HISTORY

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
GRIFFIN, GEORGIA

1840 - 1951

Lewis H. Beck

Historian
Author's Introduction

On December 16, 1949, the author received a letter from the pastor, Rev. McLowery Elrod, advising him of his selection as church Historian, and with it the commission "to prepare a History of the Church, and send a copy to the North Georgia Conference Historical Society and keep one copy for the church files".

Nothing was said as to what period of time the history should cover or the length of the document. The writer, realizing his limitations, and the magnitude of the task, accepted the commission with trepidation—and many misgivings.

Occupied at the time with the task of completing a history of another local organization, it was not until the spring of 1950 that the writer was able to give any time to the project. It was our desire, if we attempted a history of the church, to write it from the inception of the church—one hundred and eleven years ago.

Our first task, of course, was to collect as much material as possible from our local church records, but we soon found that our records were so meager and went back for only about 50 years of the 162 years of church existence, that we were terribly handicapped. Much of these early records (minutes of the church's quarterly conferences) are so poorly kept they are all but worthless. Why church records are considered so unimportant that no worth while records are kept for posterity is beyond our comprehension. Certainly the preachers or some laymen should have taken enough interest in church history to have made it worth keeping. Even until rather recently our
church records are all but worthless, and even now—we hate to say it—are very inadequately kept. Be that as it may—and probably we have no right to criticise, we soon saw we would have to turn to other than local sources if we obtained enough material about which to construct the history.

After discussing the matter with church officials we decided to go to the old conference records in the Emory Theological Library and search them for information relative to the local church. We obtained the services of a divinity student at Emory to go carefully through these voluminous old conference records—a task that required much patience and several months time. It was then necessary to take these notes and type them for practical use. The men's Bible Class of our church underwrote the expenses of the project, and without their help this history would not have been possible.

After receiving this voluminous material (over a hundred typewritten pages) it was necessary to sift and resift this material, retaining only the most pertinent material. In most cases the only information we could obtain about our early ministers was from the eulogies prepared as memorials to them upon their deaths.

However we considered all this material of sufficient interest—in the years to come—to incorporate all of it in our church copy of our history.

As we draw our efforts to a close we realize how inadequate they have been. As in all human documents there will be found
errors and omissions. However these errors and omissions are of the head and not the heart.

This arduous task has been a labor of love, and if it will serve, in a small way at least, to keep alive some of the glorious memories, traditions and recollections of our church through the ages, we shall feel fully recompensed for what ever little contribution we have been able to make.

My task is done and I render up my stewardship with a hope that the reader will be as charitable as possible in judging my poor efforts.

I humbly thank our gracious Heavenly Father for using me, even in this small way, in rendering some service to His cause.

Respectfully,

Lewis H. Beck

Griffin, Georgia

May 25, 1951
Before attempting to write a brief history of the First Methodist Church of Griffin, now in its 111th year, it is interesting to look back in the dim past and learn something of the history of the area that was to become Griffin and later Spalding County.

Although the city is 11 years older than the county, to learn of our history we must learn of the county first. What is now Spalding County, and the territory surrounding it, was not originally a part of the colony of Georgia. Instead it was in the confines of the colony of South Carolina until 1764, when it became a part of Georgia. Even then, though technically claimed by the colony of Georgia, the lands were really in possession of and owned by the Creek Indians. It was not until the First Treaty of Indian Springs signed by the Creeks (1821) that the territory between Flynt and Ocmulgee rivers was ceded to Georgia, that the white man had a legal claim to the area. Shortly after this treaty, the Georgia legislature passed an act creating five counties from this newly acquired territory, now the counties of Henry, Monroe, Fayette, Houston and Dooly. The next year (1822) Pike county was created from a part of Monroe. What is now the area surrounding Griffin remained in Pike County until Spalding was created on December 20, 1851 from parts of Henry Fayette and Pike and what had been a part of Monroe.
As Griffin founded in 1840 was to remain in Pike County for 11 years, we shall see that much of our early church history has to do with Pike County.
THE BIRTH OF GRIFFIN AND THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

The history of the First Methodist Church of Griffin really begins with the birth of Griffin in 1840, when General Lewis Lawrence Griffin auctioned off the first lots in the town that was to bear his name. Prior to selling these private lots (No. 8 of which was sold to an uncle of the writer who bears his name) General Griffin had laid out public squares for parks, drill grounds, school grounds and churches. A square acre was given to each the Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Episcopal congregations for the erection of a church. There evidentially was no Christian congregation in the area at that time. Though strangely enough in 1849 there were enough Christians to buy a lot of their own and erect a church. To them goes the honor of having actually built the first permanent brick church, a portion of whose walls are still standing, being a part of the Second Baptist Church just off Broad on Experiment Street. The First Methodist Church, that is a permanent structure and a part of our present church building, was not erected until 1855. These two church buildings are the only ones, portions of which are still standing. The First Methodist Church is the only one that occupies the ground originally granted it by General Griffin.

It has been erroneously stated that a portion of the walls of our present church were a part of our first church structure. This is not true. Our first church building was
a small frame structure that stood in the north-west corner of our lot about where the Masonic Temple now stands. We originally owned a "square" (acre) as previously stated bounded by Solomon Street on the north, Hill on the west and where the other boundaries of a square acre would be we cannot say, but we wonder what went with all this land. There is no record of its sale or transfer in the records of Spalding County. They might be found in the records of Pike or Henry counties. (A portion of Griffin was at one time in both counties).

But to get back to our first house of worship: The First Methodist Church was organized in 1841 in a cotton warehouse in Griffin. We do not know positively just where this warehouse stood. Among the first buildings erected in Griffin was a cotton warehouse, as Griffin was early a cotton trading center. Shortly after the first warehouse was built it was found inadequate, and a second was built. These warehouses were built where Newton Coal and Lumber Company now stands and where Belk-Collant is. Which was built first we do not know, but it was in one of these warehouses that the First Methodist Church was organized, most probably on the first site mentioned.

A fact not generally known, but is stated in the records that when General Griffin gave a "square" to the Methodist Episcopal Church (our forerunner) he also gave a square to another Methodist Church designated as the Protestant Methodist Church, which had no connection with our Methodist Episcopal
Church. We find no record of where the former (Protestant Methodist) ever erected a church.

It was not until 1855 that a brick building was erected on the church lot, and a portion of the walls of this original structure are incorporated in our present structure.
GRiffin CHurch BECONEs A ChRAGE

Griffin apparently was first included within the Fayetteville and Zebulon circuits in the Cherokee District of the Georgia Conference (only one conference then). The Cherokee Circuit was organized on January 20, 1841 (six months before Griffin was founded). At that conference preachers were first assigned to the Zebulon circuit, which included Griffin. Rev. Abram Pennington was in charge of the circuit and Rev. George W. Forrabee was his assistant. So, one of these "circuit riders" probably both--were the first preachers to serve the Griffin congregation. At the conference the following year (January 5, 1842) the Fayetteville and Zebulon circuit reported 901 white and 133 colored members (No information available as to the Griffin church as records were given by circuits only). Abraham Pennington was returned to the circuit, but he had to serve it all by himself (how many churches or how far separated we do not know) as no assistant was available. The next year (1843) Rev. Pennington was replaced by Claiborne Trussell and J. Scaife.

In 1845 a new district was created, the LaGrange District and Griffin "circuit" was put in the LaGrange District. Rev. Miller H. White served the Griffin circuit with William A. Smyth to assist him.
What a pity that we know nothing of these early circuit riders that served our church, riding hundreds of miles to cover their charges. This was before the day when the conference memorialized their deceased members. From these later memorials we learn much of our early pastors.

The Georgia conference of 1846 was the last one at which Griffin was listed in the LaGrange circuit. At that time the circuit had grown to number 1153 white and 359 colored members. It was that year (1846) that Griffin had a regular pastor appointed to it. He was Rev. W. D. Martin, and to him goes the honor of having been the first pastor of the Griffin Church. What other charges, if any, he served we do not know. Neither do we know aught of him personally, as no further record of him is found in the conference minutes.

Strangely enough when Griffin was taken out of the LaGrange circuit she was put back in the Fayetteville, Zebulon circuit. Rev. Noah Smith was in charge of the circuit.

The year 1847 gives us the first report on the Griffin church. At that time it consisted of 140 white and 40 colored members, and Rev. John H. Caldwell became the second pastor. Thus we see that Rev. Martin served only one year as pastor.

In 1850 the membership of the church had grown to 185 white and still retained its 40 colored members. (Guess they didn't take in negro children in those days).

The year 1851 was a memorable date for the Griffin Church, as the conference of that year decided to hold the
next meeting of the Georgia conference in Griffin, the first of a long series of Griffin conferences. The conference was held in Griffin December 24th through December 31, 1851 (seems strange to us that a century ago they chose that time to hold a church conference. We shall see later that they changed this foolish custom of holding the conference during the holidays).

The only records that we find in the conference minutes concerning Griffin for the year 1857 was that Rev. Charles R. Jewett was the pastor. (Not Jewett as we find mentioned in our church records).

The year 1859 is another memorable year in our church history. In addition to being the year prior to the beginning of the Civil War, the Griffin District was created, and her pastor, Rev. Jewett, became our first Presiding Elder.

It was this year also that the colored members of the Griffin Church became a separate charge, though both were served by the same white pastor. For the years 1859 the Rev. Arminius Wright (not Artimus as listed) was pastor. All we have for the years 1861-62 (first war years) was that Rev. Wesley P. Arnold (not W. P. Arnall as erroneously listed) was pastor.

In these old conference records we have been able to correct a number of errors in the spelling of the names of our early pastors.

In 1864 we find the Rev. Charles R. Jewett returned as pastor. He had previously served 1857-58. This is the first
instance we have of the same preacher being returned to the
Griffin Church, a practise that became prevalent later.

The year 1868 was another banner year for the Griffin
church, as the conference again met in Griffin, December 2-3.
This however was a meeting of the North Georgia conference--
its second meeting as the conference had been divided into
North and South Georgia in 1867.

William S. Rogers who had been junior pastor to Rev.
Jewett from 1864 to 1866 is listed in the conference minutes
as then being superintendent of Marietta Female College.
(A Methodist College). He was later made president of that
college.

Again the conference met in Griffin December 1-6, 1875.
The conference seemed to like to meet in Griffin.

The year 1879 has this conference report concerning Griffin
"There have been revivals, more or less, in every charge and
about 1000 added to the churches in the Griffin District.
Griffin Station was most gracelessly blessed—about 150 added
to the membership. The spiritual and financial condition of
the church are both improved—".

We skip to the year 1903, when the North Georgia Conference
again met in Griffin. The following resolutions were passed:
"Resolved, By the North Georgia Conference that our thanks are
due and hereby tendered—for the very kind and hospitable
manner in which they have entertained this Conference—"

We skip again 13 years to the year 1916, when the
conference again met in Griffin. We quote from this memorable
session "The North Georgia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in its fiftieth session at Griffin, Georgia November 22, 1916— with Bishop Warren A. Candler presiding".

