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A History
of
South Carolina Baptists

by
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Incorporating in Part Works by

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and
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JOE MADISON KING

South Carolina General Board of South Carolina Baptist Convention

DEDICATED

gratefully

to the memory of

WILLIAM SCREVEN, OLIVER HART, and RICHARD FURMAN,

true pioneers,

and to all South Carolina Baptists,

past and present,

who have followed them

in following "in His train."

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COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

families with forty-two baptized communicants. They had no meeting house and no ordained minister, though James Warren preached for them.⁷⁸ No direct connection can be traced between this group and the Regular Baptist church later organized in this section, but possibly the scattered membership of the old body formed the nucleus of the new church at Clouds Creek. It claims to have been constituted in the spring of 1790 by a presbytery consisting of John Thomas, Hezekiah Walker, and Patrick Quartermus, the last of whom took over the pastorate.⁷⁹ There is evidence for both 1790 and 1791 as the date of constitution. At that time John Langford, an old minister, was in the congregation, but no longer preaching. The church entered the Bethel Association under Patrick Quartermus in 1793. He remained only through 1794, after which Thomas DeLoach worked among them as a licentiate until he was ordained and assumed the pastorate sometime after 1800. He presented the petition resulting, in 1802, in the incorporation of the "Baptist Church of Christ" on Clouds Creek.⁸⁰

EDISTO (HEALING SPRINGS)

David Martin's work extended farther down the Edisto. There on January 14, 1770, he baptized Elijah Padgett, and others were later added until by 1772 there were sixteen baptized members of eight families of English Dunkers. Padgett led their worship but was not ordained.⁸¹ About this time a number of Seventh Day Baptists from Prince William County, Virginia, became discouraged in their attempt to worship and settle at Tuckaseeking in Georgia. They returned to the Edisto with their minister, John Clayton.⁸² The whole group probably scattered, but in 1777 a Regular Baptist church called Edisto was constituted in approximately the same region and received into the Charleston Association in 1787. Nathaniel Walker was pastor.⁸³

The church had many licentiates in 1790, but with that year it ceased to send representatives to the association, which agreed in 1797 to consider it out of union. Nathaniel Walker, who had long been ill, died about November, 1798. The association, considering that this lack of pastoral supervision might have caused Edisto Church to be careless, retained the congregation in the union for that year, but dropped it from the list in 1799.⁸⁴ While its history is then obscure, it probably became known as Healing Springs Church. Traditional accounts say that James Sweat was the second minister. Though there is nothing else to support the claim, as he spent most of his life in the neighboring churches, he may well have served this one for a time.⁸⁵ "The Baptist

⁷⁸ Edwards, Crozer MS, 37.

⁷⁹ West Creek CP, Centenary Papers, giving traditional account; Clouds Creek Church is later known as West Creek Church.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*; *Bethel Assoc. Minutes*, 1793-1803; *Asplund's Reg.*, 5. and 6. ed.

⁸¹ Edwards, Crozer MS, 37; Furman MS, 71.

⁸² Edwards, Ga. Materials, 1.

⁸³ *Charleston Assoc. Minutes*, 1787; Furman, *Charleston Assoc.*, 56, 65.

⁸⁴ *Charleston Assoc. Minutes*, 1797, 1798, 1799.

⁸⁵ Rev. Lewis H. Shuck, *The Barnwell Baptist Association of South Carolina, Its Churches and their Deceased Ministers* (Charleston, 1867), 25; the identity of Edisto and Healing Springs is an inference from location and from Rev. Nathaniel Walker's connection with both.

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Church of Christ, of the Healing Springs, in Barnwell District," was incorporated on December 21, 1804.⁸⁶

BROAD RIVER SABBATARIAN CHURCH

A group of Sabbatarians, also coming from Connecocheague and from French Creek in Pennsylvania, settled near Broad River between 1745 and 1757. The leaders were Thomas Owen, who arrived in South Carolina with his wife in 1752 or 1754, and (Victor Naley, who came with his wife in 1756 or 1757. Both of these had land on the east side of Broad River, the first on Conaway Creek and Wilkinsons Creek, the second on Little River and Rocky Creek of Broad. John Gregory and his sons, John and Richard, completed the constituents. The members met alternately on the seventh day at the homes of the two leaders and there practiced their peculiar rites. Two John Pearsons were included in the 1772 congregation, one of them probably the exhorter who assisted David Martin at Beaver Creek.

Though the meetings were held on the east side of the river, the membership was widely scattered between Broad and Wateree near the rivers on each side. A goodly number settled on the southwest side of Broad River along Second and Cannons Creeks, whence John Pearson wrote his letters of exhortation. Also, a few settled near Saluda River, where they retained some connection with their brethren in Pennsylvania.⁸⁷ Israel Seymour was their minister for a time, but he left them to become a Tunker. They had no minister and no meeting house in 1772, at which time there were twenty-four baptized members of eighteen families. It is not improbable that Rock Creek Church was an outgrowth of this group rather than of Beaver Creek. Like other Tunker and Seventh Day churches in South Carolina, it probably broke up during the Revolution, or turned toward the Regular position.

CONGAREE ASSOCIATION

Attempts at union among the back-country Baptist churches of South Carolina before the Revolution were not productive of permanent results. The first arose from Shubal Stearns' invitation to the Separate Baptist churches of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina to send delegates to a general meeting at his church on Sandy Creek, where the Separates formed the Sandy Creek Separate Association in 1758.⁸⁸ Oliver Hart and Evan Pugh were delegates from the Charleston Association to one of the associational meetings of the Sandy Creek Separates in North Carolina after 1762, to try to effect a union with them. In that year Philip Mulkey attended the Charleston Association meeting with queries from his Separate church on Broad River, probably with a view to composing differences.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ McCord (ed.), *Statutes*, VIII, 222.

⁸⁷ Edwards, Crozer MS, 47; Furman MS, 67, 68.

⁸⁸ Benedict, *Baptist History*, II, 49; Edwards, Crozer MS, 31, 32; Furman MS, 73; the account of the Congaree Association in the Furman manuscript is broken off and destroyed; Edwards, "N. C. Materials," in *N. C. Hist. Rev.*, VII, 399.

⁸⁹ Furman, *Charleston Assoc.*, 13, 14.