HISTORY
OF
THE RAYTOWN METHODIST CHURCH
RAYTOWN, GEORGIA
BY
MISS CHRISTINE DAVIDSON BROWN, SHARON
The loss of the original records of the Raytown Methodist Church, Taliaferro County, Georgia, presumed to have been destroyed by fire in the home of the late Samuel J. Flynt, long a Steward and Superintendent of the Sunday School, renders impossible the compilation of a full and detailed account of its early and intensely interesting history. All the more important, therefore, is the obligation of the present to preserve its records for the future.

From the traditions handed down to us by the oldest members of the community, we learn that Raytown, or "Ray's Place" as it was called, then in Wilkes County, was named for a Ray family from New York and living at that time in Washington. So far as is known this family was in no way related to the Barnett - Ray family so prominently identified with the history of Raytown in more recent years. "Ray's Place" was the designation given to the recreation center established on Little River where racing, gambling, cock-fighting, drinking, and other favorite pastimes of the livelier social set of near-by Washington could be enjoyed without any, to them, undue and undesired restraint. As is often the history of such places, "Ray's Place" had its day, its popularity declined, and for what reason we do not know, nor care, the Ray family returned to New York. Even here we mourn the loss of our early church records! Truly, it would prove most pertinent to our purpose if further research into the still intact records of old Wilkes should show that the decline and fall of "Ray's Place" were marked by the coming of Methodism. Intrepid souls, indeed, would have been those early Asburyan evangelists if such could be proved the case; but history does not admit the use of the subjunctive mood, and, so, the blanks remain.
Limited as we are in space, we must leave to others the wider study of Georgia's earliest religious life:—The story of the Reverend Henry Herbert who came with General Oglethorpe to remain but three months and die at sea on his way back home; of the Salzburgers and their Lutheran ministry; of the Reverend Samuel Quincy, a native of Massachusetts, who came to Savannah in May, 1733, and, though dissatisfied, remained until the Wesleys arrived; of the arrival, February 8, 1736, of John and Charles Wesley, with Benjamin Ingham and Charles DeLamotte; of their unhappy stay of less than two years and their return to England; of George Whitefield's successful ministry from Savannah to Boston and his founding of the Bethesada Orphanage, imperishable monument to his memory; of Cornelius Winter, convert of Mr. Whitefield, who came to Georgia in 1769 to spend a year in teaching and preaching to the negroes only to return to England a wiser and a sadder young man. We can but mention the names of these great men so familiar to all students of our early church history as instruments in the Methodist reformation and its impact upon the infant colony of Georgia.

Our church origins, however, do not stem from Savannah. It was long after the return of these men to England that Methodism came to America in sufficient power to warrant the organization of the widely-scattered Methodist Societies into one body. Our church historians emphasize the decade following 1760 as the years marking the great advance in these Societies by the "irregulars" who took possession of the field before the first missionaries appointed by Wesley came to the new world in 1770. These were local preachers who, converted to Methodism, migrated to America, became naturalized, grew in love of the soil and of the people; and, during the Revolution, stood by the cause of Methodism when all but one of the "regulars," Francis Asbury, were routed from the field. Again, we can but name these founders of Armenian Methodism in America:—Robert Strawbridge from Ireland to Maryland in 1760 to organize the first Methodist
Society and build in 1764 the first Methodist meeting house; Philip Em­
bury from Ireland to New York to begin his ministry in 1766 and build the Wes­ley Chapel, dedicated October 30, 1768, a shrine to be seen by all Methodists who visit New York; Captain Thomas Webb, British offi­cer and a "chosen vessel" for the northern and middle colonies; Robert Williams, arriving in New York in 1769 to become the first great name in Southern Methodism and called "the apostle of Methodism in Virginia and North Carolina," John King, an Oxford graduate, who laid the founda­tion of Methodism in North Carolina, an earnest, fearless, faithful, preacher of the gospel, whose home was a favorite stopping-place of in Bishop Asbury's journeys to Georgia.

It was not until the twenty-seventh Annual Conference, held in London in 1770, that the new work was listed as a circuit: - "No. 50 - America" There it stands in the minutes, the entire Western Continent as one cir­cuit, and the appointees are Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor who had been sent out the year before and had returned a good report. They trav­eled widely, Boardman as far north as Boston and Pilmoor as far south as Charleston, working with the local and itinerant preachers, gaining new members, forming new Societies, but never effecting a compact organiza­tion nor holding conferences to divide the territory and assign the work. The result was a duplication of effort with each preacher working as he pleased and going wherever fancy dictated. The monumental task of organi­zation and administration awaited the coming of one whose talents along those lines have never been excelled, - the evangel, the man of complete devotion, of dedication, and of destiny, the Founder of American Methodism, Francis Asbury.