This Saint of God was admitted to the conference in the First Methodist Church in the year

In the appendix of this history will be found a statistical chart giving many pertinent and interesting facts regarding our church for various periods from 1854 through 1920, covering 56 years. We will only take time here to call your attention to some outstanding comparisons.

In 1854 we had 269 white and 64 colored members. In 16 years (1870) we had gained only 37 white members and of course had dropped our 64 colored members. Thus for 16 years we averaged less than a gain of 2½ members a year. Regardless of how saintly the pastors were in those days, they were not overly zealous in increasing the church rolls.

For some unaccountable reason from 1890 to the turn of the century our membership dropped from 472 to 304.

We are quoting from the authentic church records as recorded by the conference. Whether these records were inaccurate it is not for this historian to state. We can only give you the records as we find them. Maybe our church did not make correct reports—neither do we know, we only have the record. However when the official conference minutes for the years 1864, 1866, 1870, 1880 report no additions to the church on profession of faith, we are inclined to doubt the records. Again when the records report
no infants baptized for the period 1854 through 1860 and only 4 in 1870 we must again doubt the accuracy of the records. We cannot believe that our Methodist forbearers neglected to bring the little ones to Jesus. (We recall that babies were more prevalent then than now).

Through this chapter we have attempted to tell you something of the early growth and history of our church, from 1840 through 1916, a period of three quarters of a century.

In a later chapter we shall attempt to give some later church history for the last half of the century, and more intimate details concerning our early pastors.
IV

MEMOIRS OF OUR EARLY MINISTERS
PRE-CIVIL WAR DAYS

In this chapter we wish to digress, for the time being from Church history proper and bring you some memoirs of our early pastors, some human aspects of those early men of God. (In the appendix will be found a complete list of all ministers who have served Griffin Church.)

We have seen that the first circuit rider to serve the Griffin congregation was Rev. Abram Pennington (1841-42). We find from early conference minutes that "This faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ was born in Rowan County, N. C. in 1795—converted in 1825 and admitted for trial in the Georgia conference in 1836. He continued an effective traveling preacher for 12 years---superannuated (1848)". Rev. Pennington was 46 years old when he first served Griffin.

Of our next pastor—Rev. G. W. Porrabee (latter part of 1841) we have no record whatever. The next circuit rider to serve the Griffin Church was Rev. Claiborne Trussess (1843-44). He was born November 28, 1800 in Chester County, S. C. and died in Villa Rica, Georgia, January 27, 1869 at the ripe age of 69. We have a very human description of him. "He grew to manhood vain and irreligious. In 1826 he married a pious Methodist" of whom he says, "I expect to thank God through eternity—for through her prayers and pious work and godly conversation, I was led to Christ." He was "powerfully converted" at Stockdale's camp ground in 1826. Immediately afterwards he felt called to
preach. He was licensed to "exhort" in 1835 and to preach in
1836. He was twice superannuated. He seemed to be a husky
Saint of God. The record says of him that he served circuits
of over 200 miles "traveling and preaching day and night—
swimming swollen streams to reach distant appointments—passing
on his way, sometimes, smoking ruins of dwellings set fire by
bands of hostile Indians. His ministry was wonderfully fruit-
ful, sometimes receiving hundreds into the church at a single charg

Our next pastor, still a circuit rider, was Jonison Schafe
who served the church 1843. He died in his 67th year April 1875.
"He was a good preacher, a faithful pastor, and a useful minister
of Jesus Christ".

Next pastor, still a "traveling preacher" was Rev. John B.
Wardlaw (1844). Born 1816 in Gwinnett county, died Murfreesboro,
Tenn., 1896 at the age of 80, in the 54th year of his ministry.
He was 62 years old when he served the Griffin church. At this
time Georgia and Florida was one conference, and charges were
often far apart—and often contained twenty five or thirty
charges. Several hundred miles on horseback had to be traveled
to cover his circuit, and oft times the pay for young preachers
were less than $100 a year. This was an extraordinary man and
we must quote this tribute paid him by the South Georgia
Conference in 1896. "He was a plain solid man of proper
gravity and dignity. His moral character was without stain
during his long career. No censorious, criticisms, or charges
followed him". The tribute paid this saintly man is the
longest we discovered among the conference records.
The last circuit rider to serve the Griffin station was Rev. Miller H. White (1845). He was born 1813, where is not stated. He died at Grantville in 1891, at the age of 78. He was little more than a youth when he began his ministry and the "heroic life of rifle, axe and saddle bags." He possessed "rare pulpit power." He was one of the last survivors of the noble band of Methodist itinerants who organized circuits in Georgia, which are now districts. Rev. White had a great love for medicine, studied during his spare time, and eventually received the degree of doctor of medicine, and became a skilled physician. His ministry extended over a period of nearly 60 years covering the entire state "from the seaboard to the mountains".

It was in the year 1846 that Griffin Church ceased to be an itinerant point, and became a permanent charge, or a regular church, and Rev. W. D. Martin became the first stationary pastor. It is very regrettable that we have no personal record of Rev. William D. Martin, the first pastor of our church. All we know is that he served the Griffin Church two years, 1846-47.

The next pastor was Rev. W. D. Caldwell who served only one year, 1848. (In those days the conference years did not lapse one year in the next as they do today). It is equally regrettable that we also have no personal record of our second pastor. It is hoped that someone reading these records may know something about these our first two pastors.

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Rev. J. W. Hinton was pastor for the years 1849 and 50. We have a detailed account of this minister from the conference records. He was born in Wilkes County, Georgia, in 1826, and early left an orphan and was reared by loving relatives. He was sent to the famous Methodist school at Cokesbury, South Carolina—a school from which were graduated some of the most distinguished men in Southern Methodism. Rev. Hinton, so far as we know, was the first pastor to serve the Griffin Church with a college background. Others may have but none are so recorded. At the tender age of 16, Rev. Hinton yielded to a call to preach the gospel which he continued to do until his superannuation in 1899. His first charge was as a junior preacher to Rev. John W. Yarbrough on the Decatur circuit. (This was the father of our beloved Brother John Yarbrough who served this church 1923-24 and 25). His eulogy is one of the most flattering in the conference minutes. It is said that "mentally he was a colossus—a close student and a great reader. As a speaker he was vehement and fluent. He was a great preacher "though it is said of him "his preaching was too intellectual for the masses." He became editor of the "Review". He has the distinction of having served longer as Presiding Elder than any preacher in Southern Methodism.

Following Rev. Hinton was Rev. W. D. Matthews who served only one year 1851. He must have been a very beloved pastor as it is said of him "He was a sweet spirit: the goodness of his heart stamped itself on his very countenance, and gave the witchery of love to his voice and manner. Multitudes will bless his memory.
Rev. James B. Jackson followed Rev. Matthews, and served two years, 1852-53. He was born in Clarke County. He lived and died a very tragic life. (dates are not given) It is said he was 14 years old before he ever saw a Bible or went in a church. He was in his teens before he learned to read, yet he so educated himself that he later became a professor in Andrew Female College. In intellect he is said to have been "one of the first men of his age". He must have had a marvelous brain for without an instructor he mastered four languages while performing the duties of an itinerant preacher (We wonder if his biographer has not been too lavish in his praise of him). The date of his death is not given but he was critically injured in a train wreck and died in Lake City, Florida.

The next pastor was Rev. Lewis J. Davies, the son of a Methodist preacher, and served first for one year 1854. He was born near Savannah, 1822, and began preaching in 1851. He not only served Griffin but Atlanta, Barnesville, Forsyth, LaGrange, Cowington and numerous other charges. He returned to Griffin as pastor 20 years later and served 2 more years 1875-76. He died in Gainesville, Georgia in 1886 at the age of 62.

Rev. William R. Post followed Brother Davies and served only one year 1855. He was born in Durham, Conn. in 1819, and came to Georgia in 1839, and was licensed to preach in 1847 at the age of 28. He is the first of our early preachers to have been born in the north. Four years after leaving Griffin he became a professor in the
Madison (Georgia) Female College. He also served Barnesville Plat Shoals, and Atlanta. Superannuated in 1860. Shortly after this he died.

Rev. Caleb Witt Key served the church one year—1856. He was born in Green County, Georgia in 1806, and died at the age of 75 in Augusta in 1861. It is said of him "his sermons were always clear, plain, practical, expositions of his texts, and uniformly good". After he was superannuated it is said he preached to Presbyterians Baptists and colored churches when he couldn't preach to Methodists.

Rev. Charles Raymond Jewett (not Jewett) was one of the outstanding preachers of his day. He filled practically every gust of the conference except Bishop, and it is said he could have been a Bishop had he chose. He served the Griffin church 1857 and again in 1864. He was born in 1824 and died in 1872 a comparatively young man. He was educated at Emory University, our first preacher with this honor, and later became agent of his alma mater. This high tribute is paid him—"He knew no such word as fail. With a just cause—buoyant hope, strong faith, and untried energy, he never stopped short of success."

Our next pastor was Rev. Arminius (not Artimius) Wright—who served 1859 and 1860, and returned 10 years later for one year 1870. Thus he served just prior to the Civil War and during reconstruction. He was the son
of Dr. John H. Wright of Millidgeville and later Macon. Rev. Wright was granted his license in 1845 at the conference at Mulberry St. Church in Macon. He entered the itinerant ministry when but a lad of 16. Rev. Wright had some of the most prominent charges in the conference after leaving Griffin in 1860, serving St. Pauls in Columbus, St. Johns in Augusta, First Church, Atlanta and Mulberry St. Macon. He suffered a severe blow in the death of his son, Arminius Wright, Jr., a sophomore at Emory University in 1873, from which he never fully recovered. It is said he continued to preach until he was too weak to stand in the pulpit. The date of the death of this saintly man is not given.

Thus close a record of the men that had served the Griffin Church from 1840 to 1861, a period of 21 years.

We close the chapter with the beginning of the bloodiest war in the history of our nation, and one of the most savage the world has ever seen—The War between the States.
Griffin was spared the ravages of an invading foe. There were numerous fortifications (breast works) erected around Griffin in anticipation of an invasion but no actual fighting took place in Spalding County. In his "march to the sea" Sherman passed east of Spalding County. Joseph Wheeler, the intrepid confederate cavalry leader, who was pressing Sherman's right flank, passed through Griffin, and his presence probably saved the town from attack. However, as the war was drawing to a close a detachment of Union Soldiers under General Wilson came through Griffin, and occupied the town for several days. They burned the freight depot, but we have no record of other atrocities. It has been erroneously stated that they burned the Synodical College (Presbyterian) which was being used as a Confederate hospital. However this was burned accidentally in 65, and not by the Yankees.

It can well be imagined through what difficulties our people were passing. Atlanta had been almost utterly destroyed and a hostile army, burning and ravaging, was moving just to the east of us. However this did not occur until 1864.

