IN THE YEAR OF 1785 ALL OF THE TERRITORY IN GEORGIA WEST OF THE ALTamaha RIVER WAS REGARDED AS INDIAN LAND, WITH NO RECORDED SETTLEMENTS OF WHITE PEOPLE. THAT THERE WERE WHITE PEOPLE HERE WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE, IN AN OLD CHIMNEY, AT THE REAR OF THE HOME OF MRS. B.F. KIMBROUGH, SOME TWO MILES SOUTHEAST OF GREENSBORO GEORGIA, A HANDMADE BRICK BEARING THE DATE 1782 WAS FOUND.

WILLIAM KIMBROUGH AND JOHN KIMBROUGH WERE BOTH REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS AND RECEIVED LAND GRANTS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY; BUT BY LATER PARTITION OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, THIS LAND IS NOW LOCATED IN GREENE COUNTY. THEIR LAND WAS NEAR THE MOUTH OF RICHLAND CREEK AND EXTENDED TO THE OCONEE RIVER. THE KIMBROUGHS BUILT A PRIVATE FORT FOR PROTECTION FROM HOSTILE INDIANS SOMETIME BETWEEN 1787 AND 1790. A MILITARY MAP DRAWN IN 1793 SHOWS THIS FORT. THIS CONSTITUTES ALL OF THE RECORDED EVIDENCE THAT THERE WERE RESIDENTS IN THIS SECTION AS EARLY AS 1782.

WE MUST REMEMBER THAT GEORGIA WAS A CLAN ESTABLISHED IN 1735 BY OGLETHORPE. CERTAINLY WE MUST ENVISION THE RESTLESS SPIRITS OF THE NEW PIONEERS AND REALIZE THAT THE MORE DARING WERE EVER PUSHING WESTWARD IN SEARCH OF HOMESITES. THERE WERE NO DOUBT MANY FAR FLUNG HOMES OUT IN THE WILDERNESS, ESPECIALLY ON OR NEAR THE RIVERS. THE EARLY PIONEERS THOUGH ROUGH AND HARDY WERE FOR THE MOST PART DEEPLY RELIGIOUS. THEY CARRIED WITH THEM THE BIBLE AND THE SOUL STIRRING WORDS OF JOHN WESLEY AND WHITFIELD. IT IS REASONABLE TO SUPPOSE THAT THEY PROVIDE THEMSELVES A PLACE OF WORSHIP.

IN DECEMBER, 1784, THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH WAS ORGANIZED BY BISHOP FRANCIS ASBURY, AT THE CONFERENCE AT LOVELY LANE IN BALTIMORE MARYLAND.

THE NEXT CONFERENCE MET DURING 1785 IN NORTH CAROLINA. AT THIS SESSION THE CALL FOR MISSIONARIES TO LABOR IN GEORGIA WAS GIVEN. TWO PREACHERS, THOMAS HUMPHRIES AND JOHN MAJORS VOLUNTEERED FOR THIS WORK. THERE WERE METHODISTS IN THIS REGION, BUT NO ESTABLISHED WORK. THEIR WORK WAS NOT EASY; IT DEMANDED LONG RIDES BY HORSEBACK THROUGH UNCHARTED, SPARSELY SETTLED COUNTRY IN ALL KINDS OF WEATHER. THE PEOPLE WERE POOR BUT HOSPITABLE AND FOR THE MOST PART EAGER TO HEAR THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. SOCIETIES WERE FORMED, MOSTLY IN HOMES THAT WERE CENTRALLY LOCATED IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES. PREACHING DATES WERE ESTABLISHED, THIS CONDUCTED TO BEING THE METHODIST CIRCUIT IN GEORGIA. TWO SUCH CIRCUITS WERE REPORTED AND RECOGNIZED AT THE END OF THIER FIRST YEARS WORK. THEY WERE THE WASHINGTON AND BURKE CIRCUITS.

THE WASHINGTON CIRCUIT INCLUDED ALL THE TERRITORY THAT NOW LIES IN GREENE, TALIAFERRA, WILKES, LINCOLN, LIBERTY, HART, FRANKLIN, MADISON, AND OGLETHORPE COUNTIES.

THE BURKE CIRCUIT INCLUDED ALL THE SECTION SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST OF AUGUSTA.

GOD HAD SENT HIS MESSANGERS INTO THE WILDERNESS OF GEORGIA. THE SPIRITUALLY AWAKENED PEOPLE WERE IN A JOYOUS SPIRIT OF REVIVAL. THE POWERFUL PREACHING OF HUMPHRIES AND MAJORS HAD REAPED INTO THE FOLDS OF METHODISM A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST OF CONVERTS, WHO IMMEDIATELY WENT TO WORK IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COMMUNITIES TO DEVELOP THE CHRISTIAN ACTIVITIES THERE.