Born August 20, or 21, 1745 at Hamstead Bridge near Birmingham, Stafford­shire, England, Francis Asbury was the son of Joseph and Elizabeth (Rog­ers) Asbury and his earliest memories were of the religious life of his
parents' home. At fourteen he began attending Methodist meetings in Wednesbury in the heart of the "Black Country" in Staffordshire. He marks the time of his conversion as "about sixteen" and his twenty-second year as the time when he gave himself "wholly to God and his work." He was admitted to the Wesleyan Conference on August 18, 1767, in London and he served on several circuits until 1771. At the Bristol Conference on August 7th of that year, he and Richard Wright were chosen from the five who volunteered as "missionaries to America." They sailed September 4, 1771 from Bristol and landed in Philadelphia on October 27th. On that day Francis Asbury began his work, setting the pace he was to keep -- and expect others to keep -- for the forty-five years of his "divine employ!" His amazing travels during these years were to carry him on horse-back up and down and across an ever-growing America at a rate of not less than five thousand miles per year!! Severely ill from the exposure of his first New York winter and never again free from an increasingly serious lung trouble, Francis Asbury was to continue his gospel ranging through the heavy snows and freezing rains of winter as well as the exhausting heat and burning droughts of summer. In his travels he was to meet and know the wealthy and the cultured and to call his own the homes of the young nation's most prominent people; to penetrate the forests of the frontier in un-ending search for souls he might save and lives he might convert "wholly to God and his work!" to swim the swollen creeks and rivers that he might keep his day-to-day appointments; to sleep wherever night-fall found him, upon the ground, or, as he said, "in worse circumstances" upon the floor of the rude and crowded cabin of some isolated settler; to save souls and win converts to Methodism; to gather them into Societies; to organize circuits; to hold conferences; to assign territories; to delegate ministerial duties; in short to "ride the circuit" of America, -No. 50 in the ever-widening sphere of influence of his spiritual exploration and conquest of a continent! A nobler, truer, braver, man never lived and to no man does American Methodism owe a greater debt than to Francis Asbury.
We can, of course, give no detailed account of this fascinating story, but a few firsts of our church history in America should prove of interest. We have mentioned the first Methodist preachers, the first Societies, the first Meeting Houses, the first missionaries, the first regular appointees, the first great American Methodist. Now, we shall list some of the first milestones in the development of the Church.

The First Annual Conference held in Philadelphia, July 14, 1773, with ten preachers whose reports showed a total of 1,160 members.

The First General Conference convened December 24, 1784, at Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore with sixty of the eighty-three preachers present and 14,983 members. Here, with Dr. Thomas Coke, ordained by John Wesley and sent over for the purpose, presiding, Francis Asbury was ordained deacon on Christmas Day, elder on December 26th, and on the 27th he was consecrated General Superintendent with thirteen elders and four deacons. The word Bishop was not used in the service nor in Asbury's certificate of ordination but came into general use within a year and appeared first in the Conference minutes of 1787 when the authority of John Wesley over the Church in America was formally set aside. Francis Asbury had, in the organization session of the 1784 Conference, made it plain that he would not serve as Superintendent unless elected by the ministers, and, therefore, in the very beginning, this became the method of selecting our Methodist Bishops. Dr. Coke was chosen as General Superintendent to serve with Asbury, but never became very effective as he spent much of his time abroad in missionary activities.

At the 1784 Conference our first Discipline was drawn up; our first name, The Methodist Episcopal Church, was adopted, thus freeing the Church in America from Episcopal Church rule; our first Methodist College was authorized, the name Cokesbury selected and about $5,000.00 subscribed, and established at Abingdon, Maryland, opened and dedicated by Bishop Asbury December 8, 9, 10, and later destroyed by fire; our first author-
ized plan for the publication and sale of religious books and magazines by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Conference adjourned January 3, 1785. The First Annual Conference of the Church in America was held April, 20, 21, and 22, 1785 at the home of Green Hill on the Tar River in Franklin County, N. C., not far from Louisburg, and consisted of all of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Both Superintendents were present, but Dr. Coke left for England early in June and Francis Asbury was in command of the field. Of the 1785 Conference Dr. Coke wrote that about twenty preachers were present, all in one house; reported 991 members; and said, "We have stretched our borders into Georgia."

Here in Georgia, the Trustees of the Colony had, in 1755, surrendered their rights to the Crown, and the Church of England had become the established church. Though persecution of "dissenters" was not as severe in Georgia as in Massachusetts and Virginia, the Episcopal certainly did not encourage other forms of worship and the history of Methodism records but little growth during our existence as a royal colony. It was in 1773 that Governor Wright secured by treaty with the Indians all the lands north of Augusta, about 2,100,000 acres in all, now constituting the counties of Wilkes, Elbert, Oglethorpe, Lincoln, Taliaferro, and parts of Greene and Warren, but appearing for several years upon the maps of Georgia as "The Ceded Lands." In 1777 this entire territory was organized as one county and given the name of Wilkes County.

