

HISTORY OF THE MOUNTVILLE METHODIST CHURCH

By Gordon Fielding Towns

In lifting the curtain that time has covered over our early history, and of those saintly old pioneers who so peacefully, so successfully acted their part in the great drama assigned them, there comes the soft unflickering light revealing a noble truth. This church was born from prayer and faith.

One hundred and thirty-three years ago in 1818 lived along the border line of Troup and Meriwether Counties a few families who came from some of our first settled counties into these, their new counties. The most abundant things in this section was trees, for there was but little land cleared. There was not a railroad within this section of Georgia. The old stage-coach line through here had not long been blazed. The way of getting about was commonly in gigs, wagons, on horseback or by foot.

The pioneer families of the rural communities had a friendly way of claiming each other as neighbors, though some of them lived miles apart. The goodly neighbors in the stretch of country along the lines of Troup and Meriwether were energetic folks of plain living, but of high thinking, pure and loving spirit, bent on the grand achievement of building and developing character according to the divine given pattern.

As these good people were settling from other sections of the country along the line of Troup and Meriwether counties a long line community was created. At the South end of this line, near Frost Creek, a man named Daniel Davis operated a small store. Being a progressive man, owning lots of land, he saw the great possibilities in centralizing his business and encouraging this community to grow in the center of this community line stretched along Troup and Meriwether.

Mr. Daniel Davis bought the land at the intersection of the stage-coach lines about three miles north of his store, built another store in 1820, applied for a Post Office, received the appointment from the Federal Government and named the community Mountville because it is the highest point in this section.

Houses began to spring up around this intersection, store and Post Office, which were small two-room style, built of logs, rock and mud chimneys. Atlanta, at that time was known as Marthasville.

Among these settlers was Thomas Evans, his wife and family, who built a cabin home one mile northeast of this road intersection, store, post office and heart of a new village named Mountville. Although his home was considered a part of the new community, even if it was a mile from the post office and store. His cabin home was near the site of the present Camp Viola, a recreation summer camp for LaGrange children. Very home-like seemed this Evans cabin resting peacefully in a little clearing surrounded by a profusion of trees-the original giants of the forest.

This man, Thomas Evans, the pioneer, was of close Welsh extraction on both sides of the house. They were of long lines of people noted for uprightness and goodness. This man seemed to have been a very genius for Godliness. The

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records are evidence that he lived a life of communion with and obedience to his God. The Bible was always given first place in their home, was their love and pride.

Certain, it was that in that cabin, prayer, led by Thomas Evans and joined in by his family and neighbors who met with them, resulted in the organization of a Methodist Church. Rev. James Hunter, a very consecrated and energetic circuit-rider who visited this neighborhood frequently, organized this church in 1828, in the cabin of Thomas Evans, the pioneer. Rev. James Hunter and Evans named it Mount Pleasant M. E. Church and for one year Rev. Hunter served as Pastor holding services in the cabin home. 130

The charter members were Thomas, Martha, Elizabeth, Abigail, Nancy and C. W. Evans, also Mrs. Evans and her sister, David Rorie, and Henry Chappell. The little congregation grew and soon over-crowded the cabin so the next year the members and neighbors built a regular church house larger than the cabin home near where old Hebron church stood. New settlers moved in and joined the church, among them were Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Cox, Mr. and Mrs. James Nance, Calvin Harman and several sisters.

Shortly after the opening of this new church building, three more children of Thomas Evans joined, Aaron, William and J. F. Evans. It is interesting to note from record that Sunday School class meetings were kept up all during the early years of Mount Pleasant M. E. Church. Inspiration and education from these class meetings, regular preaching services and upright parents led a young man to go into the ministry. That young man was one of the boys mentioned above, Mr. C. William Evans, who served this church in 1846.

New settlers continued to move in from time to time and united with the church. It was found necessary to have a larger church building. The second building was erected on land almost in front of Mr. Wilson Partridge's home. Mr. Partridge had a large family of boys and girls and he and his wife and family were very faithful to this church.

