

BELLS OF FAIRFIELD DISTRICT

SOUTH CAROLINA

CHARLES MONTGOMERY BELL
OWNER OF
CHESTER BELLPHONE CO

W. F. Ayer

NOTE

This manuscript is a first draft of an accumulation of genealogical and historical data on the Bell Family. It has not been verified for the reason that the information has come from many sources, with some apparent discrepancies. Inasmuch as it will be supplemented, hopefully, and require revision, other apparent errors and omissions have not been corrected.

Much of the content was researched by others of our families, who have predeceased us. Some of it was written by Mrs. Eula W. Bell, wife of the late John Montgomery Bell of Chester, South Carolina. Mrs. Bell's notes indicate contributions to her from Miss Dora Bell; the Reverend Robert Murphy Bell; and I am sure there were others, including her husband, who perhaps contributed most of the family traditions. Mr. S. Lewis Bell of Chester, South Carolina has been most helpful and has provided all of the research material of the late Eula W. Bell. Mrs. Margaret Templeton of Memphis, Tennessee; Mrs. Margaret Kilgore of Columbia, South Carolina; Mrs. Margaret Gaston of Starkville, Mississippi; and more recently, Mrs. Helen Elizabeth Malone and her sister, Mrs. Margaret Sue London, of Miami, Florida, have each contributed information.

This is a family project, and hopefully will evolve a more comprehensive History of the Bells of Fairfield District, our heritage and traditions.

R. K. Bell
Coral Gables, Florida
June 28, 1975

the Indian menace had been a deterrent to settlement there. So it was not until the end of the Indian wars that they were able to take advantage of land grants in the backcountry of the Colonies, but by this time there was a new generation with few, if any skills at all, to sustain them in the challenge. But William Bell I and his family were skilled tillers of the soil and better equipped than those who had migrated to Pennsylvania a decade or two earlier. He probably had a good idea, too, of where in the backcountry of South Carolina he was destined to settle. John Bell I, now believed to be a brother of William I, had migrated to South Carolina in 1756, where he received from King George II a land grant to fifty acres bounding on a stream known as Jackson's Creek and Little River. These were Indian hunting grounds in the 1750's and only a few of the most hardy, brave and skilled frontiersmen ventured into those parts of the backcountry, except to trade with the Indians. But here John Bell had lived for perhaps eleven years and would have known all of the early settlers. [3]

Conditions as they were, particularly the Indian menace, it is highly unlikely that John Bell I took a family into that backcountry in 1756. It is possible also that he indentured himself to gain passage to the Colonies. And it could be no more than a coincidence that there at shipside that day in Belfast were Sarah Bell, aged 48; Sarah Bell, aged 21; and John Bell, aged 19, waiting to board the Brigantine Chichester for the voyage to Charles Town. [4] And it could also be just coincidence that the family of William Bell I, as well as Sarah Bell and her daughter and son, would all ultimately receive land grants in the near vicinity of John. In fact, the same would be true of most all of those Scotch-Irish immigrants who waited to board the Brigantine Chichester that day.

What, one might ask, would impel a man like John Bell I to leave a family behind in Ireland, if indeed he did, and take himself into the Indian

[3] Department Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina.

[4] *Problems of the Frontiers to South Carolina*, Revill, p. 76.

backcountry of South Carolina? The answer, though perhaps oversimplified - ownership of land and religious liberty.

The General Assembly of the Colony of South Carolina, on July 25, 1761, enacted the "Bounty Act," an Act broadening existing immigration laws, and applicable only to Protestant Religious Refugees. Those refugees who could produce a certificate of membership in a Protestant church were granted in cash four pounds sterling, twenty shillings sterling, or two pounds sterling and twenty shillings sterling, according to their age. But, moreover, those over the age of fifteen years were granted one hundred acres of land. [5]

How great the incentive! Perhaps nothing else could have so stirred the minds and imagination of a people whose ancestors for generations past had tilled the soil, though not their own. Uppermost in the mind of William Bell I as he stood there beside ship was, perhaps, the "Bounty Act." For under its terms, and with the certificate of membership in the Church of his faith, he and his family would become the owners in fee simple of five hundred acres of land in the Colony of South Carolina. To William Bell I, it would be just as the deed of conveyance would recite: "By the Grace of God and King George III, etc."

And, religious liberty! The Bells were of the Presbyterian faith, Covenantors of the Scottish Kirk. There were the temporal advantages of the life to be in the Colony of South Carolina, which though Anglican, was tolerant of all religious faiths and sects, and therefore, a religious advantage as well.

An account of the religious motivation of immigrant Covenantors from Scotland and Ireland about the middle of the eighteenth century is found in a "Reprint from the Reformed Presbyterian and Covenantor, January, 1875":

[5] Bounty Act, passed July 25, 1761, Department Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina (The original much too torn to be copied).

"Influenced by their desire to improve their condition, as well as to escape from the oppression of Erastian tyranny, families and individuals left Scotland and Ireland and located in such parts of this land as presented the best prospect of promoting their temporal interests and enjoying religious privileges. They brought their principles with them; they knew them, loved them, and were determined to hold them fast. These principles were embodied in the testimony emitted by the Church in Scotland, which was accepted by the Church in Ireland. In this testimony they declared, in language not to be misunderstood, their attachment to the cause of Christ as King of Nations. * * *"

As the Brigantine Chichester moved slowly from dockside with the outgoing tide, its passengers were likely on deck waving their hands and arms in a final goodby gesture to their kin, friends and neighbors, and to their native Ireland. And, as the ship plowed eastward from the harbor of Belfast toward the Sea of Ireland, the Bell family probably turned their eyes toward the waters of the Fyrth of Clyde and Scotland, from whence their ancestors had come to Ireland in the first migration.

The events at sea on the voyage to Charles Town remain untold, except for the tradition in the family of John Montgomery Bell (1875-1947) of Chester County, South Carolina, a descendant six generations removed, to the effect that "they encountered such a terrific storm that the ship sprung a leak compelling the passengers for many days to work desperately to help keep the ship afloat." [6]

[6] n. Eula Willis Bell (_____ - 1935), wife of John Montgomery Bell, and a genealogist of Chester, South Carolina, in the 1920's did extensive research of the records of South Carolina as they related to William Bell I and his descendants. She interviewed natives of the Monticello Section of Fairfield County, whose parents remembered the families of William Bell R. Mrs. Bell penned copious notes reflecting her research. She wrote a partial family history of her husband's family line, and all of these valuable records have been made available by S. Lewis Bell of Chester, South Carolina, son of the late John Montgomery Bell. Frequent references will be made to the "Notes of Eula W. Bell", to whom the Bell families are deeply indebted.

CHAPTER I

THE SECOND MIGRATION

Perhaps at the break of dawn that late October or early November day, 1767, William Reed, Master of the Brigantine Chichester, and his crew were readying the vessel to take on its cargo of more than one hundred forty-seven passengers, their personal effects and supplies to sustain them on a voyage to America - destined to Charles Town in the Colony of South Carolina.

There were, in all, twenty-three family units and a few singles assembled on the dock that morning, with personal belongings at their sides. They doubtless had sold most of whatever they owned, for they would need funds to sustain themselves in the Colony during the approaching winter months. They had come that day to Belfast from the tenant farms of County Antrim, to which their forefathers had migrated from Scotland as yeoman farmers, to pit their flinty Presbyterianism against Irish Popery. They had dug into the Irish soil so briskly that soon their cattle and wool were undercutting their English landlords; and the British Government, which had paternally sponsored their migration, turned on them with a series of prohibitive tariffs. Along with the native Irish, they sank into hopeless misery. [1]

William Bell I, aged 41, whose family included his wife Isabell, aged 40, whose family surname is not known, and their children, Elizabeth, aged 20; John, aged 17; William, aged 16; and Mary, aged 5 years [2], had watched, perhaps with more than passing interest, the migration to the Colonies in America. Thousands had migrated to Pennsylvania, many of them as indentured servants, while others had little else than enough money to pay their passage. While limited land grants in the backcountry had been available to the earlier immigrants,

[1] South Carolina Annals of Pride and Pretext, William Francis Guers, p. 70.

[2] Colonial Lists of Emigrants and Immigrants to South Carolina - 1703-1773, Compiled by John F. Wall, p. 95.

CHARLES TOWN TO LITTLE RIVER

On January 5, 1768, the Clerk of the Council at Charles Town went aboard ship and administered the oath of allegiance to those of the passengers who were of age. So also on that date, a Petition was addressed to the Council on behalf of the new citizens of the Colony for allowance of the Bounty, under the Act of The General Assembly passed July 25, 1761. Their Petition was approved and it was "Ordered that the Public Treasurer do pay the Bounty of Four Pounds Sterling and Two Pounds Sterling according to their respective ages to Messrs Torrans and Pouag in consideration of their passage and the remaining Twenty Shillings Sterling to themselves agreeable to the directions of said Act." [1]

On the same date, the Council approved a Petition for Warrants of Survey on the Bounty, including the request of William Bell I for 200 acres, that allotted to him and to his wife Isabell, and 100 acres each for Elizabeth, John and William, Jr. Daughter Mary, aged 5, was not entitled to an allotment of land. [2]

It would be May 13, 1768, before William Bell I actually received his deed of conveyance from King George III to 200 acres of land on a branch of Little River, called Ellis Branch in Craven County, now Fairfield County, South Carolina. Conditions of the deed waived the payment of Quit Rents for a period of ten years. It described the land as a "plantation" bounded northeastward, part on land laid out to Stephan Ellis, on all other sides by vacant land. A further condition of the Grant was such that the land should be cleared and cultivated at the rate of three acres for every hundred acres each year. [3] And it was on the same date that Elizabeth received her deed to 100 acres on Cedar Creek, and John his deed to

[1] Council Journal 34, pages 1-10, Meeting January 5, 1768.
Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina 1763-1773-Revell, pages 93-95.
n. On this Petition were the names: William Bell, age 41; Isabell Bell, age 40; Elizabeth Bell, age 20; John Bell, age 17; William Bell, age 16; Mary Bell, age 5.

100 acres on Crooked Run Branch of Little River. William, Jr. would not receive his deed to 100 acres on Crooked Run Branch until September 1, 1768. While these tracts of land are not contiguous, they are all in the same general area.

Business with the government having been attended to, there now remained the very important task of preparing for the journey to the backcountry, which included the purchase of basic items of food, a musket, hand tools, such as the hoe, rake, mattock, axe to fell the timber, and a froe to square the logs with which to build a cabin. It may have been that they were permitted to bring with them from their homes in Ireland such items as bedding and small hand farm tools. But whatever purchases William Bell I would make as he and his family visited the stores and shops along Meeting Street would be measured by the amount of money in his pocket. We are only certain that he had one hundred twenty Shillings Sterling, the balance of the Bounty payment after paying passage for the family.