A MAN NAMED JOHN BUSH WENT AMONG THE CONVERTS IN GREENE COUNTY AND SERVICES WERE HELD IN HIS HOME. WITH THE HELP OF OTHERS HE ERECTED A "BRUSH ARBOR", WHERE A GREAT REVIVAL WAS HELD. OUT OF THIS MEETING THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH IN GREENE COUNTY WAS ORGANIZED. IT WAS CALLED "LIBERTY CHAPEL". THE DATE WE BELIEVE WAS 1786 WHEN IT WAS BORN INTO THE METHODIST CONFERENCE. THE OLD BRUSH ARBOR BECAME THE COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE PERIODIC CAMP MEETINGS, WHEN PEOPLE CAME FOR MILES AROUND TO HAVE A WEEK OF WORSHIP A FELLOWSHIP. IT IS PROBABLE THAT THE PEOPLE HAD A PLACE OF WORSHIP EVEN PRIOR TO THIS DATE, PERHAPS BEFORE THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION OR JUST AFTER. THIS WOULD EXPLAIN THE NAME "LIBERTY" DEDICATED BY A JUBILANT, THANKFUL PEOPLE FOR THEIR NEW WON FREEDOM FROM ENGLAND. BISHOP ASBURY RECORDS HIS VISIT IN 1799 AND MAKES REFERENCE TO A CONFERENCE HELD IN THE HOME OF JOHN BUSH, AND ANOTHER REFERENCE TO A "BRUSH ARBOR" CAMP MEETING NEARBY.
IT IS REASONABLE TO SUPPOSE THAT BISHOP ASBURY'S PRESENCE INDICATES THAT THERE WAS SOME KIND OF METHODIST ORGANIZATION THERE PRIOR TO HIS VISIT; OTHERWISE, WHY HAD HE CALLED A CONFERENCE IN ADVANCE OF HIS VISIT?

REV. JAMES JENKINS, STATES IN HIS BOOK "EXPERIENCES, LABOURS AND SUFFERINGS OF REV. JAMES JENKINS, SOUTH CAROLINA CONFERENCE". "I WAS BORN ON THE NORTH SIDE OF LITTLE PEBBLE, IN THE UPPER PART OF BRITTON'S NECK, ON THE 28TH OF NOVEMBER 1764. I ATTENDED CONFERENCE IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA IN JANUARY 1797, AND WAS ORDAINED ELDER. I LEFT CONFERENCE IN GOOD SPIRITS. WASHINGTON CIRCUIT WAS MY FIRST FIELD OF LABOR, ANTHONY SAILE, MY COLLEAGUE, AND BISHOP GEORGE, OUR PRESIDING ELDER. THE CIRCUIT EXTENDED FROM LITTLE RIVER TO A DETACHED PORTION OF THE ALLEGHANY MOUNTAINS, INCLUDING GREENSBORO, PETERSBURG, AND ONE OTHER VILLAGE, THE NAME NOT REMEMBERED. I THINK IT WAS FORMED IN 1785 BY BROTHERS MAJORS AND HUMPHRIES."

THIS INDICATES THAT THERE WAS SOME KIND OF METHODIST CHURCH, CHAPEL OR SOCIETY IN OR ABOUT GREENSBORO AS EARLY AS 1786. GREENSBORO CAME INTO EXISTENCE IN 1786; BUT WASHINGTON COUNTY WAS HERE IN 1784, AND IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE TO SUPPOSE THAT THE PEOPLE LIVING HERE EVEN BEFORE WASHINGTON COUNTY WAS LAID OUT. NO COUNTY WAS EVER LAID OUT UNTIL THERE WERE ENOUGH PEOPLE TO JUSTIFY IT. MR. JENKINS WRITING IN THE PAST TIMES, AND GREENSBORO WAS A FLOURISHING VILLAGE WHEN HE WROTE HIS BOOK; THEREFORE, THE METHODISTS WERE IN THE MEETING HOUSE HERE BEFORE EITHER THE BAPTISTS OR PRESBYTERIAN'S ORGANIZED A CHURCH. BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN, SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST CHURCH OF RECORD IN GREENS COUNTY, IT WAS ORGANIZED IN 1786; BUT REV. JENKINS PLAINLY STATES THAT, "I THINK THAT WASHINGTON CIRCUIT WAS FORMED BY BROTHERS MAJORS AND HUMPHRIES IN 1785."

