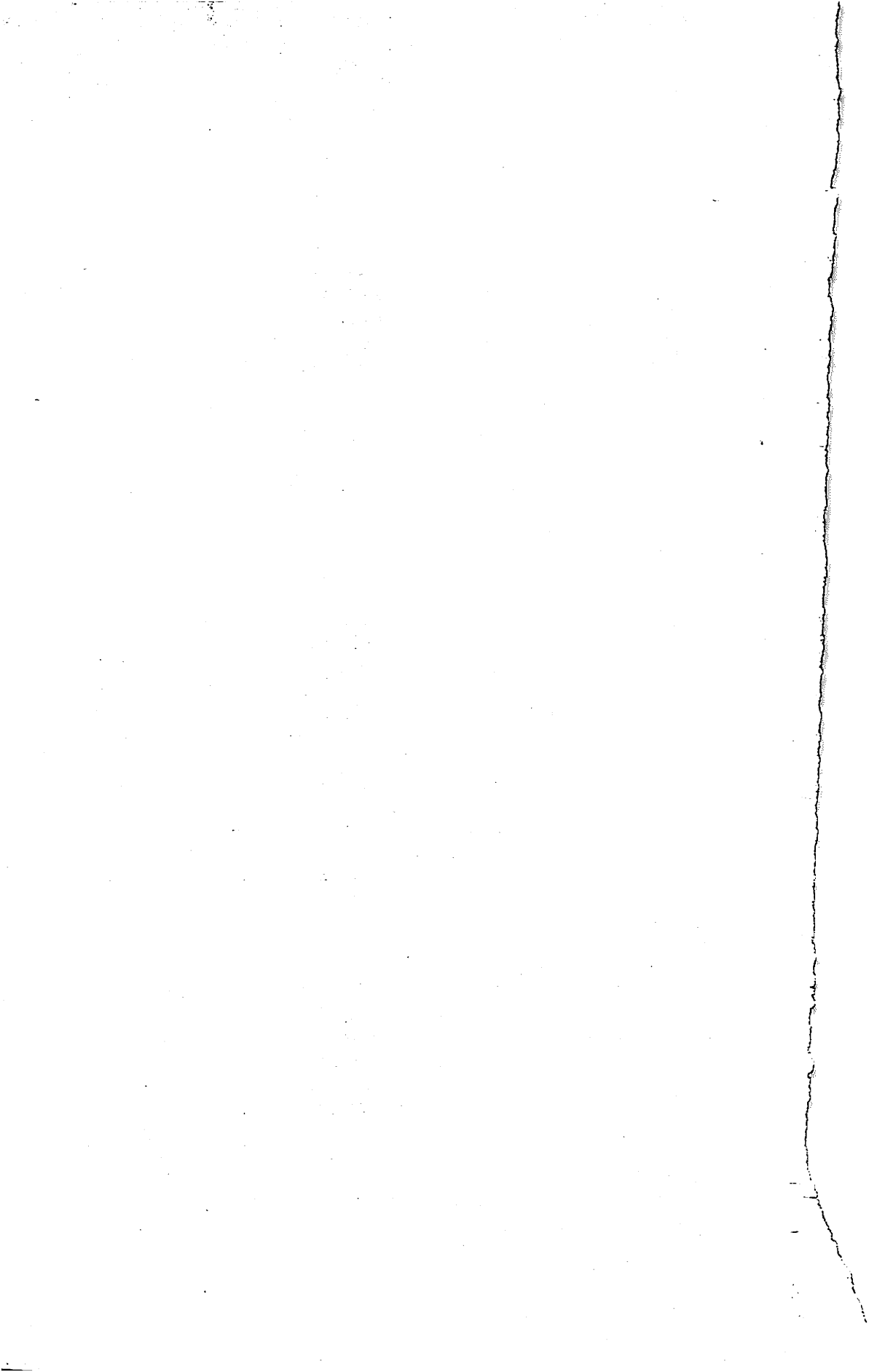
About 1840, he became stated supply of Winnsboro and Perry's Church, Lancaster County, and he also taught school in Winnsboro.<sup>3</sup>

The oldest records of Bethel Church are the *Minutes of the Session* which are written by Rev. Thomas Ketchin in a lively, interesting manner, with many details given, in the literary style of the period.