It is only from fragmentary records relating to earlier immigrants that we are able to glean some idea of how the Colony handled the settlement of the immigrants on their lands in the backcountry, and what they would take with them for sustenance until such time as they might harvest a crop. For example, in 1764, a group of French Protestants arrived at Charles Town under the auspices of the King of England, and "His Majesty thought it advisable that they should be Established in his Province of South Carolina where from their knowledge of the Culture of Silk and Vines it is hoped they may be particularly Usefull to the Colony and to the Publick and the Lords Commiss'rs of his Majestys Treasury having accordingly enter'd into an agreement with Mr. Alexander McNutt for the passage of these people to Charles Town it will be your duty immediately on arrival

[2] Ibid, pages 95-96.

[3] Department Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina.

to give them every Countenance Support and Protection in your power." [4]

For the subsistence of these French Protestants it was provided:

"1 lb. flour 1 quart Indian corn each pr. diem" and "1 steer pr. week among the whole" (approximately 124 persons) "1 corn mill salt &ca." In addition they were allowed "20 bushels of salt," a "Canoe" and "hooks and lines." Since the French Colony had arrived late in April, it was considered too late for them to go onto their allotted lands and put in crops for the ensuing winter, and it was suggested they go to Fort Lyttleton near the coast where ground was already cleared and plant some "corn potatoes pumpkins peas &ca." [5]

Geographically, the Colony was divided into the Low Country and the Piedmont, the Low Country extending some one hundred miles inland. Along the coast it consisted of swamps, sand and pine barrens, and along its rivers and streams were soil and water suitable for rice plantations. It was an area highly developed, with elegant and stately plantation mansions and more than one hundred thousand African slaves in its midst. Elsewhere in the Low Country were waste lands, sparsely settled, and used primarily to graze cattle. Then came the higher lands of the Piedmont, with its many rivers, creeks and streams, where the soil was fertile and covered by forests of white oak, hickory and pine.

The Colony had settled earlier immigrants along the fall line from the Province boundaries on the north and thence to the south. This was the line generally followed by the wagon trains from Pennsylvania, commonly known as the "Great Philadelphia Waggon Road." The road from Charles Town to the west intersected with the Great Road at the community of Pine Tree (Camden) or Pine Tree Hill, as it was sometimes called. Pine Tree was a trading post to which the people brought their products for sale, and where they, for the most part, purchased supplies. Some three thousand

[4] Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina 1763-1773-Revill, page 17.

[5] Ibid, pages 23-24.

lumbering four-horse wagons crossed the ferries near Charles Town each year, loaded with products of the backcountry. [6]

The officials of the Colony appear to have acted expeditiously to move this group by wagon to their properties in the backcountry. Already the surveyors were on the scene laying out the land; for on January 20, 1768, the Plat to William Bell's 200 acres was recorded in the Office of the Surveyor General. [7]

Perhaps the best extant history of the South Carolina frontier at the time of William Bell's arrival is the journal kept by Reverend Charles Woodmason, Anglican minister, who, newly ordained, left the culture and wealth of Charles Town September 12, 1766, to minister in the backcountry. He travelled horseback more than three thousand miles each year of his ministry, from settlement to settlement, marrying, baptizing and cajoling the people, who were, for the most part, of every religious faith or sect, except Catholic. [8]

Woodmason arrived at Pine Tree, his headquarters, on September 16, 1766. A journal entry of the 28th notes: "Not a house to be hir'd - Nor even a single Room on all this River to be rented, fit to put my Head or Goods in - The People all new Settlers, extremely poor - Live in Logg Cabbins like hogs - and their Living and Behaviour as rude or more so than Savages. Extremely embarrassed how to subsist. Took up my Quarters in a Tavern - and exposed to the Rudeness of the Mobb, People continually drunk." [9]

Again at Pine Tree, on December 21, he "Officiated in the Meeting House. By influence of the Chief Justice, had a Congregation, and preach'd

[6] Sellers, Charleston Business, pages 34-35.

[7] "Pursuant to a precept from Egerton Leigh, Esquire, Surveyor General, bearing date the 5th day of January, 1769, I have admeasured and laid out to William Bell a plantation or tract of land containing 200 acres situate lying and being in Craven County on a Branch of Little River called Ellis's branch bounding N. E. part on land laid out to the said Stephen Ellis and on another by vacant land and hath such shape form and marks as appears by the above plat. Certified on the 20th. day of January 1768. Per Ralph Humphrey D. S." Department Archives & History, Columbia

[8] The Carolina Backcountry - Hooker. (Introduction, page xi)

[9] Ibid, page 7.

in the Afternoon. Found the School Room that was intended for me, turn'd by the Tavern Keeper into a Stable. Only 3 Boys offer'd, out of 2 or 300 that run wild here like Indians - But as their Parents are Irish Presbyterians, they rather chuse to let them run thus wild, than to have them instructed in the Principles of Religion by a Minister of the Church of England." [10]

In January, 1767, Woodmason, returning from Lynch's Creek, where he preached to a "great multitude" of people who he says "complained of being eaten up by Itinerant Teachers, Preachers, and Imposters from New England and Pennsylvania - Baptists, New Lights, Presbyterians, Independants, and a hundred other Sects * * *," noted in his journal, "I was almost tir'd in baptizing of Children - and laid my Self down for the Night frozen with Cold - without the least Refreshment - no Eggs, Butter, Flour, Milk, or anything but fat rusty Bacon, and fair Water, with Indian Corn Bread, Viands I had never before seen or tasted." [11]

In February, the journal records, "From the lower part of Lynch's Creek I proceeded to the upper - and from the Greater to the Lesser; The Weather was exceeding Cold and piercing - And these people live in open Logg Cabbins with hardly a Blanket to cover them, or Cloathing to cover their Nakedness. I endur'd Great Hardships, and my Horse more than his Rider - they having no fodder, nor Grain of Corn to spare." [12] From Hanging Rock Creek he went "upwards to Cane Creek where I had wrote the Church People for to assemble - But when I came I found that all my letters and Advertisements had been intercepted. I trac'd them into the hands of one John Gaston, an Irish Presbyterian Justice of Peace on Fishing Creek, on other side of River * * *. Here came Deputies from Camp Creek

[10] Ibid, page 11.

n. At this period in time there were no churches in the backcountry. Yet in almost every settlement there was a log Meeting House used primarily for religious purposes.

[11] Ibid, page 13.

[12] Ibid, page 16.

n. Hanging Rock is a hundred foot cliff overhanging the branch of Little Lynch's River. Meriwether Lupton, of South Carolina, page 145.

and Cedar Creek two adjoining Settlements - and Indeed, I was glad to get away from this starved place, where have lived all this Week on a little Milk and Indian Corn Meal, without any other Sustenance but Cold Water - and hardly any Fire to warm me tho the Season bitter Cold indeed. Wood is exceeding plenty (for the Country is a forest and Wilderness) but the people are so very lazy, that they'll sit for Hours hovering over a few embers, and will not turn out to cut a Stick of Wood." [13]

Having ended the first year of his ministry in the backcountry, Reverend Woodmason took account of conditions in general: "But the people wearied out with being expos'd to the Depredations of Robbers - Set down here just as a Barrier between the Rich Planters and the Indians, to secure the former against the Latter - Without Laws or Government Churches Schools or Ministers - No Police established - and all property quite insecure - Merchants as fearful to venture their Goods as Ministers their persons. The Lands, tho the finest in the Provincee unoccupied, and Rich Men afraid to set Slaves to work to clear them, lest they should become a Prey to the Banditti - No Regard had to the numberless petitions and Complaints of the people * * *." [14]

It was October, 1767, that Woodmason found his way to the general area where the Bells would make their hom the following January. In his journal on the 31st of that month he wrote: "I was conducted over the Wateree River (across the Wild Woods where had never before been) to Little River, where I officiated ~~the~~ 31st. to about 300 Persons. Here a large body of People met me - I baptized several Adults, and of them 3 or 4 Quakers, who conformed to the Church." [15]

It was April, 1768 - the William Bell I family had arrived in January - that Reverend Woodmason returned to Little River, and from his pen, we are able, in some measure, to know now what it was like as spring

[13] Ibid, pages 16-17.

[14] Ibid, page 27.

[15] Ibid, page 29.

approached, following a winter of bitter cold. For he said, "Proceeded on my journey upwards - and on the 10th gave sermon to the Congregation at Little River - I found the Scarcity of Provisions here, greater than on other side of the River, and not a Bushel of Corn to be had for money - Nor Necessaries of any Kinds and the poor people almost starving - I was supplied with Bacon and Eggs - but having liv'd a fortnight on this my Stomack became quite sick - No Bread, Butter, Milk or anything else to be had." [16]

And finally, we note the observation of Woodmason in late May, 1763: "In all these Excursions, I am obliged to carry my own Necessaries with me - As Bisket - Cheese - A Pint of Rum - Some Sugar - Chocolate - Tea - or Coffee - With Cups Knife Spoon Plate Towels and Linen. So that I go alway (s) heavy loaded like a Trooper. If I did not, I should starve. Never will I be out again from home for a Month together to take the chance of things - As in many places they have nought but a Gourd to drink out of Not a Plate Knife or Spoon, a Glass Cup or anything - It is well if they can get some Body Linen, and some have not even that. They are so burthen'd with Young Children, that the Women cannot attend both House and Field - And many live by Hunting, and Killing of Deer - There's not a Cabbin but has 10 or 12 young Children in it. When the Boys are 18 and the Girls 14 they marry - so that in many Cabbin s You will see 10 or 15 Children. Children and Grand Children of one Size - and the mother looking as Young as the Daughter. Yet these Poor People enjoy good Health; and are generally cut off by Endemic or Epidemic Disorders, which when they happen, makes Great Havock among them." [17]

[16] Ibid, page 35.

[17] Ibid, page 37.

CHAPTER III
THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Broad River, flowing southerly along the western boundaries of Chester and Fairfield Districts, was known by the Indians as "Es-waw Huppedaw," which is said to have divided the Empires of the Cherokees and the Catawbas. A few miles to the east, and flowing southward from its headwaters in Chester District, is Little River. Between these two streams lies a high ridge, and it was at the southernmost point on this ridge in Fairfield District, that the Bells made their first home.

Circumstances would have dictated that they clear and prepare for cultivation as much ground as possible between mid-January and April, 1768, on which to plant Indian corn, peas, and other vegetables. Deer was plentiful and so, too, fish in the streams about. It probably was Isabell, Elizabeth and Mary who tended the crop while William I and his two sons, John and William, Jr., felled trees and squared and notched the logs as they began construction of a cabin.

None of the beneficiaries of the Land Bounty were in a position to make all of their land productive. Many exchanged or swapped for another site. Others traded land for food, livestock, or tools and farm implements. John and William, Jr. may have traded or sold their grants, as both of them soon purchased other land - John, the 100 acre tract adjoining his father's land from Stephen Ellis. [1]

William Bell I was more fortunate than many of his fellow settlers, for only a few miles north on the ridge from where his cabin would rise, was John Bell I, who had made his home near Mill Creek since 1756. In John's family were his wife, whose Christian name is unknown; three sons, John, Jr., William and Thomas; and two daughters, Jenny Craig and Margaret. [2] John Bell I would have had the tools, equipment, and

[1] See Reference to this deed of February 8, 1774 is found in a deed from John Bell, dated November 4, 1773. Deed Book A, page 404, Fairfield County, South Carolina, Records.

