

Blake - more of article Sandy Level Baptist Church file

effect that in 1772 there were branches established at Wateree Creek, Twenty-five Mile Creek, Amelia, and Four Holes, all of which remained with the parent church practically throughout the period under consideration.<sup>65</sup> Rev. John Newton, and Messrs. Timothy Dargan, Richard Bell, Ralph Jones, and John Blake aided Mr. Reese in the work of caring for these five meetings.<sup>66</sup> No records of Congaree Church during the Revolution have been found. This region was the

<sup>65</sup>Edwards, Crozer MS, p. 30; Furman MS, pp. 50, 75; *Charleston Assoc. Min.*, 1803, 1804, 1807, 1808, 1817, 1818, 1841, 1843; *Bethel Assoc. Min.*, 1820 ff.; Furman, *Charleston Assoc.*, pp. 57, 86-8; of these branches Wateree Creek is discussed below; the constituents settling about Twenty-five Mile Creek were possibly Jean Curry who had a survey of 250 acres on Wateree in 1773 (Plats, XIV, 291); Andrew Salisbury had a survey on Twenty-five Mile Creek in 1768; Nathan Ellis on High Hills of Santee 200 acres in 1773 (*ibid.*, XV, 35); Bryan McLendon is claimed by Edwards (Crozer MS, p. 30) to have given the land for this branch—this was probably from his survey of 100 acres, head of Twenty-five Mile Creek in 1767, adjoining which he obtained a second survey of 200 acres in 1772 (Plats, XVII, 142); on this a meeting house was erected in 1768, "about twenty miles below Wynnsborough, and 25 from Camden" (Furman, *Charleston Assoc.*, p. 57); though long a branch of Congaree, Twenty-five Mile Creek Church was dismissed from Wateree Creek Church at the time of its constitution and admission to Charleston Association in 1807; it removed its seat of worship in 1841, and by 1843 was known as Sandy Level Church, which still exists; Amelia Township branch in 1772 had a meeting house built in 1769, 33 miles southeast of Congaree "on a piece of land given by John Joyner, but no conveyance being made they are in fear of losing it;" John Joyner had several surveys in Amelia Township or St. Matthew's Parish, one in 1757, from which the church lot may have been given, on True Loves Branch (Plats, VII, 263; XVII, 315-9) and touching the Santee River; of the constituents of Congaree Church, Agnes Martin may have been connected with "one Martin" whose plat touched John Joyner's 1771 survey (*ibid.*, 317); John Pitman first had a survey in 1757 in Amelia Township (*ibid.*, VI, 343); Joseph Ferrill 100 acres in the upper end of Amelia in 1771 (*ibid.*, XV, 81); Ebenezer Westcoat 200 acres in Amelia northeast on Santee River in 1784 (*ibid.*, VIII, 418); Timothy Dargan, who described himself as a "Liver in Amelia" in 1754 (JC, Aug. 7, 1754) and who had a survey of 100 acres in October of that year (Plats, VI, 132), must have preached to this branch for a time, and probably also to Four Hole branch; when Amelia Township Church entered Charleston Association in 1808, it was described as "6 or 8 miles west from Belleville" (Furman, *Charleston Assoc.*, p. 86); Four Hole meeting was held in 1772 in a private house "60 miles off SSE" from Congaree; John Newton's plat of 200 acres in Halfway Swamp in 1770 (Plats, XVI, 474) suggests that he might have preached at Four Hole and Amelia; Four Hole Church, formed in 1813 and entering Charleston Association that year, was dismissed from Amelia Township Church (*Charleston Assoc. Min.*, 1813).

<sup>66</sup>Benedict, *Baptist History*, II, 150; Edwards, Crozer MS, pp. 32-3; Furman MS, pp. 62-3; Furman to Hart, Apr. 14, 1792, in Cook, *Richard Furman*, p. 45; Rev. John Newton was born Aug. 7, 1732, at Kent, Pa.; he was converted to Baptist principles in 1752 and baptized by Rev. Joshua Potts of Southampton; called to the ministry in N. C. on Mar. 7, 1757, he came to S. C. in 1768, having two surveys, the first on Halfway Swamp at Horsekin Creek of 200 acres in 1770, the second on waters of Little River of 150 acres in 1772 (Plats, XVI, 474, 476); he married Kestiah Dorset by whom he had John, Jemima, Philip, James, Moses, and Phoebe by 1772; ordained at Congaree in February, 1768, by Oliver Hart and Evan Pugh, he was silenced by Congaree Church under the direction of Sandy Creek Separate Association for allowing Regular Baptist ministers to ordain him, and would never enter fully into ministerial work again; he removed to Georgia and died there early in 1791; of Richard Bell nothing further is known than that he obtained surveys of 200 acres in the fork of Wateree and Congaree in 1767 and of 300 acres on the north side of Congaree in 1770 (*ibid.*, IX, 53; XI, 291); John Blake had a survey in 1770 on Beedy Fork of Wateree Creek touching William Roden's land (*ibid.*, XIII, 247); he lived in Fairfield County without slaves in 1790 (*Census*, p. 22).