Let us revert to the church records as reflected by the conference minutes (see appendix). In 1860 just prior to the war when the Rev. Arminius Wright (who we discussed in the last chapter) was serving his first pastorate in Griffin, the church reported a membership of 322 (having
dropped its 64 colored members). Even during these perilous times we had a flourishing Sunday School with 39 officers and teachers and 240 members, almost as many as church members. Five years after the close of the war (1870) it is remarkable that we had lost only 18 members from the church rolls and still more remarkable that we had lost only 8 from the Sunday School. Values had so shrunk that we carried the values of all our church property in 1870 as only $15,000. We will have more to say about these comparisons as the years roll by. Here, however, we wish to pay a well deserved compliment to the preachers that held the church together during these horrible days, when many of our people went hungry and destitute—and suffered worse indignities under reconstruction.

The first of these preachers was Rev. Westley P. Arnold (not Arnall as erroneously stated in some of our records) This saintly man began his itinerant preaching in the South Carolina Conference in 1827. He was ordained at the Georgia conference in 1831, and for 25 years served in the eastern and central portions of Georgia. He served Madison (1859-60) before coming to Griffin in 61. In 1869 he served the Millidgeville station, and though he had had "forty three years of abounding labor" (preaching the gospel) "yet he retained much of the freshness and zeal of his younger day". These saints of God were certainly men in those days. This outstanding tribute was paid him by the conference (he died in 1870) "Brother Arnold was the noblest type of Christian gentleman we have ever seen—in him was happily blended exalted dignity with the gentlest love".
Following Brother Arnold was Rev. Habersham J. Adams who served our church during the turbulent year of 1863, and returned 5 years later to serve two more years 1868-69 as Presiding Elder Griffin after leaving district. Griffin served several years as Presiding Elder of the Atlanta District, Rome District, LaGrange District, Dalton District. He died December 1896, after serving in the Georgia Conference for nearly 50 years. He was a native of Athens, Georgia and a graduate of the University of Georgia. It is said of him that when ever he arose to address the conference "he commanded attention, and his advocacy of a measure was almost the assurance of its passage."

In 1864, the Rev. Charles R. Jewett, of whom we have already spoken, returned to serve the church in 1864. He had previously served the church in 1857 and 58. Evidently Rev. Jewett did not serve the entire year as Rev. William A. Rogers is listed as pastor also in 1864, serving 1864, 65 and 66. It is regrettable that no memoir of him is given in conference records, and we were unable to find any record covering his ministry.

In 1865 the Civil War was over, though the horrors of reconstruction were to ensue. Rev. Charles A. Fulwood served the church 1864, 65 and 66. He was born in Houston County in 1829, converted at an early age, and preached his first sermon in 1846, when 17 years of age. He served as Chaplain in the Confederate army. In 1872 he was transferred to the Florida conference, and stationed in Key West. He did missionary work in Cuba, and at the close of the
Spanish American War (1898) he was the first superintendent of missions in Cuba, though he was 69 years of age. This man has a wonderful record—for 4 years he served colored missions; for 4 years white missions; for nine years he traveled circuits; for 22 years he served stations; for 21 years he was Presiding Elder—thus for 60 years he was in the ministry, a record we find surpassed by no other minister. His end was as glorious as it was dramatic. When nearly an octogenarian, and his name was called by the conference (1905) he arose standing before the chancel rail his weak voice breathes a message of love to his brethren and he fell back into the arms of his brethren "A saint went up to be crowned."

Our next pastor was Rev. Robert William Bingham. (what relation Mr. E. W. Bingham, if any, who was a loyal member of our church and a consecrated worker in the early part of the 20th century we do not know). Robert William Bingham was born in Meriwether County in 1824 and died in 1900, 76 years of age "full of usefulness and honor." In 1851 he was sent to "the far west to meet the needs of that wild region." In 1857 he was made president of the Western conference, though we do not know where. The next year he returned to his native state and served many charges for 53 years. (Griffin 1867) It is said of him "He was a man of stainless soul, and excelled as a gentleman. His pastorate was pre-eminent—a writer of unusual distinction, brilliant in conception, effective in aim."

In 1868, Rev. Habersham J. Adams returned for 2 years. He is discussed under his 1863 pastorate.
The same is true of Arminius Wright, 1870. See his 1859 pastorate.

In 1871 the Rev. John W. Heidt was sent to Griffin and he served for 5 years, the longest continuous pastorate we have yet encountered. He was born in Macon, Georgia in 1841 and died in Atlanta in 1909, 68 years of age. He was early educated at Springfield Academy, entered Emory University in 1859 and graduated in 1862, and two years later received his A. M. degree. Craving further education he entered the Law School of the University of Georgia from which he received his doctors of laws in 1861. Thus far he has the distinction of being the most highly educated of any of our early preachers. Colonel Heidt must have been a remarkable man. At the outbreak of the war he enlisted in the Chatham (Savannah) Artillery but was later removed from military duty by appointment of Governor Joseph E. Brown as Solicitor General of the Eastern Georgia Circuit. He remained in the legal profession until 1866, when he entered the old Georgia Conference and was licensed to preach. (His father was a Methodist preacher). He was the first lawyer to turn to the cloth in our early Griffin ministers. He had many assignments, a Presiding Elder, was President LaGrange Female College (1882-85): Regent of South Western University, Texas (1885-89), Associate Editor and Business Manager Wesleyan Christian Advocate (1901-1902). He was chaplain of the Georgia Senate 1881-82 and received honorary degree of L.L.B. from the University of Georgia and D. D. from Trinity College, N. C., the same year: long
a trustee of Wesleyan and LaGrange Female Colleges, and was
president of the Board of Trustees of Reinhardt College
at Waleska, Georgia. After laying down his law books,
about 1861, he served the North Georgia Conference for
33 years, in addition to 3 previous years as its secretary.
His eulogy, and rightly so, is a lengthy one ends thus
by—"He wisely dealt the bread of life".

In 1875 Rev. Lewis J. Davies returned to Griffin to
serve for 2 years. See his former pastorate here in
1854, twenty one years prior.

Next came Rev. Daniel J. Myrick to serve for the
years 1877 and 78. He was born near "the Rock" in upson
county in 1826. He served numerous charges in Georgia
from 1849 to 1901--fifty two years. There is mention of
the fact that while serving Griffin, Rev. Myrick suffered
a nearly fatal illness. No details are given. "His star
knew no waning".

Next to serve Griffin was the Rev. Thomas R. Kendall, D. D.
Also born in Upson County in 1840, and died in Decatur 1956
at the age of 90--having lived longer than any pastor to
have served Griffin. He was in school at the military
college in Marietta, when the war broke out. At the age
of 15 he ran away and joined the confederate army. (They
took them young then) At the age of 17 he was promoted from
lieutenant to captain, and declined a higher office on the
staff of the redoubtable General Kirby Smith. He served until
the close of the war in 85, and entered what was then the
Medical College at Atlanta (now Emory University), from which he graduated first honor in 1869, though he turned to the ministry. He was licensed to preach in 1875 and held various charges until superannuated in 1923-48 Years. While serving Griffin which was his third appointment (1879) he was assured by his Presiding Elder and Chairman of the Board of Stewards that Griffin did not want and would not have a revival. (Griffin Church was bull-headed even then). Brother Kendall was just as bull-headed, and determined that Griffin should have a revival, and a revival he did have, and what a revival. 300 members were added to various churches in Griffin. At the time the benevolence of Trinity Church in Atlanta was only $500, yet Brother Kendall raised $1100 his first year and $3000 the second year, against great opposition. We take our hat off to this old war horse. He seems to have been the first real go getter that the Griffin Church had had. During this good man's Griffin pastorate--3 years "1200 joined the Church". (Editors note--We do not find any such record in the minutes of the conference. The official record from the minutes at Emory--state for the year 1890 we had only 410 members and even 10 years later 1890 we had only 472 members. We are at a loss to reconcile the statement from Brother Kendall's eulogy). It is stated that the Home Missionary Society of our church was organized during Brother Kendall's ministry. Be that as it may, this man was one of the outstanding preachers to serve the Griffin Church.
Chapter VI

CLOSING YEARS OF THE 19TH CENTURY

In the present chapter we wish to deal with the preachers that served the Griffin church for the last eight years of the 19th century. Rev. James E. Evans came to us in 1882 and served only one year. He was born in Wilkes County, Georgia, February 4, 1810— and died in the 77th year of his life and in the 57th year of his ministry. He was commissioned to preach on Christmas day 1829 when less than 19 years of age, and a admitted to the Georgia Conference in 1833. "Physically he was a noble man, possessing a magnificent frame—his bearing dignified and his manner courteous. His mental constitution was the counterpart of the physical man. He was well balanced and practical. "His education was limited to high school as he never attended college, yet he is said to have been one of the best educated men in the conference at that time. "He was a fine pastor as well as a good preacher". After leaving Griffin he was commissioner of Education Farm Institute (colored) Augusta. It seems that Rev. J. E. Evans was most zealous in the building program of the churches and districts he served. Quoting the conference records of 1886, the date of his death we read, "St. Luke's church in Columbus and St. James in Augusta are beautiful monuments to this devoted servant of Christ. "He was also active in building Trinity Church in Savannah, Mulberry Street Church in Macon". This remarkable man, self educated as he was he
served the cause of education as a Trustee of both Emory and Wesleyan Colleges, on the Board of Trustees of the former institution 44 years, and the latter 45 years. This record we find unsurpassed by any one else. He is said to have done more for Wesleyan than almost any other man—he "rocked the cradle of this institution in its infancy and lived to see it crowned by Christian liberality."

Such was the man that served Griffin Church in the year 1882.

Our next pastor was Rev. Simon Peter Richardson who likewise served only one year (1883). His grand parents were pure German, from Hanover. They were Lutherans, and there had been no preachers in the family for over 200 years. Simon Peter (his parents must have been very religious folk) was born near Newberry, S. C., in 1818 and was baptized into the Lutheran Church when a young child. At 18 he joined the Methodist Church and was admitted to the Georgia conference in 1840, on trial. Spent much of his early ministry on Florida circuits. He returned to be Presiding Elder, Griffin District 1890. He died in Macon in 1899 at the ripe old age of 81. He must have been a very lovable and social gentlemen, as it is said of him, "We will never have one on our rolls who will add more to the social life of our annual gatherings."

Next to be sent to Griffin was the Rev. Allen Covington Thomas. Born in Gwinnett County, Georgia September 19, 1849 and died in Canton, Mo. (where he had transferred, 1901).
in 1904. He was a member of the Georgia conference for over thirty years. "sweet and gentle, unselfish and affectionate—still he was uncomprising in his devotion to moral principles". He graduated from Emory College in 1870 and the same year was admitted to the North Georgia Conference.

