

HISTORY OF FRIENDSHIP CHURCH

When I was asked to tell what I knew of Friendship Church my heart was filled with joy and sweet memories of the little church where *I found my Saviour when I was just a child. (It was there that I first attended school. My teacher was Mr. Jimmins Wingfield. Then the church was used for school as well as for church.)

*Back in 1884 or near that time my father Mr. L. J. Edmondson and Mr. W. S. Griffin felt the need of a place to worship in the neighborhood so began to plan to build a church.

Dr. Joe Cooley, father of Mrs. Edmondson and Mrs. McMullen, gave the land for the church to be built upon and the four were called the pillars of Friendship Church. After several years my father gave land for the building of a schoolhouse.

On September 30, 1897 the church was turned over to the General Conference of the M. E. Church South.

When Sunday came there was no question about going to church or Sunday school. On Thursday nights we looked forward to the Prayer service after which we would linger for extra singing and a social time.

Our home was always open to the preachers and we were glad to entertain them. Before we retired he would lead us in prayer and ask God's blessing upon the home.

We had neighborhood prayer meetings and we would often walk a mile or more to attend.

If we had company my father would invite them to go with us if they declined he would say, "Make yourselves at home until we return."

My mother died when I was twelve years old, but I remember

how she, too, loved the little church and worked in it as long as she lived.

As I remanice I can almost see the faces of those faithful men and women as we would come together on different occasions.

I was away from home when the storm hit the little church. As i came in sight of the ground where it had stood and so many souls had been saved under its shelter tears came in myeyes and I wondered it it would ever be rebuilt. Soon Mrs. Miner and others began to see the loss and planned to build God's house back.

I wonder if the neighborhood appreciates it as we did 50 years ago. Now the electric lights are there to brighten it where we had kerosene lamps. How well I remember Mr. Dave Butler and how he felt it was his job to make the fire and help in any way that he could. He always spoke of my father and his daughters, my sister and me as Mr. Edmondson and his gals. He was faithful. The little bookcase in the corner/was one of the few things saved when the church was blown down. It was made, I think, by Mr. Dick Park. Everybody wanted to help in some way. When we had protracted services the other churches in the West Putnam Curcuit would attend, coming in wagons often. The church would be full to overflowing and you could feel the Spirit of Christ in the services. Oh that we could take time to be Holy--now and then.

May we few that remain carry on as our fathers did and never let the little church die.

Know all men by these present, that we the Trustees of Friendship Church, viz: A. S. Alford, A. S. Denham, J. T. Dennis, A. H. Reid, W. S. Griffin, T. J. Park and Z. I. Edmondson^d, for in consideration of the love we bear for the cause of Christ, and for an earnest desire to promote his heritage on earth, do give and grant and by these present convey unto N. G. Maddox, Z. I. Edmondson, J. T. Dennis, A. S. Alfor, D. T. Singleton, J. T. Mathews and W. B. Broadfield,, Board of Trustees M. E. Church South, West Putnam Charge and to their successors in office for the use and benefit of the M. E. Church South as a place of devine worship to be applied by the said Trustees to the object herein stated under the direction of the General Conference of the M. E. Church South, one acre of land around said church and the said Trustees are to have and to hold the property aforesaid for the use aforesaid free from the claim or claimes of ourselves, our heirs, our executors or administrators and from the claims of all others whatever.

In witness whereof we have herewith set our hands and seal this, the 30th of September, 1897.

Z. I. Edmondson (chr.)