scene of many skirmishes, and religious life must have been completely disorganized.<sup>67</sup> The church reappears in 1790 still under the care of Rev. Joseph Reese and still with many branches. The assistants then and shortly after were Rev. Ralph Jones, Rev. Gabriel Rawls, and Mr. John Price, a candidate for the ministry.<sup>68</sup> Congaree with its branches was apparently turning more and more to the position of the Regular Baptist churches. It had quarterly communion beginning with the first Lord's Day in March, and had no ruling elders nor laying on of hands. But Mr. Reese was "averse to joining an Association," and it was 1798 before it entered the Charleston Association, whose minutes refer to it as "a church of many years standing . . . formerly under the pastoral care of the late eminently pious, excellent and useful, Rev. Joseph Reese . . ."<sup>69</sup> Infirm and unable to preach in 1794, Mr. Reese died in 1795,<sup>70</sup> and Congaree was without a regular pastor until 1802, when Rev. Stephen Nixon took up the work.<sup>71</sup> In 1799 the church asked the association for

<sup>67</sup>Anne King Gregorie, *Thomas Sumter* (Columbia, S. C., 1931), pp. 98, 136, 156-7, 164, 169, 170 ff.

<sup>68</sup>Rev. Gabriel Rawls, mentioned as an itinerant among the branches of Congaree Church 1790-1794 (*Asplund's Reg.*, 5, and 6, ed.), had surveys of 244, 472, and 375 acres in 1784, 1786, and 1785, on Cedar Creek, on Harmons Creek touching John and Philip Pearson, and on Crane Creek waters of Broad River (Plats, VIIIq, 491; XIIIq, 143; XVIIIq, 207); he lived in Richland County without slaves in 1790 (*Census*, p. 27); John Price had a survey on the road from Charleston to Minicks Bridge near the Congaree (Plats, XIX, 272); he lived in Richland County without slaves in 1790 (*Census*, p. 27), at which time he was a candidate for the ministry at Congaree Church (*Asplund's Reg.*, 5, and 6, ed.); he died about 1815 (Richland County PC, Box 25, No. 602).

<sup>69</sup>Edwards, Crozer MS, p. 32; *Charleston Assoc. Min.*, 1798.

<sup>70</sup>*Asplund's Reg.*, 5, and 6, ed.; Furman, *Charleston Assoc.*, pp. 72-4; Edwards, Crozer MS, p. 32; Furman MS, pp. 52-3; Benedict, *Baptist History*, II, 364-6; Cathcart (ed.), *Baptist Library*, pp. 314-5; Rev. Joseph Reese (Rees in early records, but signature to his will Reese) was born on Duck Creek, Kent County, Pa. (now Delaware); he came to Congaree in 1745 (an Evan Reese had a survey of 250 acres on Ralifords Creek in 1747, Plats, IV, 382); a memorial of Joseph Rees signed by Martha Goodwyn June 2, 1767 (Memorials, IX, 242; XI, 215; XII, 149), asks 100 acres on the east side of Pee Dee originally granted to Daniel Rees in 1750, and conveyed to Joseph Rees in 1759; as he was brought up in the Anglican Church, his conversion by Mr. Mulkey "drew much attention;" he had little education; he was ordained by Messrs. Oliver Hart and Evan Pugh February, 1768; except for some few years at Lawsons Fork during the Revolution, he was pastor of Congaree Church until his death, Mar. 5, 1795 (Richland County PC, Box 26, pkg. 627; Wills C, 107-9); his will mentions children Catherine Wells, Mary Arthur, Joseph Reese, Timothy Reese, Jesse Reese, John Altum Reese, Ann Tucker, and wife Sarah; he had been previously married to Ann Reynolds; his property included tracts of land in Congaree, Lawsons Fork pinelands, and Pincushion Swamp; plantation and house in low grounds of Congaree, books, slaves, etc.; he mentions particularly Mr. Bunyan's writing.

<sup>71</sup>*Charleston Assoc. Min.*, 1790-1816; *Asplund's Reg.*, 5, and 6, ed.; Richland County PC, Wills G, p. 1; Plats, XXIq, 262; Rev. Stephen Nixon received in 1788 a tract of 310 acres