Settlers from South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia, soon began to seek new homes in this lovely land where great groves of oak and hickory stood upon the hillsides, and grass and flowering shrubs covered the earth with a vesture equal to that of a royal park. Herds of deer and flocks of wild turkeys were still on hill and covert. Amidst these bounties of nature, in spite of the dangers and hardships of frontier life, settlements were made along the rivers, the creeks, and near the site of the many bubbling springs. Mill sites were especially coveted and formed...
the nucleus of the communities. Among these migrating families from the older colonies were a few Methodists, but they were too widely scattered and too occupied with wresting an existence from the wilderness to give more than a nostalgic thought to the fervent eloquence and evangelical preaching of the ministers they had once known. They spent the Sabbath in hunting, fishing, and looking after their cattle; they were somewhat indolent, and --- quite content with their spiritual condition!

Came the Revolution, and all the English preachers returned to England with the exception, as we have seen, of Francis Asbury whose love for American Methodism was stronger than his love for his native England. Let it be remembered that one of the fundamental causes of the American Revolution is to be found in the tyranny of the Church of England. Wherever a state-established church exists, freedom of religion dies; wherever and whenever freedom of religion dies, the death of civil liberty soon follows.

Though Georgia entered the fight late, no other colony was more terribly devastated. Here in this youngest colony, where the allegiance of the older members met the fiery revolution of the young, the element of civil war entered, brother opposed brother, and father opposed son. Property was confiscated, wiped out, half the wealth of the state destroyed; outrages touching not only property but life itself were inflicted in reprisal by both Whigs and Tories as the fortunes of war changed sides. In Wilkes County this bitterest of all strife became so desperate that this section of Georgia was called "the Hornets' Nest." In the moral area the devastation was equally as drastic, the hostility developing such bitter hatreds that both sides at times seemed more like brutes than men, and religious outlook was not only discolored but distorted. There was but little spiritual influence in Georgia to offset this condition, and Dr. A. M. Pierce says in his history of Methodism in Georgia: "By the time Georgia had suffered the moral deterioration of the Revolutionary War, it was
plain that Methodism would again be forced to cross its borders if it were ever to be a constructive factor in the only state in which both John and Charles Wesley, as well as George Whitefield, had labored. From South Carolina, North Carolina, Maryland, and Virginia, it came a Methodist here, a Methodist there, at times an entire family of Methodists ... among the settlers from these older colonies who, after the Revolution, poured in a steady stream of migration into old Wilkes County, the mother of many counties and the cradle of Georgia Methodism.

At the Conference of 1785 Beverly Allen, of Virginia, was given the whole state of Georgia as his appointment! There is a difference of opinion among our church historians as to the exact time he came to Georgia, some saying that he did not come at all the first year and giving the credit of the seventy members enrolled to an unnamed local preacher. We know, however, that he did come, even though late for his appointment, that he became involved in serious trouble with both church and state, and that to him belongs the discredit of being the first apostate Methodist itinerant in America.

The Virginia Conference of February, 1786, met at Lane's in Salisbury, North Carolina, and, in answer to the call for missionaries to go to Georgia, Thomas Humphries and John Major volunteered. At this Conference Georgia and South Carolina became one district, with James Foster as presiding elder. They hurried into Wilkes County and viewed the situation: In all Georgia, only three Episcopal Churches without rectors, three Lutheran, three Presbyterian, and three Baptist churches; not more than seven Christian ministers; no church of any kind north of Augusta except those organized by Abraham Marshall and Silas Mercer for the Baptists; no roads, only pathways and Indian trails; no houses of worship, only the private homes of the settlers in which to hold services; all Georgia one circuit and their work to explore the country and map out lines of advance. They
may have traveled as far south as Burke County, but by far the largest number of the 430 members enrolled that year lived in Wilkes County where some Methodists from Virginia had settled.

At the 1787 Conference, held March 22 - 29 in Charleston, Georgia was made a separate district with Richard Ivey as presiding elder. There were two circuits, the Wilkes with Thomas Humphries and Moses Park, and the Burke with John Major and Matthew Harris, in charge. Dr. Coke had arrived in Charleston and was present at the Conference. The name of Hope Hull, a native of Maryland, in the minutes was memorable for Georgia Methodism as the future was to prove. A wonderful success attended the preachers and by the end of the year the membership numbered 1,100; again, the increase was in the rural areas where, for the first time, the pioneers of Georgia heard the moving message of universal atonement. In writing of this Conference, Bishop McTyeire mentions the Washington Circuit and he says, "Georgia was long the Southern frontier. It has been propitious for Methodism. The leaven is in the lump; the seed is in the soil."