REV. JENKINS ALSO STATED THAT "AT ONE OF OUR TWO MEETINGS IN 1797 HELD IN LIBERTY CHAPEL, NEAR GREENSBORO, BROTHER BISHOP GEORGE STOOD IN THE DOORWAY, THE HOUSE NOT BEING LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD HALF THE CONGREGATION, PREACHED A MOVING, MOVING SERMON, SO MUCH SO THAT NONE OF THE OTHER PREACHERS WOULD OPEN THEIR MOUTHS AFTER HIM."

THE OTHER INCIDENT REFERRED TO IN THIS YEAR, BISHOP GEORGE HAD ALREADY PREACHED THE SERMON AND WAS FOLLOWED BY REV. JENKINS IN A FIERCE EXHORTATION TO THE CONGREGATION TO REPENT. A MAN IN UNIFORM CAME FORWARD AND FELL AT HIS FEET, BEGGING REV. JENKINS TO PRAY FOR HIM. OTHER PREACHERS TOOK UP THE APPEAL, CRYING OUT FOR PARDON OF THEIR SINS AROUND THE PULPIT. THIS SAYS JENKINS, WAS AS FAR AS HE KNEW THE BEGINNING OF PUBLIC PROFESSION OF PUNISHMENT, OR IN METHODIST GRAMMAR "GOING TO THE ALTAR." THE MEETING HE SAYS WAS SUCH A NOISY ONE THAT HE WONDERED THAT THE Horses DID NOT TAKE FRIGHT."

THIS MOST CERTAINLY INDICATES THAT LIBERTY CHAPEL WAS A HOUSE AND THAT IT HAD A DOOR IN THE YEAR OF 1797, TWO YEARS BEFORE BISHOP ASBURY'S VISIT IN 1799. THEREFORE, IF LIBERTY CHAPEL HAD A HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN 1797, IT IS REASONABLE TO SUPPOSE THAT AN ORGANIZED CHURCH HAD EXISTED THERE FOR SOME YEARS PRIOR TO THAT DATE. ALL OF WHICH LEADS TO THE BELIEF THAT "CRACKERS NECK" WAS SETTLED BY THE METHODISTS EITHER BEFORE OR JUST AFTER GREEN COUNTY WAS FORMED (FEB. 3, 1786) AND THAT THEY SOON CELEBRATED THEIR LIBERTY BY BUILDING A HOUSE OF WORSHIP, AND THAT THEY GAVE IT THE NAME OF LIBERTY CHAPEL. IT MAY HAVE BEEN A BRUSH ARBOR ORIGINALLY, BUT IT WAS A DULL RECTANGULAR AND DULY ORGANIZED HOUSE OF WORSHIP IN 1797.

AGAIN, BISHOP ASBURY VISITED LIBERTY CHAPEL ON DECEMBER 25, 1805 FOR A VERY SPECIAL OCCASION. A NEW CHURCH HAD BEEN BUILT TO REPLACE THE OLD ORIGINAL LIBERTY CHAPEL. FOR THE DEDICATION SERMON, BISHOP ASBURY TOOK FOR HIS TEXT, FIRST PETER, CHAPTER FOUR, VERSES THREE, FOUR AND FIVE. HE MENIONED THAT THIS WAS THE SECOND BUILDING ON THE SITE AND THAT IT MEASURED FORTY BY SIXTY FEET.

AGAIN ON DECEMBER 26, 1806, BISHOP ASBURY HELD CONFERENCE AT JOHN BUSH'S HOME. HERE THE SUBJECT OF THE NEW FRONTIER, ALABAMA, WHICH WAS BEING SETTLED, WAS DISCUSSED. LORENZO DOW, IN 1803, HAD VISITED ALABAMA FOR A SHORT TIME AND WAS FOLLOWED BY TOBIAS GIBSON AND MOSES BLACK. NONE OF THESE PREACHERS STAYED HOWEVER, SO THERE WAS NO METHODIST WORK IN ALABAMA AT THIS TIME. SO AT THIS CONFERENCE BISHOP ASBURY SELECTED MATTHEW P. STEVIVAN, FOR THIS WORK. HE THEREFORE BECAME THE FIRST METHODIST PREACHER TO BE ASSIGNED TO ALABAMA. THEREFORE ALABAMA SHOULD KNOW THIS IMPORTANT FACT OF THE SOURCE OF METHODISM IN THAT STATE.

LIBERTY CHAPEL WAS NOW ON THE "APALACHIN CIRCUIT", WHICH CONSISTED OF PART OF OGLETHORPE, GREENE, CLARK, AND PART OF WARREN COUNTIES.

