

MARVIN METHODIST CHURCH, *Barnesville Circuit*

Marvin Church was organized in the spring of 1885 by a band of faithful men and women, prominent among them being professor George W. Merritt, Mr. and Mrs. E. Rumble, Mrs. R. H. Banks, Mr. and Mrs. Will Banks, Mr. J. W. Banks and others. Rev. S.R. England was the organizing pastor and remaining on the charge, the church having been admitted to the North Georgia Conference. He did a splendid work and made a place for himself in the hearts of the people 'round about. The first revival services were held in a brush arbor in the little village of Johnstonville, afterwards in the school building, until a house of worship could be erected.

Professor Merritt was probably the first superintendent of the Sunday School, which was in progress before the organization of the church. The work of the Sunday School was carried on through the years due, in a large measure, to the faithful work of Mrs. E. Rumble, who gave herself so untiringly to the work. About 1920, Mr. Rumble's failing health necessitated their removal to another climate, and they went to California to reside. Long before this time, though, Roy R. Manry was elected superintendent, which post he has held very faithfully through the years.

Mrs. Rumble organized the Missionary Society of the church, which office she held during all of her stay in the community.

Marvin Church has been a power for good in the community and the older people look back with love and affection upon those who so successfully "carried on" in the early days. The land for the church house was deeded to the trustees by Mrs. R. H. Banks and Capt. B. M. Turner, both of whom, together with most of the original members, have passed to their reward.

There were some colored members who remained in the church until the slaves were freed and organized a church of their own. Members were, and still are, dismissed by certificate. If there was any complaint against a member, he was called before a church conference and the matter settled.

Many sons and grandsons of these original members worked faithfully in the church for many years. Charnell C. Hightower Rebecca Lyons Hightower, John G. Sappington, Kiddy Howard Sappington, Newsome A. Sappington, Martha Graham Sappington, Benjamin T. Sappington, Martha Howard Sappington, Harriet C. Sappington and Martha S. Sappington have passed to their reward. Andrew Jackson Sappington, the youngest son of Henry T. Sappington, is the oldest member of Prospect Church. He was church secretary for forty-six years -1879-1925- and is the present chorister, which office he has held since 1875.

Henry N. Sappington and Richard A. Sappington, sons of John G. Sappington, are the next oldest members of the church.

Communion service has always been held regularly. When Quarterly Conference convenes at the church, the presiding elder preaches at the eleven o'clock service, a basket dinner is served and everyone is invited to attend the business session conducted by the presiding elder in the afternoon. Andrew Jackson Sappington was recording steward for twenty-nine years. Thomas G. Scott is the present incumbent.

Francis Gibson, a charter member, was the first Sunday School superintendent. Henry N. Smith was superintendent for a number of years, 1896-1924. Prospect Church and Fredonia Church have a union Sunday School at present, of which

J. F. Porch is superintendent. Sunday School rooms and cement porch were added to the building in 1926, during the pastorate of Rev. A. M. Sprayberry. An organ was purchased in 1906 and Eula Sappington Bush was the first organist. Lucy Sappington is the present pianist.

The Woman's Missionary Society was organized in 1884 during the pastorate of Rev. J. B. Hanson. Mrs. Rebecca Lyons Hightower was elected president. Evelyn Bankston Sappington is the incumbent in 1931.

The Epworth league was organized in 1896 during the pastorate of Rev. T. H. Timmons. A. J. Sappington was the first President and until the present time, under the leadership of Edmund Dumas, the League has never been discontinued or ceased to fill an important place in the church life of the community.

The present officers of the church are: Pastor, Rev. V. B. Hamrick; trustees, Otis H. Owen, James A. Sappington Berner Means, stewards, Andrew Jackson Sappington, Otis H. Owen, John G. Sappington, Carrie Horne Askin; Sunday School Superintendent, J. Flournoy Porch; Secretary of the church, Otis H. Owen; lay leader, Lawton P. Hilton.