[2] Last Will and Testament; Thomas Bell, son of John Bell I, Department Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina.

at least some livestock to help William I get established.

But there were other problems than simply carving a livelihood from a wilderness of virgin timber. The backcountry was undergoing a social revolution. Along the banks of the Wateree, Santee, Congaree, Peedee, Saluda and Broad Rivers and their tributary streams, more than 50,000 settlers now lived in log cabins on small clearings of land. Between 4,000 and 5,000 of them had come directly from Northern Ireland, but the great majority came by way of Pennsylvania. Among this latter group were many destitutes, criminals seeking a place of refuge, and many with the most remote religious background, if any at all. A great many of them were a generation removed from the skilled tillers of the soil in Northern Ireland and were without the skills necessary to sustain themselves in the wilds. And there were others - a generation of natives whose parents had settled along the Wateree River in the 1750's, many of them orphaned at an early age.

It was inevitable then that the need for government would be felt immediately with the impact of such a sudden migration of people to the area. In each Parish there were justices of the peace and constables, but this court had limited jurisdiction of civil and criminal matters. There were sheriffs' deputies also, but they were established to serve warrants and process from the court in Charles Town where all major civil and criminal trials were held. But if one obtained a warrant charging another with a crime, the cost of travel and sending witnesses to Charles Town was prohibitive. And thus, for all practical purposes, judicial process in the backcountry was meaningless.

According to law, the right to vote was secured, but the great distance between the settlers and the nearest Anglican Chapel where the ballots were cast, prevented them from exercising the right of suffrage.

So also were the Parish boundries so loosely defined, that few people knew in which Parish they were to vote. And even had they been able to exercise the right of suffrage, their votes would have been meaningless without the creation of additional Parishes to which could be elected representatives to the Commons House. [3]

So it was in this vast unpoliced wilderness that bands of rogues, thieves, looters and rapists traversed the land, stealing livestock, ravaging young women and, in some instances, stealing them away from their homes.

In 1776 the inhabitants of the Congaree, Ninety-Six, Saluda River, Broad River, and places adjacent, petitioned the Assembly in Charles Town, listing their problems: "They were without representation in the Assembly; Indians and lawless whites caused hardship; their produce could reach market by land carriage only," and "they had neither churches or schools." But this and other petitions to the Assembly accomplished nothing since it would not enact remedial laws, and the thieves established a reign of terror that was uninterrupted until 1767. Describing the plight of the honest settler, the Reverend Woodmason wrote: "Our large stocks of cattle are either stolen or destroy'd. Our cowpens are broke up - and all our valuable horses are carried off. Houses have been burn'd by these rogues, and families are stripp'd and turned naked into the woods - stores have been broken open and rifl'd by them (wherefrom several traders are absolutely ruin'd) Private houses have been plundered; and the inhabitants wantonly tortured in the Indian manner for to be made to confess where they secreted their effects from plunder. Married women have been ravish'd, virgins de-flower'd, and other unheard of cruelties committed by these barbarious ruffians." [4]

[3] The Carolina Backcountry - Hooker, pages 215-219.

[4] Ibid, page 170.

In the spring of 1767, the settlers began to strike back. Families and neighbors confederated to resist the outlaws. At the outset, they acted only in defense of their homes and families and without defiance of the government, but the picture soon changed. On October 5, 1767, Governor Montague informed the Council that settlers between Santee and Wateree Rivers had assembled and in a "rioting manner had gone up and down the country committing riot and disturbances and they had burnt the houses of some people who were reported to be harbours of horse thieves and talk of coming to Charles Town to make some complaints.", [5]

The Regulator Movement had begun. Governor Montague, on November 5, 1767, appeared before the Council and Assembly and asked for legislation to suppress the Regulators. But, on November 7, "The Remonstrance," a long and eloquent protest and petition written by the Reverend Woodmason and signed by four Wateree planters, in the name of 4000 settlers, was presented to the Assembly. This document contained the fullest account of backcountry grievances and was backed by the threat of backcountry invasion of Charles Town unless a redress of the grievances was forthcoming. Within four days of the presentation of "The Remonstrance," an Assembly Committee reported favorably on a Court System, a Vagrancy Act, and two Companies of Soldiers to suppress and prevent disturbances. [6] But the apparent victory for the backcountry people was to be short-lived. The Governor found it necessary to appoint leading Regulators as officers of the two companies of soldiers. The troops were commissioned as Rangers and began three months' pursuit of the outlaw bands. However, the Regulators were incensed to discover that the Court Bill, which Governor Montague signed April 12, 1768, failed to provide for county, as well as circuit courts; and worse, the Assembly had inserted provisions in the Act

[5] Ibid, page 171.

[6] Ibid, pages 172-173.

which made disallowance by the Crown almost certain.

Thomas Bell, who came to the backcountry earlier, is recorded as having taken an active part in the quest for the establishment of civil government. "Well aware that the Act of 1768 would be set aside in England, Thomas Bell, William Calhoun, Patrick Calhoun and Andrew Williamson, for themselves and other upcountry settlers, presented in July, 1768, a second major protest to the Assembly, condemning it for the useless enactment of a law which would certainly be annulled in London, and insisting that additional Parishes sending members to the Commons House be organized." [7]

Notwithstanding the passage of the Court Act, the authorities continued to arrest Regulators for their acts. A Regulator victim, John Harvey, stated that in September, 1769, he was chained to a sapling and whipped for an hour. Fifty different Regulators gave him "ten stripes each until he had received 500 in all." [8]

As an outgrowth of the continued arrests of Regulators, "men of property" from as far away as the Peedee River met at the Congaree and unanimously adopted a plan of regulation. By this plan, not only were evil doers to be purged, but the Charles Town court was to be denied jurisdiction over the backcountry of the Province. Judicial process originating in Charles Town would be served only "where, and against whom" the Regulators thought proper. Now the government was faced with acquiescing in rebellion or opposing it, and serious clashes followed. There was great anxiety among the coastal planters, as rumors and stories came from the backcountry in August and September, 1768. It was reported from Camden that 2500 or 3000 Regulators planned to go to Charles Town, while a like number would "hold themselves in readiness, in case they should be wanted." [9]

[7] History of the South - Alden. Vol. 3, page 150.

[8] The Carolina Backcountry - Hooker, page 174, n. 48.

[9] *Ibid.*, page 175.

Finally, the Regulators determined to appeal for aid to the King and Parliament. This threat may or may not have been the turning point; but Governor Montague, after making a hurried tour into the backcountry, in late June, 1769, urged the new Assembly to pass the Circuit Court Act. The Governor sailed for England in 1769, taking with him the newly enacted law for Royal approval. In December, 1769, news arrived that the Crown had approved the Act. It was not until late May, 1772, that the Act was declared in effect and the courts did not open until November. Ironically, this event which met the greatest single demand of the Regulators took place after Reverend Woodmason had become ill and discouraged and had left the Province. He had preached, harangued and cajoled with the backcountry people for six long years in an effort to convert them to the Anglican faith. In this, he had failed, yet the Reverend Woodmason had been the champion of the people in their pursuit of political equality. It is likely that he, more than anyone else, was responsible for achieving that goal. [10]

[10] Ibid, pages 183-184.

CHAPTER IV

BELL - MONTGONERY UNION

Although some descendants of William Bell I have held to the belief that the Bell and the Hugh Montgomery families came to this country on the same vessel and that William, Jr. and Ann Montgomery were playmates on that trip [1]; the fact is, however, that no Montgomery name appears on the passenger list of the Brigantine Chichester [2].

Old land titles place a Hugh Montgomery at Rocky Creek in Chester District on or before September 18, 1765. [3] Just as John Bell I was the pioneer Bell in Fairfield District, Hugh Montgomery seems to be the Montgomery pioneer in Chester District. It is likely that some of his children joined him in later years. On June 22, 1767, a large group of Protestants arrived in Charles Town on the Ship Nancy, and among the passengers were Mary Montgomery, aged 50; John, aged 17; Elizabeth, aged 15; George, aged 13; and James, aged 12. [4]

On the Ship Hillsborough, that arrived February 27, 1767, were John Montgomery; Rachel, aged 30; Samuel, aged 13; and William, aged 12. [5] And, on January 6, 1773, the Ship Lord Dunluce dropped anchor in Charles Town with several hundred passengers, including their spiritual leader, Reverend William Mart(y)n. So also, among this group were several Montgomerys. David, with his family who were not named, received a grant to 350 acres on Rocky Creek in Chester District. Hugh Montgomery, who came without a family, received a grant to 100 acres in Fairfield District. [6] Most of these new settlers, including their minister, received grants to land in the Rocky Creek area of Chester District. And among them, for certain, were some of the kin and probably the children of Hugh Montgomery I.

[1] n. Notes of Eula W. Bell.

[2] Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina 1763-1773-Revill, pages 93-95.

[3] Deed Book V, page 193, Chester County, South Carolina Records.

[4] Protestant Immigrants to South Carolina 1763-1773-Revill, pages 74-76.

[5] Ibid, pages 67-68.

[6] Ibid, pages 121-124.

It is likely the Bell and Montgomery families were neighbors back in Ballymena, Ireland. And it's almost a certainty they would have renewed that acquaintanceship at the meeting house at Rocky Creek where the Reverend Martin preached each Sunday. Scotch-Irish Presbyterians had literally settled in every part of the backcountry; but the Reverend William Martin was the only Covenanter minister and his church attracted large crowds on Sundays, coming from great distances. If there were enough horses to accomodate them, whole families would come to attend religious services.

For an early view of the Rocky Creek Community, where the family of Hugh Montgomery I, including a daughter, Ann, resided, we turn to a "Historical Sketch" found in a "Reprint of the Reformed Presbyterian Covenanter" of 1875: "This settlement was composed of a congregation of recent immigrants from the north of Ireland, commonly called Scotch-Irish. They had come to America about the year 1773, accompanied by their pastor, the Rev. Wm. Martin. Here in the summer of 1773, the pious Covenanter might be seen, from day to day, felling trees and clearing a space of ground, on which they reared a large log church, many of them living in tents at home, till a place was provided in which they could assemble for religious service. Such was the condition of the Covenanters, who had left their native Ireland for the religious liberty found in the wilds. During seven years after their settlement in the woods, they enjoyed a life in which nothing of earthly comfort was wanting. Every Sabbath morning the parents in their Sabbath-day clothes, with their neatly-dressed and well behaved little ones, might be seen at the log meeting house, their pocket Bibles containing the old psalms in their hands; they would follow the preacher in all of the passages of Scripture cited by him as he commented on the text. Their simple, truthful piety caused the wilderness to rejoice. It was always insisted on as a point of duty among the Covenanters that children should be brought to church with their parents. The little ones

sat between the elders, that they might be kept quiet during divine service, and be ready at the appointed time for the Catechism. The strict deportment and piety of this people had already done much to change the customs formerly prevalent - men and women who used to hunt or fish on the Sabbath now went regularly to meeting, and some notorious ones, whose misconduct had been a nuisance to the community, left the neighborhood."