The next year Rev. William Francis Cook, D. D. came to serve the years 1885, 1886 and 1887. (as 1885 was the year this chronicle was born, he is more than interested in who was the man serving the church that year, though it was not until 30 years later that this writer became a Methodist). It is said of Brother Cook that he "was the embodiment of all that is good, pure and noble". He was for 47 years an itinerant preacher. He was born in Talbot county Georgia in January 1840. Graduated at Emory College in 1850, received his A. M. degree in 1860, and the honorary degree of D. D. in 1878. Licensed to preach at Thomaston, admitted to the conference in 1855. After his pastorate in Griffin, and having served various charges, in 1875 elected to the faculty of Wesleyan University, but resigned the same year to accept vacancy Trinity Church Atlanta. Before becoming pastor in Griffin in 1885, he had served this district two years (1880-81). In 1883-84 he was President Middle Georgia Agricultural and Military College at Milledgeville. For many years he was a Trustee of Wesleyan College. He died in 1903 at the age of 83, and 16 years after leaving Griffin.
The memorial to our next preacher, H. S. Bradley (1868-90) is the longest in the record of Griffin pastors, covering few typewritten pages, from which we can quote only briefly. Dr. (M.D.) Bradley, (for he was a physician many years before he was a preacher) was born in Baldwin County, Georgia in 1837. He embraced medicine as his life work and "soon was recognized as a skillful and successful practitioner especially in surgery." At the outbreak of the Civil war he offered his services to the Confederacy, and was assigned to duty as a surgeon in the army of Northern Virginia. (Lee army). He rose to the rank of brigadier—general—a very high rank for a surgeon. At the close of the war he opened a drug store and practised in Cartersville, Georgia. "He was a leader in politics, social and worldly life". He was not converted until 1878 when 41 years of age—a condition we have not met with in any of our preceding 30 odd pastors. The next year he was licensed to preach. He died in Washington, Georgia in 1893, three years after leaving Griffin. The name of H. Stiles Bradley will always be an honored one in Methodism.

Of our next preacher, Rev. B. S. Sassonett (1893-94) we know little. No memoir is found for him in the conference records.

The name of Quillian is one of the most revered in Georgia Methodism. The first Quillian to serve our church was the Rev. Henry Milton Quillian (1893-94) who served in the North Georgia Conference for 53 years. His father was a Methodist
preacher, and thus we know the Quillians have been Methodist preachers in Georgia for nearly a century and a quarter. He graduated from Andrew Male High School in Elberton, and taught school during the summer holidays of 1874-75 in Franklin County, Georgia. Then he went into mercantile business with his brothers at Homer, Georgia--1873-75. He was admitted to the Conference in Griffin December 1875, and was to return as the local pastor 18 years later. He died at Blakely, Georgia in 1931 at the age of 80.

The next pastor of Griffin First Church was Rev. Thomas Jefferson Christian, who served from 1895 through 1898, the year of the Spanish American War. This is the first pastor of which the writer can speak personally. I knew and loved "Brother" Christian when a lad of 10. He lived in the old parsonage, corner 11th and Poplar Streets, which has been the writer's home for the past 40 years. My sister lived directly across the street from the parsonage and I often was in "Brother" Christian's home. I remember him as a kindly gentle man fond of children. The Conference eulogy says of Rev. Christian "he had a strong personality, and bound friends to him by his affability."

Rev. Charles S. Owens followed Rev. Christian, and served the Griffin church only one year 1899. My recollection of him is very vague (there is also some confusion as to the year he spent in Griffin. Our church record shows he was here in 1899, while conference records list his pastorage here as 1898 and Thomson in 1899. Which is correct, the writer cannot say.
Chapter VII

THE BEGINNING OF THE 20th CENTURY

Following Rev. Owen was the beloved Rev. W. T. Irvine, who the writer recalls very vividly (he should as Rev. Irvine performed our wedding ceremony—however this was his return pastorate to Griffin in 1916). The writer knew Rev. and Mrs. Irvine intimately. At the time I was living across the street from the parsonage, and knew the young lad Willard (now Major General U. S. Army) and his two little sisters—Annie and Helen. The young son, mentioned above married lovely Lillian Scott, the daughter of Will T. Scott one of the oldest and most faithful members of our church.

As stated, Rev. Irvine returned as pastor in 1916, and the reason I recall this preacher so well throughout the years we retained our friendship with this splendid gentleman and one of the finest preachers to serve this church. He was a graduate of Emory College. His conference record embraced 57 years. In November 1942, Brother Irvine retired. He died in Covington.

It is regrettable that no detailed church records exist prior to 1902, or if such records are in existence, this author has been unable to locate them. In previous chapters we have attempted to sketch the early history of the church from its inception, but had to depend upon conference records, which gave little or no local church details. However for the last forty eight years we have the minutes of the church's
quarterly conferences, and shall attempt to give from these records pertinent information of lasting interest.

It happens that the year 1902 was the one that this author of this history left Griffin to attend the Georgia school of Technology. At the time Rev. T. C. Betterton was pastor and Rev. W. F. Glenn was Presiding Elder. Incidentally the parsonage, at that time was located southwest corner Poplar and Tenth streets (later about 1906) the parsonage was sold to Mrs. E. W. Beck, Sr. the mother of the author, and has been his home for over 40 years. Rev. Betterton was the last pastor to live in the old parsonage. The author recalls brother Betterton very well, and considered him a consecrated man of God. After Brother Betterton left Griffin, he resigned from the conference and went into the manufacture of caskets in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Rev. Betterton's father was in the wholesale liquor business (and had been for some years). An unfortunate occurrence happened a few years after Rev. Betterton left Griffin. He was indigited for shipping whiskey into Georgia (then a dry state) in coffin boxes. It developed that Mr. Betterton was not guilty of the offense and was exonerated, as the whiskey was shipped without his knowledge or consent.

It is interesting to note some of the church officials, forty eight years ago.

Professor Homer Wright was superintendent of the Sunday School. How well I recall Professor Wright, principal of the High School. Professor Wright had only one eye, but
he could see more with that one than most of us with two.
The writer shall always be indebted to Professor Wright
who was the finest mathematics teacher we ever encountered.
At the time Mrs. Wright was teaching the adult class (both
men and women). Professor Wright resigned as Superintendent
Sunday School in June 1902 and was succeeded by Judge Robert
T. Daniel. B. H. (Breck) Moore was church secretary. For
many years he was connected with Bass Brothers Company, and
later secretary--treasurer Griffin Mercantile Company. In
September, brother Moore resigned as secretary and was
succeeded by Milton J. Daniel who retained this post for a
number of years.

In 1902, the church Trustees were--Capt. W. J. Kincaide
(capitalist and industrialist), Col. W. F. Tammell (father
of Mrs. B. R. Blakely), Mr. George R. Niles (merchant--and
still active in the church), Mr. C. H. Johnson (merchant)
Mr. Alex S. Murray (for many years Post Master of Griffin--
the father of George Niles Murray), Judge Robert T. Daniel
(long Judge Griffin Circuit--Superior Court). All six of
these Trustees have been dead a number of years, with the
exception of Mr. George R. Niles.

The stewards were--in addition to Judge Daniel, Breck
Moore and Alex Murray--Mr. W. B. Griffin--Cotton Merchant
and father of Elmer H. Griffin, Mr. J. J. Mangham (Joss--
cotton manufacturer), Mr. L. W. Goddard (pioneer furniture
dealer), Mr. James D. Rivers (father-in-law of Elmer Griffin
and Woods Hammond, was traveling salesman). Mr. M. J. Daniel, Jr.
(bank official--later secretary Rushton Mills and finally in
Mr. Ben B. Brown (Merchant, first Ford dealer and father of
Ben Brown, Jr. and father-in-law of Judge Arthur Maddox),
Col. R. J. Reading (Director Georgia Experiment Station),
Mr. Ed P. Bridges (Merchant and later served a number of
years as city manager—first chosen to that position in
1916, when city changed to commission form of government.
Dr. J. M. Thomas (physician and former husband of Mrs.
Adavele Kincaide Hunt). Mr. J. W. Mangham (Jacket—cotton
manufacturer and brother of Jose), Mr. W. T. Scott—Merchant,
and still active in the church. Mr. George J. Coppelidge,
Merchant. Later Dr. T. H. Wynne, Sr. (Optometrist and jeweler)
and Mr. T. C. Manley (Merchant and father of John Stephens
Manley) were added to the board.

Of this list of distinguished men who were stewards all
are deceased save—Mr. Will Scott, and Dr. T. H. Wynne.

The minutes reveal some interesting facts nearly a half
century ago. The church had no Epworth League, and little
was done for missions. Rev. Betterton reported "the Sunday
school was hampered for lack of teachers and on account of
being out of the church building". Why the Sunday School
was out of the church building, we do not know, unless
the building was undergoing repairs.

It was in 1902 that Mr. Robert Wheaton was received into
the church on profession of faith. Mr. Wheaton became one of
the most active church workers we ever had, and served the
church faithfully, in many capacities until his death in
He was the husband of Mrs. Vivie Worthington Wheaton for over
30 years a devout church worker, and the father of Robin Wheaton also an active church worker, and past president Man's Bible Class. Among other members received during the year, Mr. Roscoe Johnson (for 30 years with the Post Office) Mr. George Murray, (for years a church official and active worker). Among the author's schoolmates that joined the church that year were Miss Taune Gordon Kimbrough, later Mrs., Miss Louise Johnson, later Mrs. and Miss Addie Anthony, later Mrs. Bill Cartledge. (The author was at the time a Baptist and did not affiliate with the Methodist church until 1924).

At this time the membership of the church numbered only about 500, and the church was in debt about $1200 on parsonage and church building. The pastor's salary was $1200.

Having served two years, Brother Bovettton was returned as pastor in 1904 for two more years. Mr. B. R. Blakely was added to the board of stewards—banker, merchant and public spirited citizen. No man in Griffin was ever more universally loved than Mr. R. E. (Rush) Blakely—the father of Tillman T. Blakely. In 1905 Mr. J. J. Mangham was added to the board of Trustees to replace Mr. C. R. Johnson, deceased. Mr. E. W. Bingham was made superintendent of the Sunday school. Two faithful church workers became members in 1905, and have been faithful ever since, Misses Myrtice and Blanche Bailey, for a great many years, teachers in our public schools.

An incident of interest in 1905, was the receipt of $25.00 from Rev. V. E. Mengat of Marietta, Georgia, who stated it was in payment for a note he gave the church for
money he owed the church, 30 years prior. The note and interest was cancelled by the church and the $25.00 returned to Rev. Manget.

It seems that some controversial matters arose in the church in the spring of 1905. In conference assembled, a motion was made by Col. Redding that a committee consisting of Rev. T. C. Betterton be appointed "to take under advisement and consideration the very important question as to the relationship which baptized children, and infants bear to the church". If any report was ever made by this committee or any action taken we fail to find any mention of it, and/or where the theology of the Methodist church was affected.

In reviewing these old records, we find that the first quarterly conference year 1902-1903 was held December 22, 1902, in the law offices of Judge James S. Boynton, ex-Governor of Georgia. Why this meeting was held in Judge Boynton's office (on top floor of what is now the Parks Building we do not know. There is no record of Judge Boynton's affiliation with the church in any capacity. Judge Boynton and the author's father Judge E. W. Beck were for a time law partners).

Let's glance at what the church was doing in benevolences approximately half a century ago. There is no financial statement for the year 1902, and the first one we find was at the first quarterly conference (held in Judge Robert T. Daniel's law office—in the Masonic Temple) December 21, 1904, with Dr. W. F. Glean, Presiding Elder, in the chair (Incidentally Judge Daniel was the brother-in-law of this author). The
membership had increased to 342 members, and the Sunday School to 178. The church gave $200.00 for Foreign Missions, $124.00 for Home Missions and the Sunday School raised $70.00.

