Zear Methodist Church was organized in 1840, one year before the old Church at Oxford was built.

The reader will recall that "Zear" is a Bible name which means "little". This name was given to one of the oldest cities of Canaan. When the cities of the plain were destroyed, Zear was spared as a refuge for Lot.

Zear Church was two miles north of the Flippen Community on the Atlanta-Macon road, now Highway # 42. One acre of land was deeded by Thomas first Owensby to the Trustees of Zear Church, Matthew Gilbert, Allen Johnson, and Benjamin Crabb for the sum of ten dollars ($10.00). (Two great grandchildren of Mr. Benjamin Crabb, Mrs. Bob Payne and Mr. Hugh Kelley, still reside in McDonough, Georgia.)

At a location on the east side of the road, where the Tunis road enters the Atlanta-Macon road, Zear Church was constructed. The framing was of peeled pine poles. Rough, wide boards were used for weather boarding. There was no ceiling at all inside the structure. The benches were homemade with one board for the back support. The pulpit was in the north end of the building. There was one door in the south of the building and two doors in the north, one on either side near the "amen corner". A square altar surrounded the Chancel. Windows were on each side.

Across the road from the Church was a large grove of oaks. Here the horses were tied in the cool shade of the trees. Horse-drawn vehicles included shining buggies, farm wagons, and occasionally an ox cart.

The road on which Zear was located was traveled by one wing of Sherman's Army on their way to the sea, but, like the Zear of the plains of Canaan, God spared Zear Church from the torch of the enemy.
For fourteen years after Zoar was founded we have no records extant. The deed was recorded in 1840, four years before the Northern and Southern separation of the Methodist Church. For ten years after the beginning of the Methodist Church, South, we have no records of the North Georgia Conference, or rather of the churches that now compose the North Georgia Conference.

In 1854 there were only nine districts in Georgia, namely: Athens, Augusta, Dahlonega, Marietta, LaGrange, Macon, Columbus, Lumpkin, and Sandersville.

Zoar Church was probably in the Marietta District and on the Covington Circuit in the year 1854. It appears that this section was nearest that circuit than any others recorded in the Minutes of that time. The Presiding Elder of the Marietta District during that time was Rev. J.W. Talley. It therefore is evident that the first pastor of Zoar Church was Rev. W.R. Branham, pastor of Covington Circuit in 1854.

In 1855 the Atlanta District was formed. At this time McDonough became a Charge within this District with Richard Lane as Pastor. The McDonough Circuit probably included all the churches within a wide radius. Zoar Church was a part of the McDonough Charge. The records show that the McDonough Circuit had 474 members, 9 local preachers, and 107 Sunday School pupils in the year 1856.

One of the early circuit riders, Windsor Grayham, preached often at Zoar after he was superannuated. Brother Grayham was a preacher of great power. He was the great grandfather of Wilson J. Culpepper, who is now a preacher in the North Georgia Conference.

In 1859 the Griffin District was formed. McDonough was within the bounds of this new District. The Reverend W.R. Branham was appointed the Presiding Elder of the District. During this year Jonesboro reported for the first time as a Charge. At that time the McDonough Pastor, Rev. R.H. Waters,
lived in Jonesboro.

In 1860 the McDonough Charge, Rev. Robert W. Lovett Pastor, paid $123.00 for Missions. Prior to this date no mention is made in the Minutes of the amount paid for Pastor's Salary.

In 1861 McDonough and Jonesboro were in the same Charge with The Reverend Albert Gray as Pastor. This arrangement prevailed until the year 1864 when McDonough and Jackson were placed on the same Charge. Presumably the smaller churches around McDonough were included in all the above changes which affected McDonough.

In the year 1865 McDonough was withdrawn from Charge affiliations with Jackson and, along with the smaller churches, again became the McDonough Charge.

The Georgia Conference was divided in 1866, forming the North Georgia Conference and the South Georgia Conference. At this same Conference the fixed salaries for preachers became the order. This is the first time salaries were made specific.