Eula W. Bell, in 1928, interviewed Miss Janie Hutchinson, then seventy-two years of age, and whose mother had related to her bits of Bell and Montgomery history. Based on that interview, she penned the following historical note: "Some light has been thrown upon the Hugh Montgomery line by the recollections of Miss Janie Hutchinson of Monticello, S. C., a quaint little person of seventy-two years (1928) who lives mostly in the past. Her stories are handed down from her mother who also must have had a remarkable memory. This Miss Hutchinson's mother was a daughter of Robert McCulloch, who married in County Antrim Ireland, one Ann Montgomery, then later immigrated to America, landing at Charleston, S.C., January 1, 1823. This Ann Montgomery was a daughter of Thomas Montgomery, who in 1779, was hanged by the Catholics from a limb of 'the great oak' at Bally Mena, County Antrim. Miss Hutchinson thinks perhaps 'the great oak' was as much as a hundred yards from the forks of the road! Thomas Montgomery with his last breath 'denounced the Pope of Rome and swore allegiance to the one and true living God.' This Thomas Montgomery was in all probability the brother of Hugh Montgomery I, father of Ann Montgomery, wife of William Bell II, since Ann Montgomery McCulloch, daughter of Thomas Montgomery of Bally Mena, County Antrim, Ireland, was first cousin of Ann Montgomery (wife of William Bell II), daughter of Hugh Montgomery who had come to South Carolina about 1760. Robert McCulloch and his wife spent their first year in America at Cannon's

Creek in Newberry County, S. C., and then moved wo Wm. Bells at Monticello, and it is to be remembered that the wife of Robert McCullock and the wife of Wm. Bell II, both named Ann Montgomery, were first cousins. * * * Miss Hutchinson said the Montgomerys went to church in Bally Mena. Her hatred of the Catholics who hanged her Great grandfather. Thomas Montgomery is still a burning fire in her heart." [7]

It was likely at preaching - at the Rocky Creek meeting house - that summer of 1773, as William Bell, Jr. turned 21, and Ann Montgomery, 18, that their courtship began. They were married, surely by the Reverend William Martin, in 1774; and William Bell I, as a gift, conveyed to his son 100 acres of the plantation on Ellis' Branch of Little River. [8]

[7] Notes of Eula W. Bell.

[8] n. The gift of land to William Bell, Jr. is referred to in a deed of a later date. Deed Book 4, page 76, Records of Fairfield County, South Carolina.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR YEARS

Genealogical sources provide scant information on the family of William Bell I, except in the case of his son, William Jr., where we are on firm ground. As to the eldest son, John, we are left to speculation and conjecture. As also, with his daughter, Elizabeth. And there appears to be nothing to be learned of the youngest daughter, Mary. But John Bell may have married a daughter of Robert Bradford of the Rocky Creek Community in the Chester District. In the estate of Mr. Bradford, a John Bell, referred to as a son-in-law and heir, was the husband of a daughter who had predeceased the father. [1]

Again, a John Bell of Craven (Fairfield) District, on November 4, 1778, for 1000 pounds lawful currency, conveyed to William Daniel 100 acres, originally granted to Stephen Ellis and adjoining that of William Bell, Sr. [2]

John Bell, the son of William I, may have moved to Chester District. In later years, a John Bell of Little River in Chester District, conveyed to Jacob Reapsoman of Broad River, 100 acres on Cedar Creek, originally granted to Elizabeth Bell on May 13, 1766. The deed recites that it was made by right of heirship from his sister, Elizabeth Bell, who died without a will. [3]

William Bell II and his wife, Ann, were residing on the 100 acre tract next to the elder Bell, when, in 1775, their first child was born - William III - named for his father and grandfather. [4] Thus marked the beginning of what would be a large, fruitful and productive family, assuming its place in the social, economic, religious and cultural life of a backcountry people for more than a century. Still in the distant future for William Bell II

[1] n. Robert Bradford died in Chester District, December 5, 1785. See Chester County, South Carolina Records.

[2] Deed Book A, page 409, Fairfield County, South Carolina Records.

[3] Deed Book P, page 56, Fairfield County, South Carolina Records.

[4] n. For date of birth, see grave marker - Old Litch Church, Fairfield County, South Carolina.

were such matters of concern as clearing enough land for money crops,
and the establishment of neighborhood schools and churches.

The implementation of civil government in the backcountry was still
in progress, when on July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress declared the
independence of the Colonies with the formal signing of the Declaration of
Independence. At the outset, the Bells and their neighbors were a divided
people. They were reluctant to fight against some of their neighbors,
neither did they want to be ingrates to the King who had made their new
homes possible. But in time, when the war would be brought closer to
them, they, and most of their neighbors joined with the Continental Forces.

The Revolutionary War had not progressed to the point that people
in the Fairfield District were directly involved and the building of a society
continued. At the home of William II and Ann, came their second child, a
son named James, in the year 1777, the first natural born American citizen
of the William Bell family. [5] A third child, Ann Nancy, was born in
1778 [6] and about 1780, their fourth child, Margaret. [7]

But in 1780, news had reached the backcountry that Sir Henry Clinton,
on May 12 of that year, with the loss of less than 100 men, forced the
American defenders of Charles Town, the Queen City of the South, to
surrender after four months' seige. Sir Henry then sailed back to New York,
leaving Cornwallis with orders to pacify first South Carolina and then North
Carolina.

The Americans responded by sending south Horatio Gates, the
Commander who had humbled the British at Saratoga. Cornwallis smashed
Gates' army at Camden, only fifty miles distance from the Bell plantation,
on August 16, 1780.

Cornwallis moved into Winnsboro, Fairfield District, where he

[5] n. Grave marker, Old Brick Church, Fairfield County, South Carolina.

[6] n. This is an estimate of time of birth of Margaret Bell.

[7] n. Grave marker, Old Brick Church, Fairfield County, South Carolina.
Family Bible.

set up winter quarters. Wainsboro, now the county seat (District), had a total of twenty houses in 1780, and was less than twenty miles from the Bell plantation. Among the first uprisings against the Crown in the Little River area of Fairfield was an affray at Moberly's Meeting House on May 26, 1780.

It is interesting to note from the fragmentary military records on file with the Department of Archives & History at Columbia, South Carolina, an entry reflecting military service of William Bell II with the South Carolina Militia in support of the Continental Forces, beginning on the 8th day of May, 1780. [8]

Other entries in the military record of William II reflect he served from the 28th day of May, 1781, to June 19, 1781, and from July 4, 1782, to August 11, 1782. These periods of service were with the South Carolina Militia under command of Captain Thomas Robins of Colonel Winn's Regiment. [9]

Back at the plantation, Ann, on July 28, 1781, gave birth to a third son, named John. [10] The elder Bell, like his son William II, was aiding the military effort. Among the fragmentary records relating to William Bell I, appears a receipt for a gun taken by Colonel Lacey's Militia and approved by Hugh Montgomery, the ^{brother-in-law of William II.} son-in-law of the elder Bell. Another receipt "for provisions for 16 men and forage for as many horses." The document bears the signature of "Wm. B. Bell, Sen." And there is a third receipt: "Rec'd of Wm. Bell one bushel & half of corn for the publick use by order of Col. Hopkins by me, Lt. Jas. Love, Feb. 11, 1782." William Bell I was visited again the following day by the Militia, when he was given this receipt: "Received of Wm. Bell forage for fifteen horses and provisions for as many men. By order of Col. Hopkins. Rec. by me James Love, Lieut." [11]

[8] Department Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Department Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina.

Nathanael Greene, Washington's second in command, arrived in the south to replace Gates, and soon had Cornwallis marching and counter-marching through the Carolinas in pursuit of him. With the British, several things went wrong almost simultaneously. A combined British and Southern Loyalist force was all but wiped out by American irregulars (militiamen) at the Battle of Kings Mountain in western North Carolina on October 7, 1780. At Cowpens, South Carolina, Brig. Daniel Morgan took on Cornwallis' elite light infantry, under the command of the British cavalry leader, Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton, and whipped them as totally as Cornwallis had wrecked Gates at Camden. American armed bands (militiamen) under command of Marion and Sumter bedeviled the British with guerrilla warfare. With these defeats and harassments, Southern Loyalists began to find reasons to avoid the open support they had given the British since the fall of Charlestown, and the pressure on the back-country people lessened progressively until the war's end.

On May 15, 1782, William Bell II, for 100 pounds, sold his plantation next to that of his father, to David Montgomery. [1] It may be that his mother, Isabell, had died and he moved his family into the home with his father. By this time William Bell II was looking north along the ridge between Broad and Little Rivers, thinking in terms of a new home, as planters along the route were talking of a new community where there would be mercantile establishments, churches and schools.

An ancient map, undated, but stained and darkened with age, delineates the "plan of the village of Monticello." The original map, in the possession of Charles Burley of Monticello (18__) contains a memoranda which reads: "The plan includes fifty eight acres of land, and is situated on the ridge which divides the waters of Broad and Little Rivers in the District of Fairfield, sixteen miles southeast [2] of Winnsboro and thirty five miles northwest of Columbia. The said fifty eight acres of land is laid out into sixteen squares of two acres each; each square containing four square lots of half an acre each. The two streets bisecting the village were named Drayton and Winn, the former being 160 feet wide and the latter being 121 feet wide. The other streets were: Warren, Wooster, Montgomery, Hayes, Laurens, DeKalb, Campbell, and one other name obliterated."

A resident of later years pictured this village as: "This spot in the wilderness of Fairfield (originally an undivided part of Craven County) was both a challenge and temptation to these first few souls, neither of which they resisted. They willingly undertook to accomodate themselves to their strange, new environment - the lush lands and virgin forest,

[1] Deed Book C, page 211, Fairfield County, South Carolina Records.

[2] n. Reference to "southeast" is obviously in error. Monticello is to southwest of Winnsboro.

dripping with promise, were incentive enough. But to possess these treasures and to reap their gold were to be difficult endeavors. A firm foothold on this new land had to be secured, and with its accomplishment went severe hardship and grueling labor. Existence for them, was precarious and capricious at best. Lifelong habits and the orderly structure of society which they had known in the old world, had to be abandoned and forgotten. An indomitable spirit, sustained by a firm faith in God, carried them through several decades of such harsh existence. Thus did their new life unfold, and their dream take on the shape and substance of reality." [3]

Both Hugh Montgomery II and Charles Montgomery, brothers of Ann Bell, moved with their families to the Monticello area; and in the year 1784, William Bell II purchased 200 acres on Barton's Branch of Broad River close by [4], but it is not likely that he moved onto the property until some years later.