The membership increased 32 for the year 1904, bringing it to 377 members, while Sunday School enrollment dropped off 28 to an enrollment of 150 (we wonder why). The same amount $200.00 was given Foreign Missions, Home Missions $127.00. No record Women's Societies activities.

For the year 1905 the church made a better record. The membership was growing—having reached nearly 400 (395). Sunday school picked up to 160. Donations for both Foreign Missions ($180) and Home Missions ($117) dropped off.

At the fall conference Rev. John S. Jenkins was assigned the church as pastor, and Rev. Joel T. Davies as Presiding Elder.
Pastorate Dr. John H. Jenkins
1906 to 1908

Brother John H. Jenkins came to us in the fall of 1906. I recall him as a scholarly gentleman and a most consecrated man of God. He served the church well, and at the end of two years, was returned as Presiding Elder.

Mr. E. W. Bingham, who had made such a success as superintendent of the Sunday School was added to the Board of Stewards, as was Mr. J. D. Smith. This year the pastor's salary was increased to $1800. At this time there was no Epworth League in the church. The Sunday School enrollment had jumped to the all time high of 250 scholars. This was the first year that the church supported a Home Missionary, and a mission Sunday School was started in Experiment at the Kincaid Mills (this grew into the Kincaid Memorial Methodist church--now a splendid organization--which this year is enlarging its plant.

Mention is made in the minutes that in 1905 Miss Rosalind Blakely was attending Wesleyan College in Macon. Rosalind was the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. E. R. Blakely, a sister of Tillman, and a life long and devoted friend of this author. (she later became Mrs. Charles G. Mills, Jr.)

Later in the year the pastor's salary was again raised to $2400.

In October 1906 the pastor reported, "I think our people are less worldly and more spiritual than they were the first part of the year."
At the fourth quarterly conference (October 7th, 1906) pastor Jenkins has this to say of Dr. W. F. Glenn, Presiding Elder—"for four years he has been our beloved and faithful Presiding Elder. He has always been true to his God and loyal to his work. By his sweet and gentle intercourse he has elevated the standard of Christian fellowship", a well deserved compliment to a most consecrated man. He was followed by Dr. Joel T. Davies in January, 1907.
Pastorate Rev. Charles Octaveous Jones
1906-1912

Rev. C. O. Jones came to the church in the fall of 1906. Minutes of the first quarterly conference January 19, 1908 show that the beloved Dr. John H. Eakes was Presiding Elder. (Dr. Eakes was the father of Miss Caroline Eakes and Mrs. Ernest F. Travis). He was universally loved and admired by all who knew him. It is said of Dr. Eakes that he was the outstanding member of the North Georgia Conference for many years, and could have been Bishop had he chose. E. W. Bigham was again superintendent of the Sunday School, and Breck Moore, secretary. The membership of the church had increased to 484, and the Sunday school enrollment to 526 (outnumbering church membership by 42) We were paying the preacher $1500, which some thought excessive. There was only one circle of the Women's missionary Society with 45 members. New names added to the board of stewards were, W. R. Hanleiter (after whom Hanleiter Church was named) and Brother E. P. (Jack) Edwards. Rev. Jones stated in his report "our great need is a new Sunday school. (it was built ). Rev. Jones was the first occupant of the new parsonage on Hill Street.

It is interesting to note among the infants baptized were Tillet H. (Hilary) Wynne, Jr., William H. Tyus, Henry Holsey Moore, and Sarah V. Flynt. In September 1909 the church was still talking about a new Sunday school building. About this time Albert Blakely (life long friend of the author) died
Rev. Jones remarks in November 1909, "I think the congregation is in better spirit and more hopeful". Hopeful for what, he does not say. In 1910 the preachers salary was raised to $2,000. E. W. Bigham, Judge Robert T. Daniel and J. J. Mangham appointed to look into advisability and cost of a Sunday school annex. In 1910, the preacher was rather pessimistic he reports, "the church seems to be satisfied with itself and at ease—in lethargy has taken hold of us. The church had revival services in June, but evidently Brother Jones was disappointed at the results, again he pessimistically remarks—to my great sorrow the meeting did not take on the proportions of a great revival—the chief reason perhaps is that we are satisfied with things as they are." The eminent Doctor is again doleful in his next quarterly conference report—"attention is again called to the spiritual ease in Zion." However as Rev. Jones closed his first two years he was more optimistic, he says, "I think the spiritual state of the church is good. Harmony prevails among the members and a spirit of hopefulness reigns."

Rev. Jones was returned and served two more years, until 1912. It was during the pastorate of Rev. Jones that the auditorium of the church was reversed, and this monstrosity remained until 1950—a period of nearly 40 years. Let us hope that no such foolish action is ever taken again. The writer recalls Rev. Jones very well, remembers best his red beard which gave him the not very dignified nickname of "pink whiskers". He was born in 1849 and was 60 years
old when he came to Griffin. He was a brainy man, an intellectual we would say, but he was never popular with the congregation. He had served as president of Acadia College (Mo.) and had served in the conferences of Missouri, Texas, Kentucky, and Georgia. The North Georgia conference in its eulogy of Dr. Jones, says of him "He was an Adonis in physical form—he was cultured to the highest degree, and a past master of the English language." He died December 11, 1936 on his 87th birthday.
Following the Rev. C. O. Jones was Rev. James R. King who was pastor for the years 1912-1915. He was born in Florida, August 24, 1855, and a graduate of Wofford College (Spartanburg) S. C. in 1879, and was licensed the same year to preach. Like so many Methodist ministers he followed in the footsteps of his father who was also a minister. Rev. King came to the Griffin Church from St. Paul's, Atlanta, which he had served the two previous years. He left Griffin to serve Madison, 1914-16. In 1920 he was superannuated. He died at Wesley Memorial Hospital June 20, 1931, at the age of 76.

The writer does not recall having known Rev. King, but some of the older members of the church speak most highly of his ability and his deep consecrated Christian spirit. During Rev. King’s pastorate Rev. Fletcher Walton was Presiding Elder.

It might be interesting to note who were church stewards at this time—some 38 years ago—they were:

Robert T. Daniel (trustee) W. B. Griffin
L. W. Goddard E. H. Griffin
B. R. Blakely (trustee) J. D. Rivers
R. J. Redding J. R. Williams
Robert Wheaton J. V. Chunn
W. H. Wheaton E. P. Edwards
B. B. Brown (trustee) T. H. Wynne
M. M. Emerson W. C. Maddox
W. J. Kincaid (trustee) B. H. Moore
J. B. Futrel W. A. Hanleiter
E. P. Bridges M. J. Daniel
A. S. Murray (trustee) A. F. Patterson
All of the above save the beloved Dr. T. H. Wynne who is still an active and loyal member of the church—though an octagenarian—have passed to their reward.

N. J. Baxter was superintendent of the Sunday School and Willard W. Irvine was president of the Epwroth League.

Following Rev. King was Rev. George F. Venable. Rev. Venable served the church 1914-15. Under his able leadership the church continued to show marked progress. In his first report on the state of the church, Rev. Venable has this to say of the Men’s Bible Class, which he also refers to erroneously as the "Baracca Class"—(January 7, 1914) "A strong feature of this department of the church (Sunday School) is a large and thriving Baracca Class composed of, for the most part, of mature men under the attractive leadership of Judge Robert T. Daniel." Rev. Venable was not only a good preacher, but an excellent pastor. At this time (June 1951) Dr. Venable’s son Dr. John H. Venable (M.D.) is head of the health department of Spalding county. Dr. Venable was superannuated in 1944. He had been a member of the North Georgia Conference for 44 years. After his superannuation he served for a time as chaplain at West View (Cemetery) Abbey. Dr. Venable was first admitted to the Florida conference in 1900, and the same year transferred to the North Georgia Conference. He is at present living in Atlanta.

After Dr. Venable the beloved Rev. W. T. Irvine returned in 1916, after an absence of 14 years to again serve the church
for one year. The writer well recalls that year, thirty five years ago, on Halloween of 1915, Brother Irvine performed the wedding ceremony that united him and Miss Ethel Williams, and eventually led to him becoming a Methodist. We have already spoken in detail of the lovable christian character of Brother Irvine.

Following Rev. Irvine was that kindly spirit, that outstanding scholar, Dr. W. P. King, who possessed one of the keenest sense of humor and sparkling wit that this historian has ever encountered. Dr. King served the church for four years—1917-1920 inclusive. Dr. Luke G. Johnson was Presiding Elder, and Col. (later Judge) W. H. Searcy, Jr. was superintendent of the Sunday School— as was also W. S. Jones. T. J. Purdy was President of the Men's Bible Class, which they persisted in calling the Baracee Class, and the beloved Miss Aline Cummins was the pianist. The teachers of the class at this time were J. A. Dorsey, E. W. Strozier, J. H. Risa and J. A. Jones (superintendent of city schools). Mrs. C. E. Newton was president of the Woman's Missionary Society (name changed in 1940 to Woman's Society of Christian Service). Rev. W. L. Pierce was Presiding Elder. The pastor's salary was $2100. Dr. King was for a number of years connected with the Methodist Publishing House in Nashville, Tennessee. He was superannuated in 1943, having given 46 years of his life to the service of his Lord. This writer never knew of a finer christian gentleman, or a more interesting personality than W. P. King.
1921
Dr. A. M. Pierce

Following the Rev. W. P. King was Dr. A. M. Pierce, an outstanding member of the North Georgia Conference and now secretary of the Historical Society of the North Georgia Conference. Dr. Pierce is one of the most intellectual men ever to serve the church—he is a deep thinker and scholar and has recently written a history of Methodism in Georgia. He came in the fall of 1920 and only served the church one year.

We find that during the pastorate of Dr. Pierce that Dr. Luke W. Johnson was Presiding Elder, and we see some new names on the Board of Stewards—I. E. Haisten, P. Y. Luther, George T. Pursey and T. H. Wynne. Some of these had previously been on the Board. Brock Moore was still church secretary. In 1920 an Epworth League was organized in the church for the first time.

Mention is made that the "Baraca" class (adult men's Bible class was in good condition. This was a misnomer as there never was a Baraca class in the church, and the church had no legal right to use the name Baraca, which was done for a number of years. Mention is also made of the Women's Missionary society progressing, but no details are given.

Mention is made in our quarterly conference records that our following young people were attending college, in 1921: Clara Edwards, Georgia State Normal at Milledgeville, (now G.S.C.W); William (Bill) Edwards, University of Georgia; Mary Alice Thomas,
Gunston Hall; Lewis Thomas, New York; Milton Daniel, Jr., Georgia Tech; Benjamin Brown, Castle 4 Heights; Adair Chunn, G.M.C.

It was in 1921 that brother W. H. Cox resigned as Sunday School Superintendent and P. Y. Luther succeeded him. Again, in April 1921, we see new names added to the Board of Stewards—H. B. Montgomery, Frank Pittman, Dr. John Thomas, Ober S. Tyus and A. P. Patterson. Also during this year occurred the tragic (automobile) death of E. H. (Ned) Hallyburton, also the death of Mrs. Julia Maddox, the mother of Arthur Maddox.