Organization of the Colored M.E. Church was affected in 1867. Shortly thereafter McDonough had its first colored mission. At this time there were five churches on the McDonough Charge.

The Conference of 1870, which met in Augusta, passed resolutions to establish an Orphan's Home in the North Georgia Conference. This Church has never been unmindful of the greatness of that resolution, nor of the privilege of having a small part in this Christian work.

Lay delegates were sent to the Annual Conference for the first time in 1871. Among the delegates from the Griffin District were Joseph M. Harris, brother of the late Judge A.G. Harris, and Benjamin L. Harper.

In 1871 the Stewards of the local Church were authorized to fix the pay of their respective pastors.
Seven churches were numbered in the McDonough Charge in 1872. One of these was Zoar. The change in charge boundaries and transfers from one charge to another of churches were clear indications of the growth into maturity of the ever expanding Methodist Church.

At Sparta, Georgia Bishop Pierce presided at the Conference of 1876. Brother A.G. Harris was the delegate from Zoar Church. The Harris name has from early days been associated with the Church.

The Woman's Missionary Society of the North Georgia Conference was organized in 1878. The first local society was at Marietta, Georgia. It was not until the year 1900 that this Church was to organize for this great work.

The salary of the Pastor of the McDonough Charge in the year 1881 was $476.67. This, however, did not include chickens, syrup, and potatoes. In the yesterdays as in the present the pastor's salary is never the maximum of his compensation.

Tragedy came to the McDonough Charge in the year 1884. The Reverend Albert Gray, who had served as Pastor for only six months, passed on to his eternal reward. He is buried at the Old Oxford Cemetery, where lie the bodies of J.O. Andrews, W.R. Branham, and other illustrious Methodist preachers.

In 1886 significant changes occurred within the Charge (McDonough). The McDonough Charge was put within the bounds of the South Atlanta District. In the same year Zoar Church was sold, along with its one acre of land, for the sum of $100.00 cash to one Mr. Harlow. From this time forward "Zoar" drops out of history and a new Church on a new location emerges.

The Southern Railroad from Atlanta to Macon had just been completed in 1886, and Flippen was made a Post Office. Rev. John M. Bowden and the trustees: The membership of Zoar felt that the Flippen Community would be a better location for the Church, and authorized the Pastor, Rev. John M. Bowden,
And the trustees at that time, J.R. Price, J.R. Pair, and C.R. Patterson to secure the lot of land and construct a new Church. The new Church was to bear the name of the Community, "Flippen".

The land for the new Church was given by Mr. A.G. Harris, (His daughter, Mrs. Howard R. Carmichael, of East Point has just given a plaque to be placed in the Church in memory of her father).

Mr. Jim Bailey, a resident of Jonesboro, was employed to build the Church. While this construction was underway, the membership worshipped in the Flippen School.

The new Church was complete and ready for dedication in 1886. Bishop Warren A. Candler preached the dedicatory sermon. Rev. John M. Bowden was the Pastor.

A significant change came about when worship services were begun in the new Flippen Church. A new organ was purchased, and for the first time the members sang to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. Sallie Fannie Harris was the first organist. She will be remembered as the daughter of A.G. Harris and the mother of Harris McCurry. The latter is now a member of the Official Board of the Church at Flippen.

The first Sunday School Superintendent of Flippen Church was Mr. Henry Lowvern. He was Superintendent at Zoar when services were last held there. Other superintendents through the years were A.B. Dailey, A.G. Harris, H.L. Stansell, J.B. Rowan, Dr. B.E. Horton, J.T. Strickland, H.C. Riley, Jord Hood, Sam Dailey, and W.C. Dailey, the present Superintendent.

Mr. J.B. Rowan served longer than other Superintendent. He often walked through snow in the Winter and intense heat of Summer to reach his Church. His duties did not end with those of Superintendent, he opened the Church, built fires, taught a class, and served as song leader. Mr. Rowan's faithfulness to Flippen Church is still bearing fruit.
Dear Church never established a cemetery, but shortly after the Flippen Church was completed, a lot of land across the road from the Church was set aside as a place for those who rest from their labors. The first one to be buried there was Myrtice Lovern, a girl of fifteen years who died in 1895.