On October 21, 1784, a son, Charles, was born to William II and Ann, and a year later on October 20, 1785, another son, Thomas, bringing to seven the number of their children. Already their eldest child, William, was ten years of age, and the matter of the childrens' education was becoming a factor. It is known that among the early settlers were teachers, and those who could afford private tutorship took advantage of the opportunity. But they looked forward to the establishment of a school at Monticello. And the religious life of the Bells during this period of time was, for the most part, confined to daily Bible reading and prayer in the home. As early as 1762, Jacob Gibson, a Baptist minister and teacher, conducted religious services at the Gibson Meeting House, both for his own flock and others. About this same time, or perhaps earlier, two Seventh Day Adventist groups were formed under the leadership of

[3] A Fairfield Sketchbook - Belling page _____.

[4] Deed Book _____, page _____, Fairfield County, South Carolina Records.

John Pearson, lay preacher. Nearest to the Balls, however, was a Lutheran group, whose minister was the noted theologian, John Nicholas Martin. [5] And there was the Moberly Meeting House, begun by Episcopalians during the time of Reverend Woodmason, and used frequently by ministers of other faiths. According to Woodmason, Presbyterian Covenanters would sometimes attend his services, but never participated in Communion. And, while the Covenanters had no organized congregation at this time, the Reverend William Martin of Rocky Creek would at times visit the area and hold services at one of the meeting houses.

But the lack of ministers to serve the Covenanters was attributed to the disarray of the organization as a result of a defection of three of its ministers. In a reprint of the Reformed Presbyterian Covenanter of January, 1975, we are told: "The defection of three ministers, Messrs. Cuthbertson, Linn and Dobbin, in 1781, left the Covenanters without the administration of public ordinances. Their condition was very much like that of their forefathers in Scotland, nearly a century before, when Messrs. Shelds, Linning and Boyd deserted them and went into the Established Church. The same course was followed by them in this country, that was taken by the remnant in Scotland. They not only refused to go with their ministers in their retrograde movement, but they testified against them by refusing to attend their ministrations. To hear them preaching would be a tacit approval of their course, and a constructive declaration that the principles that were compromised were no part of the testimony that the witnesses of Christ are required to maintain. This they could not do, having professed to be the witnessing Church that Jesus Christ her head has called to bear testimony to the truth of his regal authority as 'King of Nations.'

"Rev. Martin had come over from Ireland and arrived in South

[5] 1. John Nicholas Martin was a student of the famous Reverend Samuel Davis of Virginia and became a missionary to the Cherokee Indians. See footnote, Carolina Backcountry - Hooker, page 132.

Carolina in 1773. But though he did not go into the union, yet on account of his remoteness from the main body of people who were in Eastern Pennsylvania, little aid could be expected from him. Recognizing their covenant obligations to hold fast all the attainments of the church, sealed by the martyrdom of thousands 'who loved not their lives to the death,' they determined to 'go forth by the footsteps of the flock,' and in the way that was still open to them, maintain the cause entrusted to them, and pray to God to send them pastors after his own heart. Societies were formed for prayer and religious conference on Sabbaths and week days * * *.

"Of the labors of Mr. Martin, during the seventeen years that he ministered there alone, we have no record. Unfortunately his social habits, it seems, led him at times into irregularity of conduct that impaired his usefulness. The following, contained in a letter from a correspondent in Chester District, we take the liberty of publishing: 'Mr. Martin was of revolutionary times. I have heard my parents speak of him often. When clearing a piece of ground on my plantation some twenty years ago, I found two trees growing about seven feet apart. There had been a notch out in each tree and a board placed between them, resting on the notches. On each of these trees I found a knot that had grown just above the notches, and extending to within four inches of meeting on the top of the board. I was told by my parents that this was the place where Mr. Martin preached in the grove. Mr. Martin was a warm Whig during the Revolution, and I have heard a great many anecdotes about him.' "

But there would soon be a church - a minister - a high school - and a more affluent life for the family of William II, as they prepared to move onto land near the village of Monticello.

CHAPTER VII

THE BELL'S CHURCH

The last record of William Bell I is the deed of conveyance made by him to a Mr. Daniel, in the year 1791, to his plantation for 100 guineas. The elder Bell was 64 years of age and Isabell, his wife, would have been 63, if indeed she was still living.

From the coastal area had come planters of some wealth, to take advantage of land that was especially suitable for the production of cotton, rapidly becoming the main money crop. And with them came slaves to clear and cultivate the land, but only a few of the immigrant settlers were financially able at that time to own slaves. And there was yet another deterrent. The Scotch-Irish Presbyterian Covenanters had always been bitterly opposed to slavery in any form or character. But it had long been a way of life in the coastal area, and the younger generation of the immigrants found themselves yielding their personal view of slavery to the economic pressures of the times. It is likely that the proceeds of the sale of the elder Bell's plantation made it possible for William II to purchase the first slaves, two or three perhaps. It is interesting to note that the consideration for the sale of the elder Bell's plantation was not United States' dollar currency, which at that early date in the history of the Republic was not too stable, but instead was English guineas. The guinea was an English gold coin issued from 1663 to 1813, first struck out of gold from Guinea. In 1717 its value was fixed at 21 shillings, at par \$5.11. [6]

Sometime before the 1790's the Bells and their neighbors associated themselves together and organized the Little River Presbyterian Church, which in later years would become known as Ebenezer, and still later as the Old Brick Church. The first structure was a log cabin in the vicinity between Jenkinsville and Monticello, some two miles west of the present:

[6] Deed Book C, page 211, Fairfield County, South Carolina Records.

structure. From the Centennial History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church is an account of the history of the Old Brick Church where the Bells and their neighbors worshipped: " * * * Rev. James Rogers was the first pastor of the church, as far as we can learn. He was ordained and installed over the Brick Church, then called Little River, in connection with King's Creek, and Cannon's Creek, in Newberry Co., on Feb. 23rd, 1791. Mr. Rogers continued to be pastor until his death Aug. 21st, 1830. He is buried at the Brick Church. Rev. James Boyce was the next pastor, and was installed in 1832, and continued until 1843. Rev. Thomas Ketchin was pastor from 1844 until 1852. Rev. C. B. Betts was pastor from 1855 until 1869.

"During the pastorates of Revs. Rogers, Boyce, Ketchin, and a part of the pastorate of Rev. Betts, the Brick Church was a large and flourishing congregation. The membership was composed of the wealthy and cultured planters of the community, and large crowds waited on the gospel at the Brick Church. Mr. Rogers taught a large high school at Monticello, nearby, which was attended by pupils from many parts of the state. The Brick Church was made up of the noble men and women of the Old South. In 1852 the church and graveyard was enclosed with a granite stone wall.

"The deed to the land on which the Brick Church stands shows that it was conveyed on June 2, 1793, by Henry Crumpton, to the following persons designated in the deed as members of this church, viz: Benj. Boyd, John Martin, Jas. Gray, Chas. Montgomery, John Gray, James Kincaid, Aaron Hawthorne, Thomas Lewers, Wm. Bell, Andrew Gray, Wm. McMorries, Sr., Wm. McMorries, Jr., Daniel Cochran, Collom Forbes, Hugh Montgomery, Robt. Gray, Wm. Thompson, Wm. Richardson, Robt. Martin, Alexander Kincaid, James Mantee, Robt. McGill, Wm. Holmes, Wm. Kearnaghan, H. Ronalds, R. Robertson, Hugh Robertson, Wm.

Kennedy, Hy. Horton, S. Richardson, Wm. Watt, J. Kennedy, Wm. Southwick, and Agnes Calhoun. In addition to these, we find also that families of the following names belonged to the church prior to 1791, viz: McKermies, Davidson, Turnipseed, and perhaps others. In later times, we find the additional names as members and some of them officers in the church: Nelson, Sloan, Robinson, McDowell, Watt, Martin, Player, Curry and Bell. (emphasis ours)

"Mrs. Hutchinson, a member of the church, who died a few years ago, said that she remembered hearing her mother and others tell, that after the crops were laid by, that their fathers and grandfathers would go to the brickyard, and tramp the mud into mortar with their bare feet, put it into moulds with their hands, carry it out in the sunshine - then burning the kilns by night and day. And to them it was a labor of love and pleasure. It took them a long time to get ready to build, but the building was finally completed in 1788, and it stands today, as strong and solid as at first, showing that those old men did their work well.

"The history of this old church has been a noble one. Prof. McKemie, of Georgia, whose ancestors for three generations are in the cemetery around the old Brick Church says: 'That old Brick Church has been a seed bed from which transplants have gone throughout the South.' After speaking of the names of the families already mentioned in this sketch, he says: 'If I were in the cemetery, I could recall many other names whose generations have carried Presbyterianism from South Carolina to the Pacific Coast. I recall two ministers, Revs. Joseph and John E. Davidson (who were baptized in the Brick Church by Dr. Rogers) who passed their ministerial lives in North Louisiana. For thirty-five years Joseph Davidson preached more sermons, married and buried more people, than any minister in North Louisiana. John E. Davidson was a graduate of Princeton,

and in three years organized six or seven churches in Louisiana, but he "went away" just as his star was mounting. '

"In addition to these, four other ministers have come from the Brick Church, viz: Rev. J. B. Watt, Rev. J. A. Sloan, Rev. John E. Martin, and Rev. Horace Rabb. There are others perhaps, but we have not been able to get their names.

The old communion service, with its waiter, tankard, cups, and Irish linen, more than a century old, is still in possession of the congregation." [7]

The Reverend James Rogers came to Monticello from County Monaghan, Ireland, and was a graduate of the University of Glasgow. At the same time the church members were building an edifice in which to worship, they were also contributing to and building a school in which the Reverend Rogers would teach their children. An account of this school is found in "A Fairfield Sketchbook:"

"The Reverend James Rogers, coming to Fairfield from Ireland in 1791, a few years later helped establish here an academy of learning, over which he presided for twenty-five years. Built from individual contributions of citizens, it was first known as 'The James Rogers Academy.' There are conflicting reports as to whether this academy was a school for boys or girls, or perhaps for both sexes. However, the weight of evidence would establish more or less conclusively that it was at first a male institution, but by 1800 was known as 'The Monticello Girls School.' Thomas Jefferson, whose ideal of an educated citizenry led to the public school system, made a generous donation to the school through General John Pearson, then a member of the legislature. Its name was then changed to 'The Monticello-Jefferson Academy,' still later reports indicate, this school was attended

[7] n. This account was found among the notes of Eula W. Bell

by students of both sexes, and enjoyed a sound reputation as a noteworthy institution of learning." [8]

[8] A Fairfield Sketchbook - Bolid page 211.

n. Alexander Douglass Bell, great-great grandson of William Bell I, and his wife, Martha Crosby, attended The Monticello-Jefferson Academy in the mid 1850's, as did most of the Bell children in earlier years.

n. While the Old Brick Church as been designated a historical site, descendants of members of the congregation assemble there annually for homecoming and religious services.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OLD BELL PLACE

Sometime between 1784, when William Bell II sold his plantation to David Montgomery, and 1789, when his father sold the remaining 100 acres of the original grant on Ellis' Branch of Little River, [1] William II moved with his family a few miles north in the area of the Village of Monticello. It might have been to the tract on Barton's Branch of Broad River or to the tract of 221 acres purchased from his cousin, John Bell II, the latter tract lying and being on Mill Creek. Again, he may have moved at that time to a tract on Little River near Monticello, where the families of some of his descendants continued to live until about 1915.