Here (1921) we find a detailed report of the women's Missionary Society, as reported by Mrs. E. F. Travis (daughter of Rev. J. H. Haskes) with an average attendance at their meetings of 30 members.

We also find a report of the church trustees, M. J. Daniel, E. B. Brown, and A. S. Murray, showing—believe it or not—the church property was valued at $75,000 on which only $25,000 insurance was carried, and the parsonage was valued at $10,000 on which $7000 insurance carried. $113 was spent during the year and $145 was spent on the parsonage. The church closed the year in a prosperous condition with a membership of 754 and an enrollment in the Sunday School of 519, the peak so far attained.
Chapter VIII

GRIFFIN CHURCH GIVES THE DENOMINATION A BISHOP

Of all the eminent and consecrated men who have served Griffin First Church, we are probably most proud of the services of James Edward Dickey, who was pastor only one year 1922-23, yet he left a lasting imprint on our church and our city.

Dr. Dickey was the son of a Methodist minister and was born in a Methodist parsonage at Jeffersonville, Georgia, on May 11, 1864—near the close of the Civil War. Dr. Dickey graduated with honors in the class of 1891 from Emory College, Oxford, Georgia and with him graduated another young man who too was to become a future Bishop of his denomination. He was admitted to the conference at Cartersville, Georgia, December 9, 1891 on trial. He was appointed a professor of "Mental and Moral Science" at Emory, where he served until 1896, when he was transferred to the choir of History and Political Economy until 1898. From 1899 to 1902 he was pastor of Grace Church Atlanta. In 1902 he was chosen President of his alma mater. Here he remained for 13 additional years—thus giving almost a quarter of a century to Emory. When Emory College was merged into Emory University, Dr. Dickey retired from scholastic duties and took up pastoral ones. After serving several charges he came to Griffin in 1922. It was while serving our church that he was called to higher duties, being elected Bishop by the General
conference of the Methodist Episcopal church south at Hot Springs, Arkansas, May 1922. He served as Bishop for more than six years, serving the districts of New Mexico, Texas, Virginia, Illinois, Kentucky. He died April 18, 1928 at Louisville, Kentucky and is buried in West View Cemetery in Atlanta.

Our church records show that Dr. Dickey wrote the minutes of the first quarterly conference January 25, 1922 with Dr. Luke G. Johnson, Presiding Elder, presiding. He also wrote the minutes of the second quarterly conference April 26, but had been called to the bishopric May 1922 when Dr. W. A. Shelton assumed charge as pastor. So Bishop Dickey served only a few months as pastor of our church.

It is interesting to read in the handwriting of his wonderful man his opinion of the Griffin church, "I am persuaded" writes Dr. Dickey "that there is some hunger and thirst on the part of our people--and hopes of a deeper work of good being brought into the lives of our members. (April 26, 1922). The membership of the church had grown to 754, and the Sunday school to an enrollment of 519.

It was during the pastorate of Dr. Dickey that brother and Mrs. Wilbur Brown came to Griffin and joined our church by certificate, and for 29 years no members of the church have been more loyal and been more active in the church. Joining the church by profession of faith were: Talley Montgomery, Fannie Willis Niles (Mrs. Herbert Bolton, Jr.), George Niles, Jr., and Henry Baker. It was also during this
year the church lost two of its most faithful members by death, Mr. L. W. Goddard and Mr. J. D. Williams (the father-in-law of this writer).

We quote this fine eulogy by the general conference for 1930. "Bishop Dickey was a man of versatile gifts and great industry. He served in many departments of the church, and with uniform success in all fields. But his distinguished services was his elevated character and spotless life. No selfish motives found place in his soul and no unholy disposition colored his conduct."

In the summer of 1922, Dr. W. A. Shelton was sent to Griffin as pastor to replace Dr. Dickey, who had been elected Bishop by the General conference in May 1922. Dr. Shelton served out Dr. Dickey's term. Dr. Shelton was a highly intellectual man, and made a most acceptable minister and pastor. (The writer at that time was not living in Griffin and did not know Dr. Shelton personally.)

It was during Dr. Shelton's pastorate that Brother A. P. Patterson was named church lay leader.

Dr. Shelton was followed by one of the most beloved men ever to serve our church, Dr. John F. Yarbrough who served 1923, 1924 and 1925, now (1951) retired and living in Decatur, Georgia. He was universally loved not only by his own congregation, but the city at large. To know "Brother John" was to love him. He was one of the most human and lovable characters that we have ever known. When he came to the church the membership had grown to 872, and the Sunday school
to 493. Bruce Montgomery was secretary-treasurer of the Sunday School. Lyndon Patterson was elected president of the (activated) Epworth League. We find this notation of the following:

(Conference minutes October 19, 1923) "We read with pleasure the gift of $5,000 by our Mrs. Green Dodd for the superannuate home at Kirkwood". F. Y. Luther was still Sunday School superintendent.

Deaths recorded were, Mr. H. M. Griffin, Sr. and Mr. Joe A. Rice.

Mrs. B. B. Brown (now Mrs. ) was president Woman's Missionary Society, and Mrs. A. S. Murray, treasurer. We read the following resolutions, dated November 16, 1923, "Whereas Rev. John F. Yarbrough has served the First Methodist Church South, Griffin, Georgia for one year to the honor and glory of our Lord and with all credit to himself and to this church and to all the people of Griffin—therefore be it resolved that we the official board of the First Methodist Church south of Griffin, urge our Presiding Elder to use all honorable means to have Brother Yarbrough returned to us for another year"—signed B. B. Brown, chairman Board of Stewards. He was returned for 2 more years.

It was during Brother Yarbrough's pastorate that the Maverick Bible Class was organized. "Dr." Ed Scales was president and Judge Chester A. Byars was secretary. It met in a down town moving picture theater and did much good—mainly among men that did not attend Sunday School elsewhere. It was nondenominational. Brother Yarbrough was teacher.

We find a report of the church trustees—B. B. Brown, B. R. Blakely, M. J. Daniel and A. S. Murray stating that the Trustees had securities on hand to the value of $5,000 given by Mrs. J. M. Thomas (now Mrs. Robert H. Hunt) in honor of
her father Captain W. J. Kincaid—the interest to be used for the
education of students of the church preparing for the ministry.
At the time two local boys were recipients of the fund—Mr. Vickery
at Young Harris and Mr. Elliott at Emory.

The beloved Dr. J. H. Bakes had succeeded Brother Luther
Johnson as Presiding Elder.

It was during Brother Yarbrough’s pastorate that the Griffin
church voted, through their delegates to unite the southern and
northern branches of the Methodist church.

It was in 1844 that the question of slavery had caused a
split between the Methodists of the North and the South. This
church has been a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church south
since that time until 1938, when we united with the Northern
methodists, and became simply a part of the Methodist church.
This action was ratified at the General Conference held at Birming-
ham, Alabama, April 1938. Of the 11 clerical delegates voting six
of them had served this church, either as pastors or presiding
elders—Rev. W. P. King, Dr. A. M. Pierce, Dr. V. A. Shelton,
Dr. J. F. Yarbrough, Rev. L. M. Twiggs and Dr. Wallace Rogers.

Dr. Yarbrough served as pastor 1923—1926 when he was
succeeded by Rev. H. S. Smith who was pastor 1928 and 1929.
Dr. L. M. Twiggs was Presiding Elder. Jesse O. Futrel was
superintendent of the Sunday school—he served 9 years—1925
through 1933. Rev. Smith was followed by that courtly gentleman
that was entitled to add the degree of M. D. in addition to D. D.
after his name, as Dr. J. W. Quillian had been a physician before
he entered the ministry. Dr. Quillian whose name is almost
synonymous with Georgia Methodism was a Chesterfield in appearance
and manner, and a pulpit orator of the old school. The writer
recalls an incident in relation to Dr. Quillian for whom we had
the deepest reverence and respect. On one occasion we were present
with Dr. Quillian in visiting a bereaved mother. We knew this
lady was not only suffering emotionally but was actually ill.
Before entering the room we acquainted Dr. Quillian with the fact
and suggested he make his visit as brief as possible. He turned
to me and in squelched me by reminding me that he had been a
physician before I was born.

Following Dr. Quillian was Rev. Fred Glisson for the year
1931-32. This delightful character, whose resemblance to the
comedian Eddie Cantor was striking, is probably best remembered
for his fine work among the young people of the church. In his
honor is the church camp named in his honor near Dalma. We
have heard more eloquent speakers than Fred Glisson, but we
have never known a man more sincere or consecrated than he.
The writer recalls the tender and sympathetic services when Rev.
Glisson conducted the funeral of my mother.

From minutes of a special called conference February 9, 1931
we note a letter from Mrs. Addavalo K. Hunt in which she requests
the church to take the $5,000 that she had given the church some
years prior as an educational fund in honor of her father, Captain
W. J. Kincaid and use it as a building fund for a sunday school
annex. The conference approved her request and this became the
nucleus of our first sunday school annex. A committee to handle
the fund was composed of Quimby Melton, B. B. Brown, M. J. Daniel,
O. S. Tyus, Robert Wheaton, E. H. Griffin, J. O. Futral and J. S.
Manley and became the building committee. (Details about the
building later).
Following Rev. Fred Glisson was the beloved M. M. Maxwell who served the church for the years 1934, 35, 36 and 37 and later served as District superintendent for the years 1943-4. No pastor that ever served the Griffin church was more universally loved than Rev. Maxwell.

In his report of the first quarterly conference, Rev. Maxwell stated "The work's well organized and is moving along nicely, and the spirit of the church is good, and many of our people, we believe are growing in character—day by day".

Mrs. J. E. Elder was president of the Woman's Missionary Society, and W. B. Hammond was superintendent of the Sunday School, which reported 354 from an enrollment of 892. (seems only about one out of three members was attending). The total average offering from the entire Sabbath School collection was only $17.32 a Sunday. The present collection from the Men's Bible class is over twice this amount (1951). Rev. W. T. Hunnicut was District Superintendent, serving his third year. George Murray was church secretary. The church membership had grown to the all time high of 928. The enrollment of the Woman's Missionary Society was 162 adults and 155 children.

It was on September 1, 1936 that the church lost one of its most loyal and devoted members, in the death of Elmer H. Griffin. Throughout his adult life he served the church in many capacities.

For the year 1936 the church added 76 new members. The Rev. W. M. Twiggs was District Superintendent who served for the years 1936, 7, 8 and 9.
At the Fourth Quarterly Conference November 10, 1957 the following resolutions were offered by Jesse O. Futrel, and unanimously adopted by the conference—"whereas, our beloved pastor, M. M. Maxwell is finishing his fourth year as pastor of this church, and whereas, his ministry has been untiring and always devoted to the Master’s work and whereas, our church during his ministry, has grown in number, organization and Christian fellowship, and whereas our pastor and his good family have, by their devotion to the Master, help build up the spiritual life of our church and the community as a whole and whereas, we the members of the Fourth Quarterly Conference desire to express our wish that Brother Maxwell and his family be returned to us for another year."