With the placing of more and more loved ones beneath the sod of this hallowed spot, the members felt more keenly the need for better care of the cemetery. During the ministry of Rev. C.J. Grilhe (1947) The Flippen Memorial Association was organized. This organization meets twice each year, Fall and Spring. The cemetery is cleaned at each meeting. A Memorial Service is held at each Spring meeting.

The historian is always interested in what people are thinking about during any period of history. Below is part of a resolution passed at the Annual Conference of 1892, which met at Madison, Georgia. "The scriptural observance of the Christian Sabbath is the bulwark of civil liberty, and upon it largely depends that spiritual power with which alone the Church can hope to conquer the world." This should offer food for our contemporary thinking.

In 1896 Stockbridge was in the McDonough Charge. It was withdrawn in 1897.

After remaining in the Atlanta District for fourteen years, the McDonough Charge was again placed within the jurisdiction of the Griffin District. The Reverend Frank S. Hudson was the Pastor when this change was made.

It was in 1897 that the first Epworth League was organized at Flippen. Miss Gertrude Dailey was elected president.

Names appearing in the old records as class leaders, delegates, etc., are: J.R. Pair, G.W. Rowan, W.C. Hamilton, J.L. Strozier, W.A. Huling, J.C. Harris, R.H. Brannan, J.W. Rountree, W.L. Pair, and J.K. Hood.
In the year 1900 the Pastor, Rev. F.S. Hudson, appointed the following committees:

Twentieth Century Committee-

J.C. Harris 
Miss Ione Price

Temperance-

J.B. Rowan 
Miss Annie Harris

It is very interesting to note the change in the budget from early times to the present. The McDonough Charge in 1893 was assessed $800.00. Flippen's share of this was $150.00. Flippen stewards at that time were A.G. Harris, A.B. Bailey, J.B. Rowan, and M.D. Rountree. In 1905 the Charge was assessed $940.00. Flippen's part was $105.00.

The Stewards in 1907 were W.H. Burch, J.T. Strickland, and W.L. Glass. During this year the membership of 207 was assessed $180.00 and paid $200.00.

The Pastor's Salary for the McDonough Charge in 1909 was $1000.00. Flippen paid $225.00 of this amount.

In 1910 the total amount raised by the Flippen Church for all purposes was $594.00.

The total amount raised of money by the Flippen Church during the Conference Year 1950-51 was $2,618.43.
The first Woman's Missionary Society was organized at Flippen in 1900 with Mrs. M.D. Rountree as President. These organizations were affected at the Flippen Church during the ministry of The Reverend Frank S. Hudson. More recently an additional organization has been added to the Woman's Society. In 1947 the Wesleyan Service Guild was organized. This was during the ministry of Rev. C.J. Grifhie.

One of the great preachers of this Conference who served Flippen is Rev. E. A. Edmondson. He served the McDonough Charge in 1903. For his many contributions and fine work, Flippen lovingly remembers his pastorate.

It was Bro. Edmondson who organized the Flippen Juvenile Missionary Society. This group was known as "The Edmondson Juveniles." Among the members were Sherwood Brannan, now a Steward, W.C. Dailey, now S.S. Superintendent and Steward, Ella Dailey, Eva Harris, John Paul Rowan, Earl Brannan, Kate Glass, and Mae Glass. Miss Willie Rountree was Lady Manager of the Edmondson Juveniles.

The Reverend Jim England succeeded Mr. Edmondson. He served faithfully and well for four years.

In 1914 the Reverend Horace Smith became Pastor of the McDonough Charge. He was the last Pastor of the McDonough Charge to serve Flippen. In 1915 Flippen was placed with the Stockbridge Charge. The Reverend Walter Carmichael was then Pastor at Stockbridge.

The Stockbridge was put in the South Atlanta District in 1916. The Reverend P.E. LaPrade was Presiding Elder and The Reverend Walter Carmichael was the Stockbridge Pastor. Brother Carmichael later entered World War I as Chaplain.