State Highway 34, running east and west through Fairfield County, traverses the old Bell plantation on the west side of Little River. The tract of land, it is believed, was the site of the second cowpen in the county, settled by a Mr. Howell, [2] about 1750. Before the Revolutionary War the Winn family lived on the east side of the river and the first bridge over the stream was known as Winn's Bridge. [3] In later years, it became known as Bell's Bridge, and the road to Monticello, traversing the Bell plantation, was known as Bell Bridge Road.

As one drives west from Winnsboro on Highway 34 and over the bridge at Little River, looking north, paralleling the river, will be seen an avenue of trees and the old "Bell Place." This old home, rich with tradition, legend and folklore, is featured in "A Fairfield Sketchbook" - Bolin, with the artist's pencilled sketch and some of its folklore and history:

"The Bell place is one of the older pre-Revolutionary houses in the county. It occupies the site of one of the first settlements or 'cowpens' in the upcountry.

[1] Deed Book C, page 211, Fairfield County, South Carolina Records.

[2] A Fairfield Sketchbook - Bolin, page 2.

[3] Ibid, page 2.

Bell Place
3000 acres
West side
of Little
River

"Originally the Bell Place consisted of more than three thousand acres of land. The house was built in the 1750's, and is probably the oldest house in the county that is still in use. The original portion consisted of two rooms and a hall on the first and second floors and two partially finished rooms in the attic. These rooms were floored and ceiled with wide, heart-pine planks, some of which were hand planed. None of the lumber was tongued and grooved. In this old portion of the building loop-holes for sighting and firing on the Indians and holes used as candle holders are still to be seen in this pioneer house of which the entire framework is put together with pegs.

"Many years before the War Between the States the old house was enlarged and remodeled. A two story, seven room wing was added to the back of the building and was fronted with a doubled decked porch. During this time the three big mantels with their straight panels and beautiful hand carvings were added. This work was done by highly trained plantation hands who used only their pocket-knives to carve the intricate designs. The kitchen was in the yard a distance behind the house.

"The Bells owned many slaves and the quarters for housing them was about one quarter of a mile from the main dwelling. Across the road from the plantation house was a large slave cemetery. A few of the marked graves still may be seen. The inscriptions are quite interesting. Near the burying grounds on a peninsula jutting into Little River swamp, is a large grave. It is evidently a tomb of a person of some consequence. A heavy granite base supports the tomb which is above the ground and covered with a heavy slab of granite. This is enclosed with a low rock wall. In recent years this grave has either been desecrated or badly damaged by storms and floods for the slab now lies half buried beside the open grave. The wall is broken and the massive base has been upset in several places. Time and weather seems to have erased all traces of an

inscription. Old timers say that they can remember when the inscription was still legible and that this is the grave of a Winn, probably the Richard Winn for whom Winnsboro is named.

"Another story that is told, but is sometimes contradicted, is about a daughter of the family who eloped with the father's northern born overseer. The ambitious young man thought that he would be received as a member of the family and of the gentry of the neighborhood and would live in the 'big house' with his bride and her people. When they returned to the plantation he had a rude awakening. They were met by the master who horse-whipped the groom and later built a small four room house in the yard for the couple to occupy. Whether this is truth or legend is not known, but it is a fact that there was a four room building near the house that was removed a few years ago because it was not only useless but a fire hazard as well as an eyesore.

"The old place is heavy with tradition and many stories are told about the old house being haunted. One of these is based on an unfortunate accident that occurred many years ago. Mr. Martin, a Presbyterian minister, and several other men, were riding up the avenue of trees leading to the house. The men were joking and cutting at each other with their riding crops. As the play grew rougher some of them lost their tempers. One struck the preacher, who dismounted and picked up a rock to throw at his assailant. John Bell had ~~also~~ dismounted and hid behind a tree. Just as the clergyman threw the rock Mr. Bell peeped from behind the tree. The hurling stone struck him with full force on the head and he died soon after he was brought to the house for treatment. His widow continued to operate the plantation for a time and then it was leased.

"In the early 1900's the place was sold by Mrs. Bell to James T. Lemmon who bought the house and a one thousand acre tract of land. At his death the plantation was inherited by his daughter, Mrs. Lambert

WEST of LITTLE
RIVER (Bell sold
-34- TO LEMMON

Henry, the mother of the present owner, Mrs. Myrtle Henry Wilkes. [4]

[4] Ibid, pages 188-191.

n. The late Mrs. Myrtle Henry Wilkes, a typical Southern, genteel lady, with the poise and enthusiasm of a professional guide, related to a Bell descendant the tradition of how the blood of John Bell had stained the floor of the old house and that until the stain was removed by the passing of time, John's voice could be heard, at times, calling out to the Reverend Martin. She pulled back the narrow carpet in the hallway and, pointing to a burned scar on the floor, said, "This is where Sherman's troops set fire to the house, but the fire was extinguished by a loyal slave."

n. John P. Bell, son of Charles, b. November 12, 1830; married Isabella Hemphill Caldwell, December 8, 1858; d. April 10, 1863; buried Old Erick Church.

Chapter XIII
BELLS AND THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

Hugh and Martha Bell at Starkville, Mississippi received a letter from their son William of Fairfield District, South Carolina, with distressing news, perhaps of the Secessionist Movement in progress there. On January 1, 1860, Hugh penned this letter to his son, in reply:

"My dear son and daughter: We received your very welcome favor a few days ago, but I must say I was somewhat surprised to read a letter from Billie, for I thought that he had forgotten how to write. It filled my heart with joy when the announcement came that I had a letter from one who is dear to me. But alas; it brought sad news. Your mother is very much distressed about you. There is a great deal of excitement here at this time. Mississippi will secede in a few days. They are making up companies here to send too Charleston. The times are improving cotton is worth eleven and a half cents. There are plenty of every thing. We made a sorry corn crop, but by being economical we will have enough to do us. We made sixty or seventy bails of cotton. We sold some cotton, eight bails at eight cents, fifteen at eleven, the balance hand yet. We are preparing to plant another crop. Margaret Valentine has another fine daughter. William Goyens has moved to the place he sold Davis. Miller is doing very well. We received a letter from Sallie last week. Tell her that I am very much obliged too her for writing. Tell Hugh that I think that he has forgotten us entirely. I thought that he would write as he promised to do so. John is playing around the girls very extensively. I think he has a little thought of marrying. I thought that you would have moved out here, but I have lost all hopes. I think that you will do a great deal better here than where you are. The times are very hard here, but hard as they are negroes are hiring at a big price. Negro fellows from two hundred and twenty-five too two hundred and sixty; women from two hundred too one hundred and fifty. If you had your

negros here you could make more by hiring them out, than you make there. I have hired none this year, but I expect to hire, if I can get them at their worth. We made five bails of cotton to the hands. I have written all of the knews. This leaves us all well. I must say that Margaret has been very faithful in writing. I would like that you would write often, and let us hear the knews. Nothing more. I remain forever your true father. Hugh Bell."

[1]

In Chester District, Robert Brown, son of James Montgomery Bell, was married to Margaret Ann Barnes on January 12, 1860. Two of his brothers had already married, Joseph Bigham to Eliza Jane Collins on November 24, 1851, and John Leroy to Charlotte Bagley on February 14, 1856. Charles James was married later to Rachel Bigham, December 19, 1867. [2]

December 20, 1860 - an event that all had expected - South Carolina seceded from the Union, and the State of Mississippi followed on January 9, 1861. March 4, 1861, marked the Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States, and, on April 8, 1861, Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, called for twenty thousand volunteers.

Among the descendants of William Bell I, as now known to us, twenty-five were probably eligible for service with the Confederate Army. Fourteen of them resided in Oktibbeha County, Mississippi; six in Fairfield District; four in Chester District, and one in the State of North Carolina. We presume that most, if not all, of these saw service during the war. Official records tell of the service of some, Bible records and grave markers of others, and a number of them are unaccounted for. They, perhaps, gave their lives along with those who are known to us to have died in service.

On July 25, 1861, Hugh, son of William and Margaret Bell, died.

[1] Letter in possession of Margaret Starnell Kilgore, Columbia, South Carolina, great granddaughter of William Bell, son of Hugh.

[2] Family Bible of John Bell.

On October 15, of that year, Martha M., daughter of Edward M. and Martha S. Bell, was married to Archibald J. Hamilton. And her mother, Martha S., widow of Edward M. Bell, married Reverend John Hunter on December 10, 1861.

Early in the year, 1862, the Bell men in Fairfield and Chester Districts were leaving the plantations for Camp Instruction at Columbia, South Carolina. Perhaps there were no male adults left at the Bell Community in Fairfield to manage the plantations and oversee the planting of crops. The older men were all dead. In Chester District the responsibility would rest upon James Montgomery Bell to care for the families of his four sons, all in the military service.

From Camp Instruction, Columbia, John Leroy Bell, son of James Montgomery Bell, expressed a thought to his wife Charlotte, one likely shared by all in the service. "I hope to get back to you again. This wicked war can't last long." He expressed other thoughts, too, in his letters that have been preserved to be shared with us: [3]

"South Carolina
Camp Instruction.
Columbia, July 22, 1862

Dear Wife:

I seat myself this evening to inform you of our health which is tolerable good at this time. I hope these lines may come to finding you all well. Charlotte I have wrote you two letters since I came to this place but I have never received an answer yet - I do think the time long to hear from you. * * * They say that we will be taken to Virginia - I would rather not go there if I could help it but if it is Gods will we will come through and get back to our dear friends again. If we have to go I want to go home to see you all before we leave. If it were not for you and my dear little children I could get along but you are never out of my mind. * * * I heard that you had a

[3] Original letters of John Leroy Bell were in the possession of Dora Ann Bell, daughter of Robert Brown Bell, when copied by Eula W. Bell.

storm of wind and rain in Chester last Thursday night - I want you to give me the news about it - let me know how the crops look - I would like to be there to get some apple pie - we cant get apples they are asking 5 ¢ for 2 apples. Charlotte you had better dry all the fruit you can for you have no idea how high and scarce provisions is. Take care of your stock the best you can. Tell William and your mother that I will write to them soon. Let father see this - direct your letters to Columbia Camp Instruction in care of Major Gibbs I hope you will write to me as soon as this comes to hand. Nothing more but I remain yours until death."

"South Carolina
Columbia Camp Instruction

Dear wife and little children

I seat myself this morning to inform you of our health which is good at this time. I hope these lines may come to hand and find you all well. Dear wife I will inform you that we have to take cars to Virginia this evening at 4 o'clock - Charlotte I hope you wont take it hard - I want you to take it easy and pray to God for me - If it is Gods will for me to come to and get back to you and my Dear little children once more - Charlotte you must trust in God and you will get along some way. * * * Charlotte I will write to you as soon as I get there and I hope you will write to me. Nothing more at this time but I remain your husband till death - may God be with you and bless you forever. (postscript) Kiss my little children for me Fare ye well if I never meet you on earth - I hope to meet you in heaven."