It seems evident that the members of the Church Session in the 1840's felt a great responsibility for the moral behavior of the members of the congregation. Improprieties of church members were brought before the church session and if they were considered of a serious nature, the offender was called before the Session to give an account of his action. However, the mention of offenses is not numerous. One case concerned a disagreement between two church members over a financial matter. The offenders were spoken to and told to refrain from participating in the celebration of the Lord's Supper until they forgave each other and shook hands.

The "sealing ordinances" of Baptism and the Lord's Supper were considered a high privilege and duty. According to a note in the Scofield Reference Bible upon Ephesians 1:13, "In whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise," the Holy Spirit is Himself the Seal. In the symbolism of Scripture a seal signifies a finished transaction, ownership, and security.

To become a member of the church, a person appeared before the session for questioning of his knowledge of the doctrines of the church. If the member was coming from another congregation he presented a letter showing that he was in good standing in his former church. One letter from a pastor in Kilwright, Ireland, said "Miss Mary Cathcart, now Mrs. McKinna has been a regular wor-



families if they essay to instruct their children and servants in the principles of our holy religion and keep up family worship as God in his providence may give them opportunity, and report to the Session." They also agreed "to meet at least once every 3 months for the purpose of engaging in prayer and holding religious conference and receiving reports concerning the moral deportment of the members of the congregation." And they promised to instruct the young people in "the principles of our holy religion."<sup>17</sup>

The Westminster Shorter Catechism was one of the methods used in instructing communicants in the principles of "our holy religion." "What is the chief end of man?"; "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." The Westminster Catechism opens with this mighty question and response and continues with questions on the scriptures, the Godhead (What is God? God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth), sin, redemption, justification, adoption, sanctification, the Ten Commandments, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, prayer, the Lord's Prayer, and the meaning of the petitions.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism was completed by the Westminster Assembly of Divines about November 19, 1647, and was presented for approval to the Houses of the English Parliament, on November 25 and 26. It was approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on July 28, 1648, by the English Parliament about September 5, 1648, and by the Parliament of Scotland, February 7, 1649.

It was made a part of the authoritative standards of the American Associate Presbyterian Church, on November 2, 1753, the date of the organization of the Presbytery of Pennsylvania. It was adopted by the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, November 1, 1782, when the A.R. Synod was organized.<sup>18</sup>

The Children's Catechism, by Brown, is simpler and was used with beginners. The opening questions were "Who made you?" "God." "Who redeemed you?" "Christ." "Who sanctified you?" "The Holy Ghost."

The first notice of a death in the Minutes of the Session was that of Mr. Robert Cathcart, on October 1, 1847. He was referred to as "a principle founder and great supporter of the church."<sup>19</sup>

Preceding the celebration of the Lord's Supper, in September, 1850, Rev. Robinson preached, on Friday afternoon and Rev. James Boyce, on Saturday. On the Sabbath, Rev. Mr. Robinson preached the action sermon, Rev. Boyce fenced the tables, "Our Pastor served the first table, Rev. Robinson the second, and Rev. Boyce served the third table at which there were only two negroes. Several of our Christian friends from New Hope were present and



many of the inhabitants of the town."<sup>20</sup>

On October 1, 1851, two new elders were elected. They were Messrs. George Lyons and Henry L. Elliott. They were ordained, on November 14, 1851.<sup>21</sup>

Baptisms performed between September 17, 1842, and November, 1851, during pastorate of Rev. Thomas Ketchin:

- Sept. 17, 1842 — George and James Cathcart McCormick, children of Mr. and Mrs. George McCormick.  
Jan. 23, 1843 — Mary Hasser McDougald, daughter of Mr. David McDougald and his wife, Jane McDougald.  
Jan. 23, 1843 — Thomas Timms, son of Mrs. Sarah Timms.  
March 27, 1843 — James Cathcart, son of Mr. James Cathcart.  
Nov. 11, 1844 — Thomas Ketchin Cathcart, son of James C. and Elly J. Cathcart. (This was the grandson of the pastor).  
Nov. 11, 1844 — Mrs. Priscilla Lyons.  
Nov. 9, 1846 — Laura Martha Elliott, daughter of Henry and Mary Elliott.  
Nov. 9, 1846 — John Harper Cathcart, son of James C. and Elly J. Cathcart.  
Aug. 8, 1847 — Elizabeth Jane Lyons, daughter of George and Mrs. Priscilla Lyons.  
Nov., 1847 — Child of Mr. James and Mrs. Helen Barber, baptized by Rev. L. McDonald.  
March 19, 1848 — Child of Mr. and Mrs. George McCormick.  
Dec. 11, 1848 — Mary Jane Cathcart, daughter of James C. and Elly Janet Cathcart.  
June 10, 1849 — Rachel Eliza Elliott, daughter of Henry and Mary Elliott. (She was to become the wife of Rev. Neill Pressly, the first A.R.P. missionary to Mexico).  
June 10, 1849 — James Ross Lyons, son of George and Priscilla Lyons.  
Oct. 13, 1849 — Mrs. Jarrett's child.  
Nov. 15, 1851 — Joseph and James McDowell, sons of Mr. John McDowell.

There were 19 members named in March, 1843. Others admitted were:

- On September 2, 1843 — Mr. George Lyons and Mary Ann Ketchin.  
Sept. 2, 1843 — Mrs. Sarah Watson, from New Hope.  
Sept. 4, 1843 — Miss Helen Huey.  
March 9, 1844 — James Elliott, Esquire.  
March 9, 1844 — Mr. Henry Elliott and his wife, Mrs. Mary (McMaster) Elliott.  
March 9, 1844 — Mr. James C. Cathcart.

Besides Bethel's pastor, Rev. C.B. Betts serving as a Chaplain in the Army, the following members served in the Confederate Army: James K. Brice, John S. Cathcart, Robert J. Cathcart, Robert Elder, John McMaster Elliott, James Buchanan Elliott, Warren Harvey Flenniken, Archibald Moore Huey, James Ketchin, Robert Simpson Ketchin, William W. Ketchin, Dr. T.B. Madden, James K. McDonald, John W. McDowell, Richard Nott McMaster, Edward Phillips, R.W. Phillips, B.C. Rosborough, Andrew M. Timms, Charles Timms.

George Hunter McMaster was administrator of the South Carolina Soldiers' Home in Richmond during the War. His wife, Mary Flenniken McMaster, was for a while matron of a hospital for soldiers at Petersburg, Va. and was also matron of the S.C. Home in Richmond. His brother, Fitz William McMaster, a son of the congregation, of Columbia, succeeded John Hugh Means, a Fairfield native, who was killed at the Battle of Second Manassas, as Colonel of the 17th, S.C.V.

James Orr Boag served the Confederacy as a lithographer, before he became a member of our church.

J. Banks Lyle, son of our first pastor, Rev. James Lyle, went into the Confederate Army with Gen. John Bratton's South Carolina Brigade, 5th S.C.V., and he served with great distinction during the entire war.

Veterans of earlier conflicts who belonged to Bethel were John McMaster in the War of 1812, Hugh Miller, Alexander W. McDowell and Thomas Leslie Yongue in the Mexican War.

A page in the Session Book was dedicated to the memory of James Elliott on October 21, 1865. He had served as an elder since 1844 and had also been an elder when Bethel was an Associate Church. The memorial reads in part: "We bow in meek submission to His adorable will saying 'the will of the Lord be done.' Yet we deeply feel and sincerely regret the loss of that venerable patriarch from our number. In the deceased we have lost a kind father, a tried friend, an honored and worthy elder, wise in counsel and tender in admonition.

"Through a long professional life he maintained a consistent walk and conversation. Scrupulous in the discharge of his Christian duties and punctual in his attendance upon the meetings of Session. It is our present comfort that we are not without good hope that our loss is his eternal gain."

James Elliott (b. 1773) lived at Richburg where his father, Daniel Elliott, was killed by the Tories in 1780. His mother and most of his brothers and sisters moved to Ohio. James came to Willsboro and was a silversmith and served as Clerk of Court for many years. His life span of over 91 years (he died April 1865).

began a few years before America won its independence and it closed in the month that saw the collapse of the Confederacy. He lost two grandsons in the War, John McMaster Elliott, 18 years old, and James Buchanan Elliott, 17½ years old. So distressed was he over the fortunes of the Confederate cause that the family members dreaded breaking the news to him of Lee's surrender at Appomattox. They were spared the ordeal, however, for they found him dead when they went into his room to tell him of the surrender.