With the passing of time, the membership crowded the church facing the Partridge home. It was found necessary to have a much larger building and to have it located at the most accessible place for the greatest number of the membership. The majority of the people who had moved in during those later years settled around Mountville. So, it was decided to place the new building in Mountville, if someone would give a lot for its erection. The land for the church was given by the great-hearted and saintly Dr. Joe Bradfield. The building was put on a hill where now the Mountville cemetery stands.

The first Sunday School at this place was organized by Mr. John Carlton. For a number of years this was one of the most flourishing Sunday Schools in Troup county. While this church was on the hill it reached great heights of prosperity. There were some great consecrated hearts and souls among its membership. I have a record of some of its membership whose children and grandchildren are members today. Here are some of the membership while the church stood on the hill. Mr. and Mrs. John Carlton and son, Olin, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Bradfield and children, Mr. and Mrs. Boss Woodward and children, Mr. and Mrs. William Watson and children, the Harman families, the Thrash families, the Bird family, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Fincher, Mr. and Mrs. Millard Fincher and family, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Owens and family, Mrs. Andy Beasley and family, the Cox family, the Daniel Davis family, Mrs. C. P. and C. R.

Marchman, Mr. and Mrs. G. V. Boddie and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Judge Hightower and family, Mr. and Mrs. Will Evans and family, the Nance family, Mrs. Alice Florence and family, Mrs. Lucy Ann Florence and family, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Partridge and family, the Towns family, Miss Anna Davis, Miss Mattie Carleton and numbers of others.

In 1908 this church was moved from the hill to its present site. ✓
Its membership grew so large that a real large church had to be built and it was decided to erect it in the heart of the now large village of Mountville. ✓

In the beginning of this history I gave some points of the beginning of Mountville as a community of people who slowly and most devoutly organized this church so that it might be an institution firmly erected for the worship of God and guidance of its youth into the path of righteous living, a community without a church is like a man without faith in God. While observing the growth of this church from 1828 up to 1908 a period of eighty years, Mountville was growing into a centralized community of houses, education, commerce, and spiritual activities. This church had been moved about on the outskirts of Mountville but at the turn of the century it was decided that it would serve its purpose more effectively to be located in the heart of town. ✓

From 1820 to 1908, Mountville grew from Mr. Daniel Davis's store and Post Office to several stores, three churches, military school, and 400 population. A blacksmith shop, horse racing on the first track ever built in this section, and a masonic lodge was organized. Dr. Joe Bradfield and Mr. Isaac Fincher were among the first settlers here. Dr. Bradfield bought the lot and built one of the first modern style dwellings where Mr. A. L. Woodward lived and reared a family. The house just recently burned in Feb. 1951. Dr. Bradfield gave five acres of land on which to built this church while Mr. Daniel Davis gave adjoining land, west to build a school building. ✓

Mr. Isaac Fincher had a two-story wood shop where he made wagons, buggies, and furniture. The factory stood on the lot of ground owned now by the historian, G. Fielding Towns. Furniture made in this shop may be found in Mountville homes today. Mr. John N. Carlton, who came from Vermont worked with Mr. Fincher in the making of furniture and buggies. Mr. Carlton was a great leader in this church and also his son Olin Carlton, like his father worked courageously for the betterment of his community.

Mr. Olin Carlton was Sunday School Superintendent of this church, taught in the grade school, made coffins, and buried the dead. When the decision was made to move the church down into the heart of this growing community, Mr. Olin Carlton gave the plot of ground for the new church. In 1908 the new and much larger church building was built at a cost of \$2500.00. That cost would not seem large today but in those days that type of church was considered the best of any rural community, the pride and joy of its members, the symbol of faith in God for all. A recent picture of this church shall be incorporated into this history.