"Richmond, Va.
August 2, 1862.

Dear Wife

I take this opportunity to inform you of my health which is good at this time. I hope these lines may come to hand and find you all well. We arrived here about 12 o'clock today - We left the Camp of Instruction last Wednesday

evening at 4- we got to Charlotte Tuesday morning at 3 o'clock and we left
Charlotte that evening and got to Raleigh about sunrise. We got to Weldon
yesterday evening sundown - we had a very uneasy trip the cars was so
crowded - we suffered for water and something to eat - we drew two loaves
of bread in Columbia - and that was all we got un til we got to Weldon and
then we got a half a loaf to a man. We have been eating bread and water
since we left Columbia. Charlotte it was hard for me to come through
Chester so nigh home and couldnt get to see you but I hope to see you all
before long - we are all going to the sixth regiment to the Old Pickens Guard.
This is a pretty place there are lots of men here - I can see 25 or 30
carriages of artillery now. I would like to hear from you very bad I havent
heard a breath from you since I left Home - I would like to be there to go to
preaching with you tomorrow - they are expecting a battle here every day
but we have to be drilled before we are taken into battle - I havent time to
give you all the news at this time - I will give you the news in a few days.
Direct your letters to 6 Regiment Company F in care of Capt. R. A. Craw-
ford - Nothing more at this time but I remain your husband til death."

"Richmond, Va.
August 9, 1862

Dear Brother (in-law)

I take my pen in hand this morning to inform you of my health which
is good at this time though I am very weak - I had a very bad spell of
disentary - I took some medicine this give me relief. I hope these lines
may come to hand and find you all well and doing well. * * * We have to
drill two hours in the day and we get a half a loaf of bread and it is the worst
bread ever I eat - we get enough of meat if we could get wood to cook it. We
draw 3 sticks of wood to the mess every three days about enough to make one
fire. This is a hard place to be but I hope we will all get home once more.
There is lots of soldiers here - there was an exchange made of prisoners

the other day about four thousand which has crowded our camp - they are lying in every direction about here and as lousy as hogs. It is reported that they have been a fighting about 8 miles from this place but that is all that I can tell you - I heard the guns very plain last Sunday evening east from this place - William I think I could get along if I could hear from home - I havent heard from home since I left - I am uneasy to hear - I hope you will stay with my Dear family and do the best you can for them - it seems that I can hear the crys of my little children now - I can never forget the fix I left them in but may God be with and bless them and you all forever - nothing more at this time but I remain yours til death. "

"Gordonsville, Va.
August 16, 1862

Dear wife

I take my pen in hand to inform you of my health which is tolerable at this time - I have been very bad off and had got better when we got orders to move - we left Richmond yesterday morning - we landed at Gordonsville at 5 o'clock then we had to march about 4 miles - we had to march 6 miles yesterday morning - we was brought here to reinforce Jackson army - I never wanted to come here but it don't matter God is here as well as there - I think if I had a days rest I would be well enough - I never was so sore in my life. Charlotte I am uneasy to hear from you - I received one letter from you since I left and it was wrote ~~the~~ 31 of July - it was sent to me at Camp Columbia - it was sent (on) to me. I received a letter from sister Nancy and a pair of shoes come by hand to Charles. Nancy's letter stated that our baby was very bad off with that rising and I want you to write me soon and tell my friends all to write and I am hoping to get some of them - I have wrote to many and havent received any til it looks like no use to write. Dear wife I went to the sergeant doctor since I commenced my letter and he excused me from drilling today - he gave me 2 quinine pills to take - we have to

drill 6 hours in the day which is going to be hard on us - I would give the world if this wicked war was over which I hope will be in a short time - if I could hear from home it would do me good - I cannot be easy when I know the fix my dear little baby is in but I hope the Lord will be with and bless us and that the time will not be long when we will all meet again - Charlotte I received that lock of hair that you sent me I was glad to see it - write soon as this comes to hand and fail not. We fare but middling for some thing to eat - we get a half of loaf of bread a day - we get beef and a little bacon - we can live on it when we are well - fruit is worth \$10.00 per bushel - 25 cts. for three little apples - I havent bought any since I come to Va. I bought a pint of buttermilk yesterday morning I paid 10 cts. for it - it wasnt fit to drink - I believe I have told you all that I can think of at present. Nothing more at present but I remain your husband untill death."

"Camp near Culpepper,
November 9, 1862.

Dear Father,

I seat myself to-day to inform you of our health which is good at present hoping these lines may come to hand and find you well - Dear Father I got to my Regiment yesterday - I left the hospital Wednesday and got here Friday - I hadnt to walk but 2 miles - I went away to Stanton and we heard that the Regt. had moved and I turned back and got to Culpepper Friday night - we had snow here Friday and it snowed some last night - it is very cold this morning and is some warmer * * * Charles says he wants his old uniform coat and a woolen shirt and drawers if you have them ready when you send the rest of his clothes - we have marching orders but have no idea where we will go - we expected to leave this place by daylight this morning but are still here - we hear such talk as going to the coast - I dont know how it will be but I hope we will get from this cold place - I have told you all that I can think of at present. Nothing more at this time but I remain

your affectionate son untill death."

Camp near Fredericksburg
January 22, 1863

Dear Wife

I seat myself this morning to inform you of my health which is good at present. I do truly hope these lines may come to hand and find you all well and a doing well. Charlotte I haven't much to write at this time for I have wrote you 4 or 5 letters since I have got one from you by male the last letter I got with my clothes - I havent got one from you by male in two months and it hurts my feelings that I cant get no letters from you. Charlotte I got my clothes by Mr. Strong and Calvin Chestnut. Calv told me that he saw you at your mothers - he said that you was well and hearty looking - he said that he expected to go to see you before he started back but Mr. Strong took a notion of starting earlier than he expected and hadnt the chance of going to see you - I got one pair of pants two pair of drawers onc shirt one pair of shoes I neck comfort & something to go over my ears and I got a handkerchief and letter in one of the pockets - and we got some fruit and some butter which we have had som good messes of. It has done us a heap of good - you have no idea how good it eats to us - I wouldnt take 10 dollars for what fruit and butter you sent us - Now Charlotte we are expecting orders to march every minute - we have orders to keep two days rations cooked in our havoc sacks to be ready to march at a moments warn- ing but we have no idea where we are going to - it is hard the way poor soldiers are treated - it is bad weather if we have to march now. I do think yesterday and last night was the worst night of wind and rain and cold that I ever saw - the ground is nothing but mud and water - I am tired of this place and I am worn out with the sound of the drum and drilling - I want to hear the sound of your voice and of them Dear little children and

I do hope to be spared to enjoy that day. I wrote home to you to try to get me to Overseas somewhere but it looks like I will never get any more letters from you - I still look every day but I look in vain - you said in your last letter that you had killed your hog - I think you ought to have enough meat to do you - I hope and trust I will get home to help you eat some of it - my advice to you is to save all you can to eat. Tell my little children howdy for me and I do want you to write to me soon and fail not - I will close by asking you to write to me. Nothing more at present but I remain your affectionate husband until death."

In a postscript to one of his letters to Charlotte, John Leroy Bell left this philosophical bit: "When this you see, remember me - though in some distant land I be."

John Leroy Bell died March 21, 1863, while serving in Company "A" of the 5th South Carolina Regiment. He was survived by his wife Charlotte; two daughters, Mary Agness and Elizabeth Jane; and a son Charles.

Joseph Bigham, brother of John Leroy, died at Atlanta in 1863, following wounds received in the Battle of Chickamauga. He was survived by his wife Eliza, and one son John Robert.

Two other sons of James Montgomery Bell, Robert Brown Bell and Charles James Bell, fought through the war and returned to their families in Chester District.

Two sons of Charles, the son of William Bell II, died: David of Mississippi, November 15, 1862, and John P. of Fairfield District, April 10, 1863, presumably in the military service. David was survived by his wife Jane, and two sons, William and James. [4] John P. was survived by his wife Isabella H. Bell.

And in Mississippi, serving with Company "C" of the 14th Mississippi

[4] U.S. Census 1850 of Oktibbeha County, Mississippi lists children of David Bell. There may have been others.

Regiment, were: J. G. Bell and his brother, Benjamin F., believed to be sons of James II; J. Aquilla and Robert M., sons of William Bell IV. [5]

William Bell, son of Hugh, served in Company "F", 12th Regiment of the South Carolina Infantry, and returned to his family in Fairfield District after the war.

These are but a few of the Bell descendants who saw service with the Confederate Army. Most are unidentified - some unaccounted for until this day.

The year, 1864, saw the price of all commodities sky-rocketing, with government agents purchasing most of the available meat and grain products. Sale of the assets in the estate of Nancy Bell, deceased, [6] in Fairfield District gives us some idea of the cost of living during the War Between the States. Dried peas sold for \$5.00 a bushel; wheat at \$6.00 a bushel; bacon, \$1.50 a pound; lard, \$3.00 a pound; cotton at .20 cents a pound; and cattle at \$138.00 a head. Slaves were sold for between three and four thousand dollars - all in Confederate currency. As an indication of the scarcity of writing paper during this era, the accounting in this estate was written on brown wrapping paper.

Back now to the Bell Community. After the death of Edward M. Bell, his widow, Martha S., waived her right to serve as executrix of the estate of her late husband in favor of her brother, John S. Douglass. Mr. Douglass was also appointed guardian of the person and property of young Douglass Bell, the widow Martha having married the Reverend John Hunter.

In 1862, Douglass Bell was sent to a boarding school in Due West, South Carolina to complete his primary education. The Reverend Hunter would pay Doug's expenses and bill the guardian for reimbursement. It is interesting to note from the guardianship account that a pair of shoes was purchased in 1862 for \$3.00. Another pair, purchased in 1864, cost \$60.00.

[5] Historical Sketches Oktibbeha County, Mississippi - Carrol.

[6] n. This Nancy Bell is unidentified, but likely of the family of John Bell II. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, South Carolina.

Four yards of suit material, purchased December 15, 1868 at Columbia, cost \$140.00.

In 1864, Douglass Bell was being schooled by a private tutor, John C. Chisolm, in Fairfield District. [7] His mother, Martha S., suffered a respiratory illness and died April 9, 1864. Though survived by her husband, the Reverend Hunter, Martha was laid to rest beside Edward at the Old Brick Church. A faded receipt given by Dr. Walter Brice of the New Hope Community reflects payment for medical services rendered in 1864. [8]

After the death of his mother, and when he was not away attending school, Douglass Bell lived in the home of his maternal grandparents, Alexander and Martha Douglass, in the New Hope Community of Fairfield District. An account of this home is found in A. Fairfield Sketchbook - Bollick:

"Albion is the largest and most elegant home in the New Hope section. It is the ancestral home of the Douglas family having been built about 1840 by Alexander Douglas, who was a grandfather of the late Albert Douglas, whose widow now owns the place.