In March, 1868, Mrs. Nancy Cathcart, "a former member of the Covenanter Church of this District, and consequently out of communion for probably 20 years or more," was accepted into Bethel Church. On the next day, March 21st, Mrs. Jane Madden, widow of the late Rev. Campbell Madden of the Covenanter Church, was received into the communion and fellowship of the church. These entries in the Session Book are indications that there was a Covenanter Church here or nearby in the 1840's.

Rev. Charles Bowen Betts was pastor of Bethel from May, 1855, until November, 1869. Upon his resignation, he went to Tennessee for a year and then to Neely's Creek and Union (Richburg). He stayed at Union Church for 33 years until his death, in December, 1903. He served as Moderator of the Synod which met in Winnsboro in November, 1903, when the present church building was first used. Rev. Betts was greatly loved and highly regarded in the denomination. His first wife was Miss Amaranth H. Sharpe of Due West, S.C., who bore him six children. His second wife was Miss Flora M. Burns, of Chester County, S.C., by whom he also had six children.

#### Baptisms during period of Rev. C.B. Betts' pastorate.

May 11, 1855 - 1869

March 1, 1858 - Infant of Mrs. Lauderdale.

April 11, 1858 - Three infants - one of Mrs. Shaw, one of J.M. Elliott and one of H.L. Elliott.

Sept. 26, 1868 - Dick, servant of H.L. Elliott.

Jan. 9, 1859 - son of John H. and Nancy Cathcart, named Thomas Madden.

March 27, 1859 - June, a colored man belonging to Mrs. Gaillard.

May 9, 1859 - Mrs. Margaret Seigler's two infants - John Robinson and Harriet Henrietta Frances Seigler.

June 12, 1859 - Mrs. Harriet McMaster - and Harriet Mobley and Mary Hill McMaster also baptized, daughters of Dr. J. Riley and Mrs. Harriet McMaster.

July 24, 1859 - 2 children of Mrs. Sarah Teems.

Oct. 23, 1859 - James Shaw Elder, son of Mr. Francis and Mrs. Henrietta Elder.