So as Mountville grew the Mount Pleasant church grew, and its new name in 1908 became Mountville Methodist church. A parsonage was built about this time at the cost of \$500. It is an attractive, five-room white house with an acre of surrounding land for gardening, recreation and other purposes of interest to its occupant. Its present day valuation is \$5,000.

Copies of deeds to this property shall be incorporated into this history.

Mr. Abe Woodward, Sr. succeeded Mr. Olin Carlton as Sunday School Superintendent in this new church and served a period of thirty years. Mrs. Abner Woodward, Jr., his daughter-in-law succeeded him serving through last year 1950, when Ferrell T. Towns, a young man, was elected the present Superintendent. The Sunday School is a fine body, faithful and preserving in going forward, striving to meet the demands in Sunday School endeavor this new day calls for.

From this church five of its members have entered the ministry, Rev. C. W. Evans, Rev. J. E. Russell, Rev. William Hightower, Rev. Charles P. Marchman, and Rev. Ervin Weaver. From 1828 to the present 1951 approximately fifty ministers have served this church as pastors. In seeking the records, I cannot find all names and dates they served but a list of what I have shall be incorporated into this history.

Let us glance back at the little Evans cabin in the clearing and see through the clearness of faith how its people opened their hearts to God and went out to lead others to Him and beginning there our Father has prospered this church from then on to now. Here is one of the oldest settlements in the state and here is the purest strain of Anglo-Saxon and Scotch-Irish blood that is known the world over for its characteristics of generosity, kindness, the fear of God and the art of living. Let us strive for more of that old time religion which so beautifully characterized the pioneer membership of this church. May we with profound thankfulness to God for the Christian heritage, go on, and press forward in the Master's cause - finally, may we all reach our Father's House, in Heaven.

1841-1842	John Smith
1842-1843	John Smith
1843-1844	John Smith
1844-1845	John Smith
1845-1846	John Smith
1846-1847	John Smith
1847-1848	John Smith
1848-1849	John Smith
1849-1850	John Smith
1850-1851	John Smith
1851-1852	John Smith
1852-1853	John Smith
1853-1854	John Smith
1854-1855	John Smith
1855-1856	John Smith
1856-1857	John Smith
1857-1858	John Smith
1858-1859	John Smith
1859-1860	John Smith
1860-1861	John Smith
1861-1862	J. Blakely
1862-1863	J. Blakely
1863-1864	J. Blakely
1864-1865	J. Blakely

1865-1866
1866-1867
1867-1868
1868-1869
1869-1870

MINISTERS SERVING MOUNTVILLE CHURCH

Year	Presiding Elder or District Supt.	Minister or Ministers	years served
Mount Pleasant Church of Meriwether County			
1828-1829	.....	James Hunter	1
		Jessie Boring	1
1829-1830	.....	Isaac Boring	1
		Dr. John Allen	1
1830-1831	.....	John Gleen	1
		John Chappel	1
1831-1832	.....	A. F. Mitchell	2
1832-1833	.....	A. F. Mitchell	
1833-1834	.....	William L. Williams	2?
1834-1835	.....	William L. Williams	
1835-1836	.....	Noah Smith	2?
1836-1837	.....	Noah Smith	
1837-1838	.....	E. W. Reynolds	1?
1838-1839	.....	W. D. Martin	2?
1839-1840	.....	W. D. Martin	
1840-1841	.....	Moses Hamilton	1
		Jeremiah Freeman	1
1841-1842	.....	George Pierce	2
1842-1843	.....	George Pierce	
1843-1844	.....	C. A. Fulwood	2
1844-1845	.....	C. A. Fulwood	
1845-1846	.....	Dickerson	1
1846-1847	.....	(son of the founder)-- C. W. Evans	1
1847-1848	.....	Moreland	1
1848-1849	.....	W. A. Florence	2
1849-1850	.....	W. A. Florence	
1850-1851	.....	John W. Yarbrough	1
1851-1852	.....	John Lentel	1
1852-1853	.....	Fambrough	1
1853-1854	.....	Quillian	1
Mt. Pleasant Church, Greenville Circuit			
1854-1855	John Simmons	L. Rush	2
1855-1856	John Simmons	L. Rush	
1856-1857	L. Anthony	J. R. Littlejohn	2
1857-1858	L. Anthony	J. R. Littlejohn	
1858-1859	L. Anthony	L. Rush	1
1859-1860	William H. Evans	John Marshall	1
1860-1861	J. Blakely Smith	D. Blalock	1
1861-1862	J. Blakely Smith	Lewis Ledbetter	2
1862-1863	J. Blakely Smith	Lewis Ledbetter	
1863-1864	J. Blakely Smith	John B. McGhee	3
1864-1865	J. Blakely Smith	John B. McGhee	4
1865-1866	J. Blakely Smith	John B. McGhee	
1866-1867	J. Blakely Smith	John B. McGhee	
1867-1868	John B. McGhee	F. A. Kimbell	1
1868-1869	S. J. Davies	M. H. White	1
1869-1870	S. J. Davies	R. F. Jones	2
1870-1871	S. J. Davies	R. F. Jones	

