HISTORY

OF

COVINGTON FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
The first record we find of the Methodist church in Covington, Georgia, is found on record in the Clerk's office, Newton Superior Court, Newton County, Georgia, in Deed Book "A", page 357, dated 29th day of June, 1824, in which Jesse Stratton conveyed lot located in Section D, No. 15, containing 3-4 acres more or less, in City plat - to Charles Kennon, John Hunt, Solomon Worrille, and their successors, as Trustees of Methodist Church, the consideration was $60.00 Dollars. The residence of James Philips (house No. 409) and the house now owned by Dr. Waites (house No. 407)-Church Street, now occupy this lot. This was the location of our Methodist Church one hundred years ago. In the rear of this lot, just across Elm Street, was located the Cemetery, now known as the Old Cemetery.

The next location we find in Deed Book "C", page 110, dated March 24th, 1830, conveying lot of land, one acre more or less, located in Section C, No. 24. This being only description. This conveyance was made by the Justices of the Inferior Court of Newton County, Georgia, to Leonard Fretwell, William D. Conyers, Robert Rakestraw, Robert Tucker, James Hodge, Horace J. Bates, Joshua Bailey, Collin Shackleford, and Charles Kennon, Trustees of Covington Society Methodist Church - we find from City Plat that this lot is located on Southwest corner of Washington and Lee streets, where Skinner now owns and resides (house No. 401). This is not the deed to our present location, which we know from City plat to be Section C. No. 14. The deed just recited is for lot in Section C. No. 24 on corner of Washington and Lee Streets, and the record shows in describing adjacent property, that this lot (Section C. No. 24) is referred to in 1830, as Methodist Church lot being our second location.

As to the present location and building of Methodist Church as it now stands, our only source of information is from tradition and memory. Mrs. A. A. Carr says, that she came to Covington as a bride in 1854, and attended church in a wooden building standing on this lot, Section C. No. 14, and that the wooden building was removed and now stands on Clark Street, on east bank of Dried Indian Creek known as the Colored Baptist Church. After the removal of the wooden building from this location, our present brick building was erected in 1856 or 1857, making this present brick building about 68 years old. Since its erection many changes and improvements have been made.

During the pastorate of Dr. R. J. Bigham in 1886 and 1887, the Parsonage lot was bought - on Southwest corner of Monticello and South Streets and house erected (House No. 500.)

In 1897 and 1898 during the pastorate of Rev. J. A. Timmerman, the beautiful gallery in church was removed and the ceiling raised, new metal ceiling installed, old seats replaced with new ones, floor inclined, old windows replaced with present colored glass design and first pipe organ installed.

While Bro. W. H. Cooper was with us in 1911, he took great interest in the addition of the Sunday School Annex and beautiful and substantial rock steps in front of the church, a cement floor in front vestibule of church and installing our present heating system and repainting the building.

We are grateful to Bro. R. R. Fowler for the much needed paving of the side walk in front of the church, and also the walks leading to the front and rear entrances, which he did gratuitously in 1918. We should keep in grateful remembrance Sister R. R. Fowler, our faithful and efficient organist for 50 years.
The church appreciated the faithful services of Bro. R. E. Everitt in our church choir. He joined our church choir when only twelve years old and sang up until the time of his death.

Let this go into our church history - As spokesman for our membership, let me say, God bless our dear old church. In the years to come, may her influence deepen and widen for good, may she ever stand as a custodian of a saving faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and as the years come and glide into the eternal past, when life's battles are all fought, "When the night is over and the shadows all passed and eternal dawn dispels the gloom of earthly care" - may we have a happier and more glorious meeting than this our Centennial, in the City of our God, where there will be no parting, no sorrow, for all tears will be wiped away and we shall meet and know those we love and have lost a while, and see Him face to face, who redeemed us with His blood."

Mrs. R. R. Fowler gave a roll call of all the pastors since 1838 and incidents in the lives of all of those who had served in recent years.

This was a beautiful tribute to the men of God who had served in this field, Space forbids our reproduction of this splendid paper.

Among the outstanding years of accomplishments were, the great and successful fight for prohibition in 1897-98 which Mrs. Fowler told of in the following words:

"We would pause here to compare our own quiet clean, little city, where any lady can walk the streets in safety to Covington of 1897. The woe of the prophet Habakuk had been pronounced upon it. "Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood and establisheth a city by iniquity." Out beautiful little square was in the possession of nine bar rooms, but as God raises up men for every age, he sent us a prophet in the person of Rev. Joel Timmerman, who drew the lines of demarkation so closely that with the strong help of Geo. Stewart, the greatest fight for prohibition was won."

Great revivals when large numbers came into the church were held in 1858 under Rev. Habersham J. Adams' pastorate.

In 1886 under the ministry of Rev. R. J. Bigham a sweeping revival was held with a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit here.

In a revival service during the pastorate of Rev. Henry Quillian in 1908-1909 there were 75 accessions to the church.

The church is today well officered and well organized and well equipped to do its part in the religious life of the community, and if it walks with God as many of its people have walked in the past there is no reason why it should not meet its obligations as a spiritual force and life.