It was while serving as District superintendent of this district that occurred the death of Brother Maxwell who had served his master, his church and the community so faithfully. His death cast a pall over the entire area. Mrs. Maxwell is now serving so efficiently as assistant to the pastor (Rev. McLowry Elrod).

Following Brother Maxwell was one of the most popular and beloved Ministers in the North Georgia Conference, Dr. Wallace Rogers, who served as pastor for the years 1938, and 39, and a part of 1940. He found that the church membership under the able guidance of Rev. Maxwell had increased to 1132, Paul Daniel was secretary of the Sunday School and H. L. Cochran had commenced his long term as superintendent. The school membership is given as 756, with an average attendance of 351. Adair Chunn was Sunday School Treasurer.
It was during Dr. Rogers' pastorate that the church roster was revised and brought up to date, something that had not been done in many years. The beloved Arthur Maddox, long a faithful worker in the church, was in 1938, chairman of the Board of Trustees. Griffin Church has never had a more popular minister, not only with his own congregation but with the city at large than Wallace Rogers. Attesting the high esteem in which he was held he was made President of the Griffin Rotary Club.

In November 1940, Bishop Arthur Moore called Brothers Rogers from the Griffin church to become district superintendent of the Atlanta district, much to the regret of the Griffin Church. Brother Rogers is at present pastor of

When Bishop Moore recalled Rev. Wallace Rogers from the pastorate of the Griffin church he sent Rev. B. Frank Pinn in his stead.
Rev. Marvin M. Maxwell was the youngest pastor to serve the Griffin Church, coming in 1934 at the age of 32. He was also the first pastor to be appointed to serve the Griffin Church for five years.

After serving the church for the years 1934 to 1938 inclusive he was named District Superintendent of the Elberton Districts. In 1943, Rev. Maxwell was named superintendent of the Griffin District. (1943-44).

On Sunday morning he preached at the First Baptist Church, during which he suffered a heart attack and died that afternoon. We quote from the beautiful eulogy paid Rev. Maxwell by Rev. W. T. Hurnicout, as a conference memorial, November, 1944. "He was a great gospel preacher. He believed his own message and was by the help of the Divine spirit able to put his own personality into his message. His preaching was never commonplace. He was a pastor evangelist, holding most of his own revivals. His work was constructive, he employed no temporizing methods and would not stoop to expediency—He walked with God and was not, for God took him home with Him.

Following Rev. Maxwell was the Rev. Wallace Rogers who served the church 1938-39 and a portion of 1940. In November 1940 he was recalled to become District Superintendent of the Atlanta District. Dr. Wallace Rogers was one of the most popular ministers ever to serve the Griffin Church, not only by his own congregation but by the entire community. He was elected the 17th president of the Griffin Rotary Club, but recalled to Atlanta before he served out his term. In addition to being a great preacher, a great humanitarian, he was an arthrologest of note. He knew his birds
and had spent a great deal of time studying native birds in their
natural habitat. His bird photography were works of art, many
of which had required hours of patient watching and waiting. He
often lectured on his favorite hobby. Dr. Rogers possessed a
keen sense of humor which illuminated his luridite sermons.
Griffin gave him up with keen regret (Incidentally Dr. Rogers is
vice chairman of the Historical committee of the North Georgia
Conference, of which Rev. W. M. Pierce is secretary—both former
pastors of our church).

Following Dr. Rogers was the Rev. E. Frank Pinn, a very
warm personal friend of this historian. He served the church
1941-43. Frank Pinn was one of the kindest, most lovable
characters I have ever known. Just as Dr. Rogers had his hobby
(birds) Rev. Pinn had his—mechanical trains with which he spent
hours of enjoyment. In the basement of the old armory (next to
Bunn's Laundry, Rev. Pinn had fitted up his trains—tunnels,
tracks, etc., which he operated by distant control. Many pleasant
hours this writer spent with this kindly man playing with his
electric trains.

Rev. Pinn was a native Atlantian, attended Boys High School
Deavison College and Emory University. He was a chaplain in World
War I and a member of the North Georgia Conference for 37 years.
At the time of his death in Atlanta 1951 he was pastor of
the Park Street Methodist Church. His funeral was conducted by
Bishop Arthur Moore.

It was unfortunate that some members of the Griffin congregation
became prejudiced against Rev. Pinn and requested he be not returned
to Griffin. The writer who knew and loved Frank Pinn thought this
action most unfair and thoroughly without justifiable cause.
In his death this writer lost an esteemed personal friend.

Following Rev. Pinn was one of the most popular pastors
ever to serve the Griffin charge. He was the Rev. Zack Hayes
now (1951) minister of St. John's, Augusta. He was pastor in
Griffin for 1944-48. Rev. Hayes was the son-in-law of the
Rev. "Uncle Nath" Thompson—the beloved "homespun" preacher—
evangelist of the North Georgia conference. "Brother Zack"
was a good pastor and popular with all denominations in Griffin.
His hobbies (of all things) was playing caroms (I gave him a
carom board) and he also was a devotee of Isaac Walton.

As it has been some time since we have given any church
statistics we will digress and give a few.

When Brother Hayes came to the church in 1944 we had 1074
members. The previous year, 1943, we reported 1314 members. (We
have members at this date—May, 1951) In the year 1944 our
church received 45 members on profession of faith, and 44 received
by transfer; we lost 9 members by death and baptized 6 infants;
we lost 4 more (48) by transfer than we received by this means;
the Sunday School enrollment in 1944 was 528. Rev. Hayes closed
a very satisfactory pastorate in 1948.

Following Zack Hayes we were fortunate in having Rev. Joe
S. Trailkill to come to us in July 1948, though he served us
for only one year. Joe Trailkill was one of the kindest,
most friendly and devout men we have ever known. We would
characterize him as one of the sweetest christian gentlemen with
whom we ever came in contact. Brother Trailkill was not strong
physically when he came from St. John's in Augusta, where he had suffered a heart affection. It was during Brother Thrailkill's pastorate that he suffered the great bereavement of the loss of his son, Irvine Thrailkill, who was drowned near College Park, Georgia. His great sorrow, which His Heavenly Father gave him great grace and fortitude to bear, must have been softened by the heroic deed that his son gave his life to perform in attempting to save the life of one of his children.

It was also during the pastorate of Brother Thrailkill that the church suffered another great bereavement in the death of that splendid Christian character Ward G. Brown, due to an automobile accident near Dalton, Georgia. Ward Brown was a theological student at Emory, and was assistant pastor and minister of music of our church. A splendid young man with exceedingly bright prospects in the service of his Master. He was cut off in the prime of young manhood. The church was greatly shocked and grieved at his untimely death.

At the expiration of his year of service, during which time Rev. Thrailkill suffered another heart attack, he left Griffin in July 1949 to become District Superintendent of the LaGrange District, where he is now (May 1951) located. May God bless and keep him.
Chapter

OUR PRESENT CHURCH ORGANIZATION

With this chapter, we bring to a close the year by year discussion of the Godly men that have served our church for a century plus a decade and to whose memory this church history is dedicated. Most of them have long passed on to the Mansions of the blest, and have received the almands "Well done thou good and faithful servants".

The present pastor of our church, the Rev. McLowery Elrod, D.D. came to us in July 1950, near his 46th birthday. He came to us from St. James (Augusta) where he had served four years, 1943-46, and for the years 1947-49 he served as District superintendent of the Gainesville District. McLowery Elrod received his elemental education in his native town of White, Georgia, and his high school training at Reinhardt College (Junior College) Waleska, Georgia. He later attended Asbury College, Wilman, Kentucky, from which he received his A. B. degree; and later his B. D. degree from Asbury Theological Seminary. He then attended Emory University from which he was granted his Masters (M.A.) degree. He joined the North Georgia Conference (on trial) in 1925; ordained deacon in 1926, received into "full connection" in 1929; was ordained Elder in 1931. His first charge was the pastorate of the church at Adairsville, Georgia. Human nature being what it is, any biographer or historian, is influenced in a marked degree by his personal
evaluation of his subject. Especially is this true if the biographer is
farternate enough to know his subject personally. It has been the
writer's privilege to know Dr. Elrod in an intimate way, the short
time the latter has been in Griffin. McLowery Elrod would have
been outstanding in any profession in which he chose to enter.
He is first a charming cultured gentlemen, with grace and poise
that impresses every one with whom he comes in contact. He is a
scholar and deep thinker which is reflected in his finished dis-
courses from the pulpit. His delightful Scotch accent lends charm
to his well modulated voice. A comparatively young man himself
he is much interested in youth, and under his able leadership
this has become an outstanding part of his work. His sterling
worth is recognized, not only by his own congregation, but is
appreciated by the entire community. The church has made, and is
making marked progress under his able leadership.

It is not often that a church is blessed with both an
outstanding pastor, but an equally outstanding District Superin-
tendent. (We still prefer the age honored title of Presiding
Elder). Such is the case with the First Church in Griffin.
Rev. Henry Jones is recognized as one of the most eminent
divines in southern Methodism, and is one of the wheel horses of
the North Georgia Conference which he has so faithfully served
for thirty odd years.

He came to us in July 1949, from the First Church in
Dalton where he had served as pastor for four years. He graduated
from Emory College forty years ago, in 1911--five years after this
writer
did from Georgia Tech. Dr. Jones (and he dislikes being designated by this exalted title) received his doctorate (D.D.) from Vanderbilt University in 1944. Henry Jones (as he prefers to be called) is a writer of marked ability, and has written the Sunday School lesson for the Wesleyan Christian advocate for two decades. This in itself would give him a preeminence enjoyed by few if any of his brother ministers—in this or any other denomination.

For 27 years he has been a member of the Board of Trustees of Wesleyan College, and has helped steer her through some of her turbulent years. To know this kindly spirit is to love him. He is the most unassuming man that this writer knows—yet a man that has many distinctions. Few men with whom we have come in contact have a keener sense of humor or a better knowledge of human nature.

Serving as the pastor's assistant is Mrs. M. M. Maxwell, the widow of the beloved pastor that served this church so faithfully, and about whom we have spoken in detail. Mrs. Maxwell assists in visiting the sick, planning church activities and is in charge of the church office.

Miss Emily Price is the efficient church secretary, keeps the records, and is head of the educational department.

Mrs. A. F. Gilleland is the church hostess and in charge of the physical properties of the church. Too much credit cannot be given her for her devoted attention to the various duties that fall under her management. She has filled this post most acceptably for the past years.
In the appendix is a complete list of all officers, committees etc. that make up our official church family.

At present the church has on its rolls 1322 members, and has 950 enrolled in the Sunday School.