(change to Mt. Pleasant Church, Hogansville Circuit, 1871)

MINISTERS SERVING MOUNTVILLE CHURCH

Year	Presiding Elder or District Supt.	Minister or Ministers	Years served
Mount Pleasant Church, Hogansville Circuit			
1871-1872	H. J. Adams	J. T. Lowe	2
1872-1873	H. J. Adams	J. T. Lowe	
1873-1874	H. J. Adams	J. M. Bowden	2
1874-1875	H. J. Adams	J. M. Bowden	
1875-1876	J. W. Heidt	F. M. T. Brannon	2
1876-1877	J. W. Heidt	F. M. T. Brannon	
1877-1878	J. W. Heidt	William A. Simmons	1
1878-1879	W. H. Potter	W. M. D. Bond	2
1879-1880	W. H. Potter	W. M. D. Bond	
1880-1881	W. H. Potter	J. W. Roberts	2
1881-1882	W. H. Potter	J. W. Roberts	
1882-1883	W. H. Potter	W. R. Foote	1
1883-1884	W. H. LaPrade, Sr.	E. K. Aiken	1
1884-1885	W. H. LaPrade, Sr.	K. Reid	1
1885-1886	W. H. LaPrade, Sr.	D. D. Cox	2
1886-1887	W. H. LaPrade, Sr.	D. D. Cox	
1887-1888	Dr. W. F. Cook	W. T. Bell	4
1888-1889	Dr. W. F. Cook	W. T. Bell	
1889-1890	Dr. W. F. Cook	W. T. Bell	
1891-1892	Dr. W. F. Cook	W. T. Bell	
Mountville Church, Mountville Circuit			
1892-1893	J. F. Mixon	A. S. Harris	3
1893-1894	J. F. Mixon	A. S. Harris	
1894-1895	J. F. Mixon	A. S. Harris	
1895-1896	J. T. Gibson	E. C. Marks	1
1896-1897	T. R. Kendal	J. D. Milton	2
1897-1898	T. R. Kendal	J. D. Milton	
1898-1899	W. R. Foote	M. H. Edwards	1
		L. P. Neese	
1899-1900	J. W. Quillian	B. H. Trammell	2
1900-1901	J. W. Quillian	XXXXXX Trammell	
1901-1902	M. J. Cofer	J. S. Embry	1
1902-1903	B. P. Allen	A. H. S. Bugg	3
1903-1904	B. P. Allen	A. H. S. Bugg	
1904-1905	B. P. Allen	A. H. S. Bugg	
1905-1906	B. P. Allen	W. A. Simmons	1
1906-1907	John B. Robins	B. P. Searcy	1
1907-1908	J. W. Quillian	W. S. Robinson	1
1908-1909	J. W. Quillian	W. A. Maxwell	2
1909-1910	J. W. Quillian	W. A. Maxwell	
1910-1911	W. P. Lovjoy	M. K. Patillo	2
1911-1912	W. P. Lovjoy	M. K. Patillo	
1912-1913	W. L. Pierce	F. R. Smith	1
1913-1914	W. L. Pierce	E. P. Eubanks	2
1914-1915	W. L. Pierce	E. P. Eubanks	

