

History of Alley's Chapel M. E. Church¹⁶⁸ Habersham Charge

This Church is located in Habersham County, three and one half miles from Clarksville, on the Burton Highway.

- Back in the year 1829, there were not many people living in this community. There were a few families who were all God-fearing people and saw the need of a church building. They got together and built a little log school house with a stick and dirt chimney. The writer remembers it well and went to school in it. It was built on the land owned by William W. Alley and was known as Alley's School House. The first school was taught by a man named Burgess Smith, who was a local Methodist preacher, but afterward joined the Conference.

William W. Alley moved him from North Carolina and settled him in one of his houses. In September 1829 he began his first school. There was

but little money in those days,
The patrons paid him in Corn,
wheat, rye, meat, syrup, and
anything he could use.

The patrons and builders of
the house were William W. Alley,
James Brooks, Gordon McAfee,
J. Hugh Starrett, Dr. Duvall,
Phillips, Benjamin Jones, and others.
It was used for a Church or place
of Worship. Any denomination
had the right to worship in the house.

I will mention some noted
men who went to school in
that old building. General
William Phillips, who was a
Brigadier General in the War
Between the States, Col. Charles
Phillips, his brother, who
was a Colonel in the same
war. Dr. James P. Phillips, who
was a noted physician, and
many other noted men.

One of the first Sunday
Schools, if not the first, to be
organized in the County, was
in the early thirties by General
William Phillips and Gordon McAfee.

In 1869, there was a
protracted meeting, what you

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might call a Union meeting. There were two preachers, a Baptist James Garrard, a Methodist, Col. Garnett McMillian. If you remember McMillian was elected to Congress, having won over Benjamin Hill, but died before Congress met. At the close of the meeting, the doors of the Church were open. All who wanted to join the Baptist gave their hand to Garrard, and the Methodist gave their hand to McMillian. There were quite a number. The ones who joined the Methodist Church thought they were strong enough to organize a church and in 1870 they began the work. They went into the woods and hewed most of the framing and built a little Church and it was dedicated in the latter part of 1870.

Dr. James P. Phillips donated an acre of land. Later, N. Ebbison gave an acre, and still later there was an acre bought by the Church.

The Charter members were James M. Ramsey and wife,

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W. S. Turdy and wife, James
M. Brooks, John Kinsey,
Jordan McAfee and wife, John
Jones, and others I can't recall.

Among the first Pastors
I remember which was in
the seventies were Rev. Gray,
Rev. Lewis, Rev. Smith, Rev.
Edwards. The first presiding
elders I remember were
Rev. Rush, Rev. Worley, and
Rev. Baxter.

In 1909 we built a new
Church on the same original
lot. It is a nice building,
painted inside and out,
covered with metal, and
have electric lights. The
present Church and land
is valued at \$4500. The deeds
are on record and contain the
Trust Clause.

There have been many revivals
under the leadership of the
following pastors - Milton,
Davis, Jordan, Edwards & Strzier
Simmons, Searcy and others.

The first Sunday School
was organized in 1870, with
J. M. Ramsey as Superintendent,
with around twenty-five

members. The Literature was
the Bible and the Blue Back
Speller.

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We now have a regular

Sunday School with a small
membership but faithful
Present membership is twenty -
eight, Church membership around 30.

The present pastor is Rev.
Sam Coker, Jr., present S. S. Supt.
is J. G. Alley - The Church has
paid every thing in full for
this year.

All the facts concerning
the early Church are from
memory, as I am 81 years old
and lived through all of it,
or rather a large part of it.

W. H. Alley

Historian -