The church is to be congratulated on the fine leadership of the consecrated men and women who are giving so freely and unselfishly of their time.
HISTORY OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL

We do not know when our first church Sunday School was organized. It is entirely probable that the children received some sort of Christian education shortly after the church was organized by the good women (principally) and men gathering small groups of children in the pews in different parts of the church building (consisting of only one room—the auditorium) and instructing them, prior to the church services. Later these classes were held in the afternoon. Early in the history of the church there was what was known as the class meeting which was attended by both adults and children. Shortly after the Civil War the class meeting was held in the basement of the church on Sunday mornings. Old records tell us these class meetings were held regularly for 30 years—every Sunday morning at 9 o'clock—rain or shine. There was a Sabbath school for children and young people held at the church on Sunday afternoons, so that the young people could also attend class meeting in the morning. (seems quite an imposition on the children to have to attend two sessions).

Finally the class meeting was abandoned and the Sunday school took its place and held services in the morning.

Undoubtedly this class meeting, which really was instituted by the Wesleys, was the forerunner of the adult Bible classes, the Men's Bible Class (erroneously referred to as the Baracca class, which it never was) and the Adult Women's Bible Class.
The first record we have of an organized Sunday school, is from the minutes of the old Georgia Conference. The first year we find that the local church reported to the conference on a Sunday school was in 1854, and even that far back, the record shows that we had a corps of 43 Sunday school officers and teachers--and 125 pupils--nearly a century ago. The record shows further that the huge amount of $61.35 was expended for Sunday school purposes. (The appendix at the end of this book gives a record of the Sunday school from 1854 through 1920). This same record gives the astounding fact that in 1860, six years later, the attendance at Sunday school had nearly doubled (240) with war in the offing, to break in all its fury the next year.

Prior to 1911 we had meager facilities for Sunday school, such as class rooms, etc. In that year, however a large Sunday school annex was completed. Several years later the Sunday school building was again enlarged and improved. In 1931 the Kincaid Memorial Educational Fund was made available and a new Sunday School building was erected. Then in 1941 was erected the handsome and commodious annex which houses the Men's Bible Class and the Alpha Arthur Maddox Class. From the year 1870 to 1900, the following served as superintendents of the Sunday School:

From 1900 to the present the following have served--
Professor Homer Wright, Ernest Bigham, A. P. Patterson,
Breck H. Moore, Paul Flynt, W. S. Jones, P. Y. Luther,
L. M. Lester, Jesse Futrel, Bryant Hammond and Dr. H. L.
Cochran, the last named still serving in that capacity
(1951) being his 15th year.

The Sunday School is in a most flourishing condition.
On Easter Sunday the attendance was just short of 1000.
THE WOMEN’S SOCIETIES

The records regarding the women’s societies of the church are very meager. We know that the women have been actively engaged in organized church work, and especially missionary work for over a century, and it is regrettable that a record of their fine achievement was not kept—or at least is not available. Old conference records do show that missionary work has been carried on since 1844, although it was not until 1870 at the General Conference held in Atlanta that official permission was given the women to organize as a conference adjunct to do work in the foreign missionary field. The Missionary Council authorized all auxiliaries organized from May 1870 to May 1879 should be known as Pioneer Societies. Thus the Griffin organization became a pioneer society as it was organized March 1879.

The charter members of the Woman’s Missionary (March 1879) were:

Mrs. Virginia Sherod Daniel (Mother of Judge Robert T. Daniel and Milton J. Daniel), Mrs. Harris (presume Mrs. Dr. Harris), Mrs. Minges, (Mother of George A. Minges), Mrs. Thad Clark, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. W. W. Chapman (grandmother of Mrs. Bruce Montgomery), Mrs. Saphronia McKeen (Aunt of Mrs. Ralph Jones).

An old record indicates that the first year these ladies contributed $21.85 to missions.
In 1884 the conference authorized another women’s auxiliary, called the “Women’s Parsonage and Home Missionary Society”. At the conference held in Rome in 1910 the Home and Foreign Missionary Societies were merged into one, and called the Women’s Missionary Society. The two Griffin societies thus became one, with the above title.

The name remained the Women’s Missionary Society until 1940 when the two branches of Methodism were unified, and the women’s organization was changed to the Woman’s Society of Christian Service.

From 1910 to 1940 the presidents of the Woman’s Missionary society were: in the following order,

Mrs. R. J. Redding  
Mrs. I. A. Scott
Mrs. L. C. Warren  
Mrs. J. E. Elder
Mrs. P. Y. Luther  
Mrs. Rubard Crowder
Mrs. B. B. Brown  
Mrs. A. O. Nunnally
Mrs. E. F. Travis
Mrs. H. B. Montgomery
Mrs. George A. Niles

It is regrettable that the earlier records are not available. Another case of failure to preserve the records of the church.

The first officers of the new organization elected in September 1940 were: President, Mrs. A. O. Nunnally; Vice President, Mrs. George A. Niles; Recording Secretary, Mrs. G. N. Murray; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. N. J. Baxter; Treasurer Mrs. W. H. Cox.
The following have served as presidents from 1940 to the present 1951:

The year 1928 was known as the church Jubilee Year. We find that the Woman's Missionary Society had 133 adult members, the Junior group had 40 members, and the Business Women's group had 14 members. For that year the women's groups raised $592.63.

Officers for the Jubilee Year were: Mrs. H. B. Montgomery, President; Mrs. Kelly Wilson, Vice President; Mrs. L. W. Tutt, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Ober Tyus, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. B. B. Brown (now Mrs. Frank Patterson) Treasurer.

In March 1929, the Woman's Missionary Society celebrated its silver anniversary, with a tea in the Men's Bible Class room. The circle chairmen who acted as hostesses were: Mrs. Frank B. Cork, Mrs. Harold Griffin, Mrs. Guy Haisten, Mrs. J. C. Marbury and Mrs. W. H. Cox. They were chairmen of the circles, as they were then known, respectively — North Side, West Side, Young Women's, Jubilee and South Side.
The present officers of the Women’s Society are:

President, Mrs. Quimby Melton, Jr.; Vice President, Mrs. Herben Turner; Recording Secretary, Mrs. H. A. Bolton; Promotional Secretary, Mrs. Alex Gossett; Treasurer, Mrs. W. H. Cox; Local Treasurer, Mrs. Mobley Johnson.
A VISIT TO THE CHURCH MUSEUM

The Griffin First Church has many unique distinctions, and one of them is the fine collection of religious, historical and artistic works of art which make up the church museum. Many of these relics are priceless and come from all parts of the world. The idea of a church museum was conceived by Mrs. Addavale Hunt, who has served as curator since its inception some six or seven years ago. The museum is presently housed on the second floor on the north side of the Sunday School annex. Most of the items are housed in large glass display cases, and others are on the walls or about the room.

Mrs. Hunt had returned from a world tour about 1935, and brought many of these things where she had collected them throughout the world. Then there is a very fine collection of relics and works of art from Africa which was collected by our own missionary Miss Annie Mae White, long a missionary in Africa, and presented to the museum.

There is a library of many volumes, some of them long out of print and almost priceless. In the library is a large Bible presented to "The First Methodist Episcopal Church South, Griffin, Georgia" and autographed 1869 by Col. Samuel Bailey, a pioneer citizen of Griffin, after whom Sam Bailey Institute, our first public school was named.

There is an autographed copy of one of Stephen Foster's songs, signed by our immortal Georgia poet, Sidney Lanier and dated 1856.
There is a replica of the Mayflower Compact, and numerous copies of old Georgia Conference records.

It is impossible to mention but a few of the outstanding exhibits—which comprise collections from China (the largest collection), Korea, Italy, Brazil, Holland, Africa, The Holy Land, India, Egypt, England and others. There is a small foot organ that was used by the church before the days of pipe organs. There is a copy of the original silver communion set, consisting of a large pitcher and two tall goblets. The original set was presented to the church by Mr. and Mrs. William Wesley Chapman, among the first members of the church, joining in 1849. This set was destroyed when the Reading home burned, and was duplicated by the Woman's Missionary Society. This is the set in the museum. There is a large collection of American Indian relics and artifaes. There is a large native drum made from a tree and covered with skin that the savages used for signaling long distances. There is a copy of Da Vinci's Last Supper moulded in glass—a small jewel covered copy of the Koran.

A most attractive exhibit is a series of 14 pictures of Christ's passion from his trial to his entombment. These are made entirely by inlaid woods of different colors. They were executed by Karl Grest of St. Petersburg, Florida, and are outstanding in their field of art.

There is a most unique scrap book prepared by the Woman's Missionary Society, as their year book for 1938. The backs are wooden boards sawed out in exact proportion to the exterior of our church building. It was dedicated to Mrs. Alex S. Murray
and when exhibited at the North Georgia Conference in Carrollton it received the blue ribbon award.

Up until her health prevented, Mrs. Hunt—to whom most of the credit for the museum is due, on Sundays would lecture to Sunday School students, giving them first hand knowledge of the lands from whence these treasures came.

It is contemplated making wall cabinets about the Sunday School building, where many of these beautiful and interesting articles can be seen and appreciated. As it is the museum stays locked, and admission is gained only by appointment. These works of art, many of historical interest are too lovely and interesting not to be enjoyed by far more than they are at present.
CONCLUSION

Some Highlights of Our Church History

1841  First church services held in warehouse in wooden chapel, corner S. Hill and Solomon streets.

1844  Methodism in United States split asunder account of the question of slavery. We became Methodist Episcopal Church South, and so remained for 94 years until unification in 1938.

1846  Griffin mission becomes a church station.

1852  Brick church erected, present side walls of auditorium part of original building.

1856  Rev. G. W. Key served as pastor. He was the father of Bishop Key.

1861  Griffin District formed from part of LaGrange District.

1866  Georgia Conference divided into North and South Georgia conferences.

1868  North Georgia annual conference held in Griffin Bishop Payne presiding. This was the first conference held in Griffin.
1875 North Georgia Conference again held in Griffin
Bishop Keener presiding. At this conference
Warren T. Candler (later beloved Bishop) was
licensed to preach. He returned to Griffin
fifty years later to preach his golden anniver-
sary sermon.

1879 Woman's Foreign Missionary Society Organized in
March. Griffin named as a pioneer society.

1883 Woman's Home Missionary society organized.

1903 North Georgia Conference again met in Griffin
Bishop Key presiding.

1910 Home and Foreign Missionary societies united.

1912 Church remodeled and three story Sunday School
annex built.

1916 Again the North Georgia conference met in Griffin
with Bishop Candler presiding.

1922 Rev. J. E. Dickey, then local pastor, was elected
Bishop in May at the General Conference.

1925 Again the conference met in Griffin for its
50th annual session, Bishop Darlington presiding.

1931 Again the church was remodeled: Kincaid Memorial
Educational Fund applied on improvements and
indebtedness, and the church annex was named
W. J. Kincaid Memorial Annex.
1938 Unification of northern and southern branches of the church affected at General Conference in Birmingham—after 94 years separation.

1940 Name of Woman's Missionary Society changed to Woman's society of Christian service. Church celebrated its centennial: Corner stone of adult Sunday School annex laid: Church school completely remodeled for departmentalized educational work: Church paid off all indebtedness and new building dedicated by Bishop Moore in October.

1950 Church again remodeled and monstrosity of auditorium arrangement corrected after years. Modern pipe organ with chimes added. Men's Bible Class donated loud speaker arrangement throughout auditorium.