MINISTERS SERVING MOUNTVILLE CHURCH

Year	Presiding Elder or District Supt.	Minister or Ministers	Years served
1915-1916	W. L. Pierce	J. W. Bailey	2
*1916-1917	W. L. Pierce	J. W. Bailey	
1917-1918	B. P. Allen	D. S. Patterson	3
1918-1919	B. P. Allen	D. S. Patterson	
1919-1920	R. C. Cleckler	D. S. Patterson	
1920-1921	R. C. Cleckler	T. H. Shackelford	3
1921-1922	R. C. Cleckler	T. H. Shackelford	
1922-1923	R. C. Cleckler	T. H. Shackelford	
1923-1924	Wallace Rogers	G. C. Burtz	3
1924-1925	Wallace Rogers	G. C. Burtz	
1925-1926	W. H. LaPrade, Jr.	G. C. Burtz	
1926-1927	W. H. LaPrade, Jr.	Paul Anderson	1
1927-1928	W. H. LaPrade, Jr.	J. A. Sprayberry	2
1928-1929	W. H. LaPrade, Jr.	J. A. Sprayberry	
1929-1930		B. N. McHan	1
1930-1931		C. M. Rogers	
1931-1932		C. M. Rogers	
1932-1933			
1933-1934		W. E. Brown	
1934-1935		W. E. Brown	
1935-1936			
1936-1937			
1937-1938			
1938-1939		Sam A. Dailey	
1939-1940		Sam A. Dailey	
1940-1941		A. J. Gilliam	
1941-1942		C. J. Dobbs	
1942-1943		C. J. Dobbs, Jr. (Carl J.)	
1943-1944		H. L. Morgan	
1944-1945		Homer Morgan	
1945-1946		A. J. Gill	
1946-1947			
1948-1949		John G. Lupo	
1949-1950			
1950-1951		James A. Riddle	
1951-1952		James A. Riddle	
1952-1953		Julian C. Callaway, Jr.	1
1953-1954		Larry Winebrenner	1
1954-1955		Randall Williamson	2
1955-1956		Randall Williamson	
1956-1957	Jesse W. Veatch	C. Edward Terry	2
1957-1958	Jesse W. Veatch	C. Edward Terry	
1958-1959	Jesse W. Veatch	Ralph V. Segrest, Jr.	6
1959-1960	Jesse W. Veatch	Ralph V. Segrest, Jr.	
1960-1961	John B. Tate	Ralph V. Segrest, Jr.	
1961-1962	John B. Tate	Ralph V. Segrest, Jr.	
1962-1963	John B. Tate	Ralph V. Segrest, Jr.	
1963-1964	John B. Tate	Ralph V. Segrest, Jr.	

* Big Springs, Mountville, Odessadale & Stovall Comprised the Mountville

MINISTERS SERVING MOUNTVILLE CHURCH

Year	Presiding Elder or District Supt.	Minister or Ministers	Years Served
1964-1965	John B. Tate	Albert AsKew	2
1965-1966	John B. Tate	Albert AsKew	
1966-67	Robert L. Taylor	Thomas A. Pilgrim	4
1967-68	Robert L. Taylor	Thomas A. Pilgrim	
1968-69	Robert L. Taylor	Thomas A. Pilgrim	
1969-70	Edgar A. Padgett	Thomas A. Pilgrim	
1970-71	Edgar A. Padgett	Douglas D. Lott	2
1971-72	Edgar A. Padgett	Douglas D. Lott	
1972-73	EDGAR A. PADGETT	CHARLES MORRIS	1
XXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX		
1973-74	Edgar A. Padgett	Richard Dean Bavlovsky	