The Reverend John Jenkins was Presiding Elder 1928, '29, '30, '31. In 1931 the Stockbridge Charge went back into the Griffin District.

During the ministry of the Reverend G.P. Cantrell (in 1934) Flippen Church was remodeled. Sunday School rooms were built, a choir loft constructed.
new pews added, and other improvements made.

Again during the ministry of Rev. Y.A. Bailey (1940) much work was done in improving the Church. This was made possible by Mrs. C. Edward Wright of Atlanta. She was formerly Miss Oza Johnson, daughter of the Reverend T.J. Johnson, a local preacher of the Flippin Church for many years. Mrs. Wright gave freely of her substance to the Church of her childhood. The many improvements included were flooring, painting, carpeting, pulpit furniture, and a beautiful memorial window to her family.

Another forward step in physical improvements was made in 1947 during the ministry of Rev. C.J. Grilhe. Brother Grilhe drew the plans for and supervised the construction of a recreation building. The cost of this structure was $2500.00. But for the many contributions of friends and members this cost would have been much greater. The men gave of their time and money, the ladies gave suppers, and many people gave utensils and appliances to equip the building after it was complete.

Four ministers have gone out from the Flippin Church. Membership. J.A. Rountree, son of Mr. and Mrs. John W. Rountree, served in the South Georgia Conference. Since his superannuation, he and his wife have lived in their own home at Tifton, Georgia. Sam A. Dailey, son of Mr. and Mrs. A.B. Dailey, has served in the North Georgia Conference. His present appointment is Chicopee, Georgia. Lovette Burch, son of Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Burch, served in the North Georgia Conference. He passed on to his reward last year (1950), and was buried in the Flippin Cemetery. Burch Fannin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Fannin, is now serving the Woodstock Charge in the North Georgia Conference (1950–51).

Flippin Church gave proudly of her young manhood in each of our major wars. Four gold stars adorn the service flag of World War II. These were for Wayne Phillips, Perry Stewart, William Touchstone, and Harris Bramman.
Two of the Flippen members of yesterday served faithfully on the Board of Trustees of Shingleroof Camp. They were M.D. Rountree and W.L. Glass. Serving with no less diligence and concern at present is W.C. Dailey. The fact that a tent is owned and maintained by the Church is clear evidence of Flippen's love for and interest in Shingleroof.

The membership of the Flippen Church at the end of the Conference Year 1950-51 is 275.

The officials of the Church for 1950-51 are:

Rev. Robert L. Taylor was appointed Pastor of the Stockbridge in June, 1949. He has served the conference years 1949-50 and 1950-51.

Board of Stewards-

George A. Brannan
David A. Brannan
J.R. Carmichael
W.C. Dailey
Sherwood Brannan (Honorary) D.T. Foster

George A. Brannan
Miss Allie B. Fanm
H.P. Foster
Mrs. J.J. Holloway
W. Harris McCurry

Sunday School Superintendent: W.C. Dailey
Youth Counselor: Mrs. J.J. Holloway
W.S.C.S. President: Mrs. Carrie Sue Stewart
President Board of Education: Mrs. L.L. Moore

Trustees- W.C. Dailey
Sherwood Brannan
R.T. Rowan

Church Treasurer- J.R. Carmichael

Pastors through the years have been:

Pastors-
41. J.T. Richardson 42. T.S.L. Harwell 43. G.P. Cantrell
44. G.C. Ramsey 45. J.W. King 46. Y.A. Bailey
47. John M. Maxwell 48. R.E. Lyle 49. C.J. Grilhe
50. Robert L. Taylor

District Superintendents (Presiding Elders before Unification)-
2. William F. Cook 5. George E. Clark 6. John Simmons

Because of the fact that many of the earliest records have not been preserved and many important events have long since been forgotten, it is impossible to record many things which must have occurred that would have been of reader interest. However, the writer hopes that within these pages will be included historical data which will inspire each reader in such manner that he will want to live the same kind of holy life which is characteristic of those whose names and influences live through the years.