"The house is beautifully located on an elevation at the head of an avenue of ancient trees. Its appearance is commanding; a true Southern plantation mansion in the best tradition. Green lawns and larger trees set it off. This tall, three-story manor house is built along simple Colonial lines. The main body is covered with a gabled roof and extends over the upstairs veranda. In the center of the roof is a beautiful gable. The mammoth chimneys are built in the house. Two-story piazzas extend across the entire front and each porch is supported by ten large square columns and are enclosed with picketed bannisters. The windows are long and well placed. The entrances are simple but decorative, surrounded

[7] Original receipt for payment as tutor of Alexander Douglass Bell.

[8] Original receipt of Dr. Walter Brice for services rendered.

by glass side lights. The decorations of the columns, doorways, windows, and trim are beautifully designed and executed.

"As would be expected, the interior is spacious with elegant mantels, rosettes, cornices, and mouldings. A graceful stair of three flights descenders the front hall. A narrower stairway rises from the rear hall.

"The original owner of this old house employed a builder from York to construct his home. The best of materials were used. The original locks and hardware are still in good working order. Alexander Douglas was a slave owner, a successful planter and a builder of good wagons. His wagon shop was located on the main road near the avenue leading up to his home.

"Down through the years this place has remained in the Douglas family. It has been well kept and is still in good condition and with a little redecoration, proper furnishings, and landscaping it could well be one of the show places of the Upcountry." [9]

On March 9, 1864, Ulysses S. Grant was created a lieutenant general and placed in supreme command of all the Federal armies in the field. Sherman was left in command of the west. In November, Sherman cutting loose, began his march to the sea, laying waste the country on a 60-mile front; and he occupied Savannah, December 20-21. When Mobile was taken by Farragut in August, the close of the year saw the termination of Confederate power in the far South. After wintering for a month in Savannah, (January 1865) Sherman again began driving General Johnson to the north through the Carolinas. Orangeburg fell, the Congaree was carried, Columbia and then Charleston were taken, effecting a junction with Slocum's forces at Winnsboro, Fairfield District.

[9] A Fairfield Sketchbook - Bolick page 123.
n. For some reason the Douglass family, after the War Between the States, dropped an "s" from the Douglass name.

THE CARPETBAG RULE

After the war clouds lifted over Fairfield and Chester Districts and as the mourning of the war dead continued, those few remaining Bell households faced another tragic era, that of Reconstruction.

At the Bell Community in Fairfield District, the widow Isabella Hemphill Bell lived alone at the plantation of Charles Bell, deceased, father of her late husband, John P. Bell.

Of the four sons of William Bell III residing in Fairfield District before the war, only Thomas R. is known to have survived.

William Bell, son of Hugh, and his wife, Margaret, and their three children: Sarah Elizabeth, Thomas E., and Margaret Jane, lived in the former home of Thomas Bell, inherited by his daughter, Margaret.

And there was Alexander Douglass Bell, son of Edward M., living with his maternal grandparents.

The migration, pestilence and war had reduced the male Bell population of the Bell Community to four in number, two adults and two minors.

In the Chester District, there were James Montgomery Bell and the families of his children: John Leroy, deceased; Robert Brown; Charles James; Joseph Bigham, deceased; Margaret Nancy Bigham; Elizabeth Montgomery Beattie; and Mary Jane.

And finally, at Starkville, Mississippi, there were the families of Hugh Bell, son of William II; Isabella Bell Montgomery, widow of Hugh Montgomery III; James Bell II, son of James; William Bell IV; and some of the grandchildren of Charles, son of William II; and other unidentified Bell descendants.

Nowhere among the Confederate States would the oppression, subjugation and human misery of the Reconstruction Era be felt as in the

State of South Carolina. Not even the Bells' place of worship was entirely spared the desecration of war. Confederate soldiers had destroyed the bridge over Little River. Federal troops fell upon the Old Brick Church, overlooking the stream, and removed the flooring and its sleepers, which were used by them to construct a makeshift bridge. One of the company of soldiers, stirred in heart as he witnessed the desecration of the Lord's House, wrote in pencil on the door facing of the church these words:

"Citizens of this community: Please excuse us for defacing your house of worship so much. It was absolutely necessary to effect a crossing over the creek, as the Rebs destroyed the bridge. - A Yankee." [1]

So devastating was the war's effect on the congregation of the Old Brick Church, that the organization rapidly declined until it disappeared from the roll of the Presbytery without any formal act of dissolution. [2]

On May 2, 1865, Mrs. Mary Boylde Chestnut, travelling from Chester to Camden with her husband, Confederate Brigadier General James Chestnut, Jr., noted in her diary: "I am writing from the roadside below Hackstock enroute to Camden. Since we left Chester, solitude; nothing but tall, blackened chimneys to show that any man has ever trod this road before us. This is Sherman's track! It is hard not to curse him. I wept incessantly at first. 'The roses of the gardens are already hiding the ruins,' said Mr. Chestnut trying to say something. Then I made a vow - if we are a crushed people, I will never be a whimpering, pining slave.

"May 4 - From Chester to Winnsboro, we did not see one living thing, man, woman or animal. * * * The blooming of the gardens had a funereal effect. Nature is so luxuriant here; she soon covers the ravages of savages. The last frost occurred the seventh of March, so that accounts for the wonderful advance of vegetation. It seems providential to these

[1] Charles Montgomery Bell, son of the late John Montgomery Bell, of Chester, South Carolina, in 1933, placed a framed copy of the inscription on the wall of the church near the original.

[2] Notes of Eula W. Bell.

starving people; so much that is edible has grown in two months.

"At Winnsboro, to my amazement, the young people had a May Day amidst the smoking ruins. Irrepressible youth! The fidelity of the Negroes is the principal topic everywhere. There seems not a single case of a Negro who betrayed his master; and yet they showed a natural and exultant joy at being free. In the fields we saw them plowing and hoeing corn as always. The fields in that respect looked quite cheerful." [3]

With the end of the war came two new social and economic factors. The slaves were free and a part of the free economic system; but neither they nor their former masters possessed the financial resources to cultivate crops. The prosperous planter of the ante bellum era was deep in debt and would become more so, as the carpetbaggers at Columbia wrested control of government from the solid, white citizens of South Carolina.

So it was that the planter turned to the country store for credit - the only source of credit. With this development came the lien law enacted by most of the Southern legislatures, under the terms of which a planter would give the merchant a lien on his crop in exchange for credit. Based upon the number of acres to be planted, the borrower would be limited in the amount of purchases that he could make each month during the term of the lien. But the Negro freeman had neither land nor credit; and for these, he looked to his former master. And the planter needed, equally as much, the services of his former slave. In fact, they needed each other, if either was to survive the Reconstruction Era. The Negro, through his former master, found a source of credit, though indirect, at the country store. These circumstances gave birth to the practice of sharecropping. The freed slave, however, took a dim philosophical view of a credit system that benefited him but only indirectly; and some one of them composed this ditty, which expressed their attitude:

[3] A. Diary From Dixie - Chesnut, Editor, Ben Ames Williams, pages 527-528.

"An ought's and ought
And a figger's a figger
All for the white man
And none for the nigger." [4]

The merchant served the community as a semi-banker. The farmer brought in his crop of cotton and sold it, but seldom received cash in payment. Since the merchant was to get most, if not all of the returns for a crop anyway, it was much simpler to take a credit allowance on the merchant's books and do away with the worry of losing the money. Long before the next cropseason closed, the debit side of the ledger had consumed the credit surplus funds.

Such was the economic system that enabled the Bells and their freed Negro tenants to eke out an existence during the Reconstruction Era.

The year was 1866, and farm production was almost nil. The assets of the estate of Edward M. Bell, deceased, son of Thomas, were in fact quite substantial before the war. Yet the income of the estate in 1866 was limited to the sum of \$175.00, derived from the sale of a single bale of cotton. [5] On August 1, 1866, Mr. John S. Douglass, administrator, paid real estate taxes in the amount of \$6.45. He was receipted by R. H. Jennings, tax collector, Fairfield District. [6] In December of the same year, the estate purchased a buggy and harness, perhaps for Martha Hamilton, daughter of Edward M. Bell, at a cost of \$225.00. [7]

Martha (Bell) Hamilton died March 5, 1869, leaving her brother, Alexander Douglass Bell, then attending Atlanta Medical College, as the sole surviving child of his father and mother. [8] He received his degree in medicine in 1876, at the age of 20 years, and returned to Fairfield District to practice his profession.

[4] Bills, Petticoats, and Flows - The Southern Country Store - Thomas D. Clark, page 271.

[5] Original receipt for sale of bale of cotton.

[6] Original tax collector's receipt, Fairfield District, South Carolina.

[7] Original receipt for payment horse buggy and harness.

[8] Family Bible of Edward M. Bell.

n. The original documents referred to in Footnotes [5][6][7], as well as Footnote [8][9], Chapter XIII, are in possession of R. K. Bell, Coral Gables.

After a year amid the ruins of Atlanta, Dr. Bell could hardly have been surprised as he viewed the scarred and debilitated city of Columbia, from the window of his train as it paused there enroute to Winnsboro. But had that window been a modern day television tube focusing in on the Statehouse, where Robert K. Scott, by grace of the bayonet, was exercising the Office of Governor, Dr. Bell might have, at that very moment, experienced total disillusionment in the professional career he was embarked upon. For it was there that the forces of corruption, including the Freedmen's Bureau were at work under the leadership of Governor Scott, agitating the Negroes to leave the farms and promising them ownership of the property of their former masters. Excessive taxation, in most instances tantamount to confiscation, issuance of worthless bonds and outright thievery soon found the State near bankruptcy and its people on a near starvation diet. Even the most experienced medical practitioner could do little for a patient suffering malnutrition.

South Carolina became a happy hunting ground for the northern bandits who sustained themselves on Negro credulity. In 1870, there were 415,814 Negroes to 229,667 whites. [9] And these were not uniform in intelligence. Those on the coast and rivers were little above the intellectual level of the mules they drove, even their jargon was unintelligible to a stranger. Because of their ignorance and strong passions, they were easily organized and used by the leagues and carnobaggers. [10] The members of the House of Representatives were mostly black or brown or manogany, some of the type seldom seen outside the Congo. [11]

Perhaps as the train moved slowly through Columbia, Dr. Bell observed only the pigs grunting in the unpaved streets, that were also teeming with Negroes in from the plantations to enjoy their freedom, or

[9] The Negro in South Carolina, page 7.

[10] The Tragic Era, Claude B. Powers, page 318.

[11] *Ibid.*, page 15.

the blackened ruins of flame-gutted buildings, or the pillars of the portico
of what had once been the baronial mansion of the Hamptons. [12]

But the impact of it all became Reality to Dr. Bell as he alighted
from his train at Winnsboro and saw the streets of that town policed by
Governor Scott's armed Negro militia.

[12] The Tragic Era, Claude D. Powers, page 239.