METHODISM HAD MADE GREAT PROGRESS IN THIS SECTION. THE FERTILE LAND, AGREABLE CLIMATE AND CENTRAL LOCATION ATTRACTION EVERYONE WHO CAME THIS WAY. SOON IT WAS A PROSPEROUS, THRIVING COUNTY. LIBERTY CHAPEL WAS close to THE HEARTS OF THE COMMUNITY AND IT ORDERED THE SPiritual Welfare of the People through the Consecrated Guidance of Methodism's Faithful Circuit Riders. Servants of God. WITH SUCH MEN BAZING THE TAIL OF EVANGELISM OVER MOUNTAINS OF HEARTSACHES, SICKNESS, HUNGER, HEAT AND COLD, RAIN OR SHINE AND ABSOLUTELY NO PROMISE OF MONETARY REWARD; IS IT ANY WONDER THAT METHODISM STANDS TODAY THE GREATEST INSTITUTION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE WORLD, A LIVING, GROWING MONUMENT TO THE LABORS OF THOSE CHAMPIONS OF CHRISTIANITY WHO VALUED THE SOULS OF FELLOWMEN ABOVE PERSONAL GAIN OR COMFORT. LIBERTY CHAPEL HAD PROVED TO BE FERTILE GROUND. THE SEED WAS RECEIVED, CULTIVATED AND ROOTED TO SPRING UP FROM A BRUSH ARBOR MEETING TO A SOUL SAVING HOUSE OF WORSHIP, INDEED A TREE BEARING FRUIT FOR GOD.

WE HAVE NO RECORD AS TO THE EVENTS THAT HAPPENED DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE 1800'S. BUT WE DO KNOW THAT THROUGHOUT THE CIVIL WAR THAT LIBERTY CHAPEL WAS IN ACTIVE SERVICE.

ABOUT THE YEAR 1900 IT WAS FELT THAT A NEW CHURCH BUILDING WAS NEEDED AT LIBERTY. SO THE PLAN WAS PUT INTO EXECUTION. IN 1903, REV. J.H. FARR, OPENED THE DOORS OF THE NEW HOUSE OF WORSHIP AND DEDICATED IT TO GOD'S SERVICE AND GLORY. REV. J.H. FARR WAS ITS FIRST PASTOR. THIS IS THE SAME BUILDING THAT STANDS TODAY IN 1951, STILL IN GOOD SODI SERVICEABLE CONDITION. IT SITS IN FRONT OF AND TO THE LEFT OF THE OLD ORIGINAL SITE. A PARSONAGE STANDS IN THE RIGHT BACK CORNER OF THE CHURCH LOT.

THE SAME DEEP SPIRITUAL LOVE THAT MOTIVATED THE PEOPLE WHO FOUNDED LIBERTY CHAPEL STILL BURNS BRIGHT IN THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO LIVE UNDER ITS INFLUENCE TODAY. IT WAS HERE THAT THEY TOO RECEIVED THE LIBERTY FROM SIN THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, AND HIS ATONING BLOOD, THE GREATEST CIRCUIT RIDE IN ALL HISTORY.

NEW FRONTIERS HAVE OPENED, TIMES HAVE CHANGED, THE TEMPO OF LIFE HAS INCREASED AND THE CITIES HAVE DRANK AWAY MUCH OF THIS ONCE THICKLY SETTLED COMMUNITY. LIBERTY CHAPEL IS IN THE COUNTRY NOW, JUST A RURAL CHURCH WITH BUT A SMALL GROUP OF MEMBERS. BUT MAY IT BE SAID OF ALL THESE WE LOVE OLD LIBERTY CHAPEL FOR WHAT IT HAS BEEN, WHAT IT MEANS TO US NOW AND WHAT IT WILL MEAN TO OTHERS IN THE FUTURE. THROUGH OUR FAITHFUL EFFORTS AND PRAYERS WE'LL KEEP THE FIRE OF CHRISTIAN EVANGELISM BURNING BRIGHTLY.

ONE CAN FEEL A SWEET PEACE WITHIN THE SHELTER OF LIBERTY'S SANCTUARY, NO WONDER, FOR GOD HAS BEEN WITHIN ITS WALLS FOR NEARLY A CENTURY AND A HALF. HOW BEAUTIFUL THE SIGHT TO HOLD FAITHFUL LIBERTY CHURCH, MAJESTICALLY SITTING IN A GROVE OF ANCIENT TREES, JUST OFF THE GREENSBORO ROAD. SHE STANDS AS A SENTINEL, GUARDING THE RESTING PLACE OF THOSE WHO LIE IN THE CEMETARY BEHIND IT.

SURELY GOODNESS AND MERCY SHALL FOLLOW LIBERTY CHURCH, FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.
This is to certify that the above plat represents the church lot of Liberty Chapel surveyed the 14th day of Nov. 1877.

J.F. Wright, S.G.C.

This is a copy of the original plat of land given by Mr. Reuben Smith, to Liberty Church in 1827.