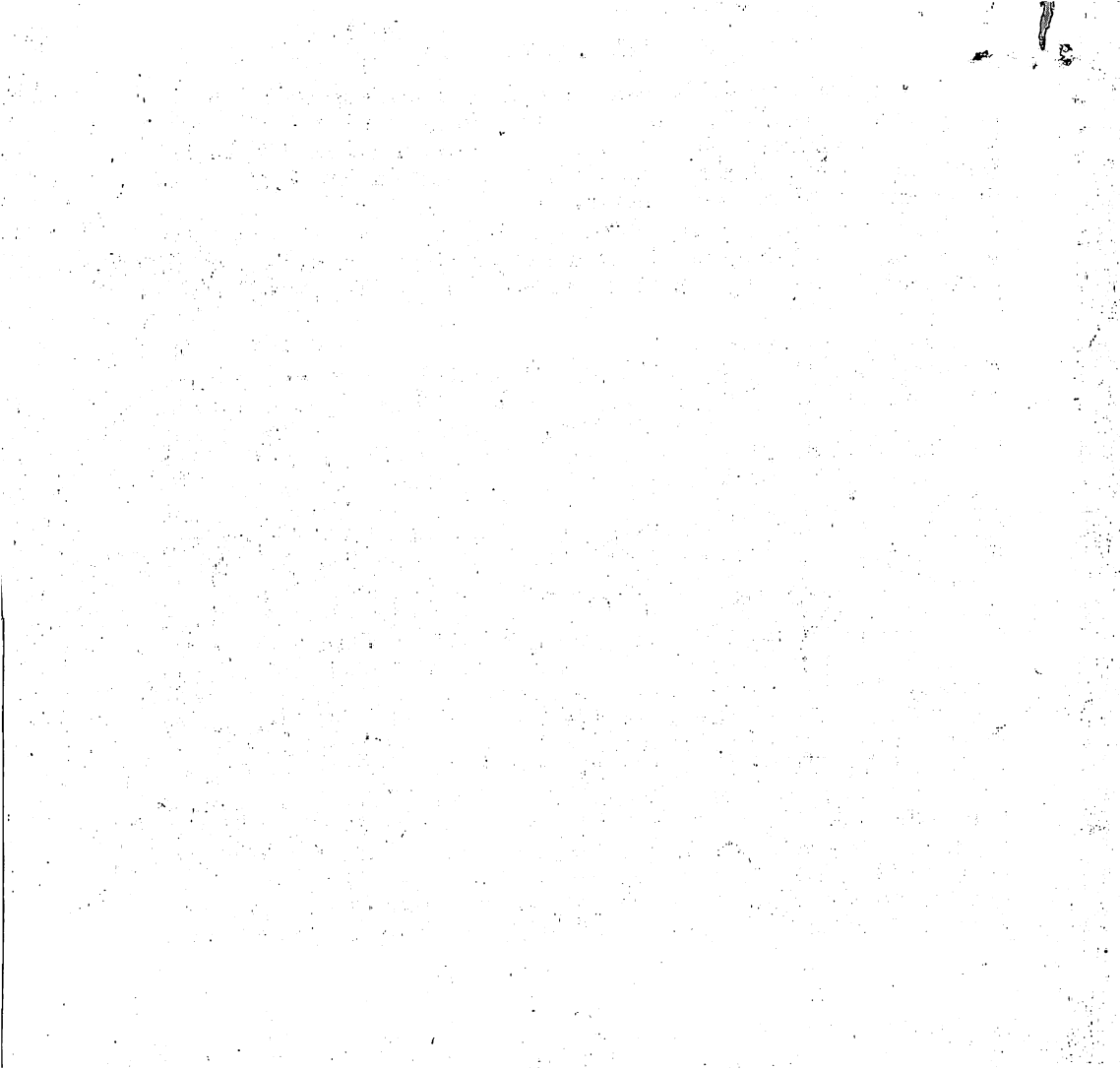
## THE STORE

The appraisers of his estate found accounts due on his books amounting to \$9,382.00, also notes due him amounting to \$6,461.85, also notes for Mount Olivet Church pew assessments for \$78.00. The following names of the patrons of his store are an interesting roll call of the early settlers of the countryside.

The people of his little world certainly made a well worn path to his door. Something potent brought them there, whether it be his magnetic personality or the spirit of his "Still House Spring" which he refers to in his will.

Among them were:

Archibald Beaty, Alexander Douglas, General Turner Starke, Muscoe Boulware, Doctor William Bratton, John B. Pickett, James Ellison, Colonel Wm. McCreight, Austin Peay, Hugh Barkley, William Cockrell, Robert Cathcart, Elijah Gayden, John G. Barber, Jesse Gladden, Jr., Joseph Caldwell, Nathaniel Ford, Esq., James McCrorey, John Aiken, John Johnston, Esq., Alexander Turner, Benjamin Harrison, Captain John Hollis, Laban Hall, John Reynolds, William Harper, Elijah Hendricks, Hugh McDonald, Churchill Carter, Tassitus Cassity, James Young, Daniel Going, Asa Turkett, George Arnet, Daniel Graf-ton, Rev. John Pickett, David Rowe, James Blair, Elijah Dawkins, Andrew Dunn, William England, Margaret Ewing, Joseph Ferguson, Moarning Fogg, Samuel Fife, Sr., Isaac Gibson, Rachel Griffin, John Hornsby, Thomas Jones, Robert L. Knox, James Morrison, Gervais Gibson, Sr., James Martin, Thomas Lumpkin, David Lavender, James Marr, Thomas Minton, Graham Havis, Lewis Goins, Elijah Gibson, William Fogg, John Henson, Widow Sarah Arledge, Wilson Gibson, Andrew Young, Samuel Arledge, Sr., William Caldwell, Alexander Caldwell, James Morris, Robert Wallace, Alexander Marshall, Widow Quinney, William Gladden, Sr., George Street, Littleton Gladden, John Gladden, Sr., Robert Going, Dillard Going, John Galloway, Reuben Pickett, Francis Pickett, Jephtha Pickett, James Pickett, Jr., John Pickett, Thomas Hall, Joseph McBride, John Quinney, James Land,



Samuel Arledge, Jr., John Gladden, William Gladden (General), John Tidwell, Dimsey Graham, John Davidson, William Splawn, Rightman Bagley, Jr., Green Lee Bagley, Erwin Arnet, Littleton Range, James Barry, Jr., Robert Smith, William Terry, Henry Gibson, Hugh Gibson, John Gibson, Betsey Flake, James Wheelin, Joseph Lumpkin, Francis Torbit, Kezzy Lavender, Letty Dewitt, Moses Davison, Richard Fish, William Lott, Robert Merriam, William Morris, William Cork, James Sloan, William Campbell, William Johnston, Leonard Hornsby, Agnes Hollis, Robert Hood, Thomas Wright, Thomas Nickle, Terry Hollis, Margaret Brown, Major Mc. Woodward, John Fife, Samuel Gault, James Lyons, Eleanor Young, John Grimes, James Aiken, Sr., Stephen P. Sissum, John Young, William W. Lewis, Samuel Johnston, Samuel Stokes, James Hollis, Sr., John Arnet, James Weir, Sr., Alben Boulware, Thomas Boulware, Obadiah Boulware, David Weir, Sr., James Barkley, John Miller, Capt. James Piper, Ferguson Smith, Hugh McDonald, Leryn Griffin, Samuel N. Rhea, Nathaniel Barber, Andrew Grafton, John Mabin, Sr., Jane Thompson, William Trapp, William Ware, William Brown, James Campbell, Jr., John Johnston, Jr., David Smith, Jr., John Kerr, Thomas Griffin, Alexander Smith, Hugh McMullen, Stephen D. Terry, William McDonald, Sr., John Arnet, James Merriam, Wm. Merriam, Jennings Allen, Patrick Merriam, Richard W. Watson, James D. Weir, Thomas Scarborough, John Barber, Sr., Jno. Brown, Samuel Brannan, John McCully, Christopher Morgan, Polly Flake, John Wilson, James Harvey, Sr., James M. Arnet, Samuel Johnston, Esq., David Smith, David Johnston, William Aiken (Irish), Captain H. D. Watson, John Aiken, James Anderson, John Scott, Robert Harker, David McBurney, Jacob Gibson, Thomas Starke, Widow Mary Hollis, Abram Wheelin, John Wheelin, Elijah Tidwell, Elizabeth Gladden, James M. Harvey, James Harper, Sr., James Dickey, John Rowland, Josiah Weir, David Walker, Samuel S. Hall, James G. Griffin, Robert Pogue, Hugh England, Samuel Fife, Minor Gladden, Thomas McCully, Robert Barkley, Gervais Gibson, Jr., William M. Johnston, Jr., Robert W. Marshall, James Gladden, Laban Brock, John Barber, Jr., Noah Hornsby, James Neil, Godfrey Beamgard, John S. Weir, Samuel C. Sullivan, Reuben Wilmore, Cornelius Beard, Robert G. Bagley, Patsy Wilson, Allen Goodrum, Thomas Goodrum, Jr., John McWaters, John Caldwell, Jr., Peter Hollis, Middleton Gladden, John Grant, Jr., John Wallis, Moses Knightson, Jr., Gladden King, John Watson, John Allen, Burgess Moore, Benjamin Peoples, Elijah Elder, John Mike, Joseph Payne, Fleming Caldwell, John Atkin (merchant), Josiah Farmer, Alexander J. Barber, William Ford, Simeon Cockrell, Jeremiah Cockrell, John McEwin, John Kelly, Edward Davis, Thomas McCauley, James Barry, Jr., James Barry, Sr., James Black, William Courtney, Peter Carson, Jonathan Lavender, William Page, John Britnal, Samuel Penny, Andrew McCausland, Zachariah Dodds, James Dennam, Robert Dunlap, Doctor John Douglass, Robert Ewing, Samuel Evans, Robert Forsythe, Logustin Ford, John Grayson, Richard Girvin, Patrick Gray, Branson Stokes, Daniel McHenry, William Jackson, David W. Johnston, Sr., Captain Wm. Johnstone, John Ivey, Peter Moore, Israel

Nettles, James Pinder, John B. Phillips, George Reed, James C. Robinson, John Stenson, James Stevenson, Benjamin Swan, William Splawn, Francis Sandyfur, Philemon Starke, Samuel Sessions, William A. Turner, John Templeton, William Tennant, Peter Turkitt, Simeon Tidwell, Levi Tidwell, Randol Wright, James Workman, Arthur Yarborough, John Haigood, Sussannah Pickett, William Johnston. Tr. Alexander McAlhatton.