The First Annual Conference held in Georgia convened April 9, 1788 at, probably, the Tate home (William Tait's?) near the junction of the Broad and Savannah Rivers, then Wilkes, now Elbert, County. This was Bishop Asbury's first trip into Georgia and here he met six members of the Conference:- Richard Ivey, Thomas Humphries, Moses Park, Hope Hull, James Conner, Bennett Maxey, Isaac Smith, Matthew Harris, Reuben Ellis, and probably John Mason from the adjoining circuit in S. C. John Major died on his way from the Burke Circuit to Conference. Richard Ivey, presiding Elder; Hope Hull to the Washington (Wilkes Circuit) was to be called the father of Georgia Methodism. At this Conference Bishop Asbury introduced that section of the Discipline which provided for the removal from Society of preachers or members who proved "disorderly."

The 1789 Conference was held at Grant's Meeting House, the first Method-
ist Church building in Georgia, located in Wilkes County not far from Washington and near the home of Daniel and Thomas Grant, who gave it, and who had come from Virginia in 1784. The Grant home and church were not very far from what is now Raytown. Richard Ivey was again named presiding elder; Moses Park and Wyatt Andrews to the Washington Circuit. A committee was appointed to procure 500 acres of land for building the Wesley and Whitefield School in Georgia.

The 1790 Conference was also held at Grant's and the first native Georgian to become an itinerant Methodist preacher, John Andrew, was admitted. He was the father of James Osgood Andrew. Richard Ivey, elder; to the Washington Circuit.

The 1791 Conference was held at Scott's Meeting House, also in Wilkes and not far from Grant's. Dr. Coke was present. Richard Ivey, elder; John Andrew and Hardy Herbert to the Washington Circuit.

The 1792 Conference was held in Washington with Bishop Asbury presiding. Richard Ivey completed his four years as elder and was succeeded by Reuben Ellis, who remained in Georgia only one year. His "district" extended from Charleston, S. C., to Greenesboro, Ga., from the Saluda to the Altamaha! Two new circuits were formed, the Elbert and the Oconee. James Tolleson from South Carolina was appointed to the Washington Circuit, one of the best of the few men the Bishop had to supply the field, and he remained in Georgia only one year.

At the 1793 Conference, held in Washington, it was agreed that Georgia and South Carolina should be united in one Conference and this became effective in 1794. At the first Conference in Georgia, 1788, reports showed one district, two circuits, seven preachers, and 1,100 members. In 1793 Georgia had one district, five circuits, ten preachers, and 1,894 members. This session of the Georgia Conference was the last held until Jan. 1, 1831.
It would be interesting and informative to follow the proceedings of the various Conferences through the years, but space does not allow. By the turn of the century the great revival tide which swept over America had reached Georgia and, with too few ministers to serve the ever-increasing population, "Campmeetings" became the vogue. Thousands thronged the famous old camp-grounds of Georgia and enrollments of members increased in proportion. Bishop Asbury came into Georgia before going on to the Conferences in South Carolina and in October, November, and December, 1801, made an extensive tour of Georgia Methodism with Bishop Whatcoat and was thus prepared for a judicious arrangement of the work. It was entirely reorganized and the circuits took the names of the rivers which flow through them, making it difficult to define their boundaries. The Wilkes, or Washington, Circuit was divided into the Broad and the Little River Circuits.

The Little River Circuit embraced the lower part of Wilkes, Lincoln, Taliaferro, and Columbia Counties. Stith Mead, who had organized the first Society in Augusta in 1798, was Presiding Elder of the Georgia District, 1800 Conference, 1801, and again in 1802, with Josias Randle and Britton Capel on Little River Circuit. In 1803, Stith Mead was returned to the Georgia District and Lewis Myers to Little River with Josias Randle; 4,300 members reported.

In 1804, January 4th, Conference met in Augusta, with Dr. Coke present; Stith Mead again in charge of the Georgia District.

In 1805 in Charleston Georgia was divided into two districts: the Ogeechee with Josias Randle in charge and Reddick Pierce junior preacher on Little River Circuit; the new district was the Oconee with Samuel Cowles, elder.

January in Charleston

In 1806 the number of circuits was increased, Sparta and Milledgeville appearing for the first time.

The next Conference met in Sparta late in December, 1806. Jesse Lee came to the Sparta Circuit and with him James Russell, the remarkable native orator Southern Methodism had produced.

The 1807 Conference met in Charleston, Dec. 28, 1807. The circuits remained as they were, and the Washington County Circuit was formed.
In 1808 the Conference met in December at Bush's in Greene County, Ga., on his first visit to Georgia with Bishop McKendree assisting Bishop Asbury. James Russell was sent to the Little River Circuit, the heart of Wilkes County, and in 1809 there was a sweeping revival there, which, Dr. Pierce said, swept infidelity from that section. Britton Capel on the Ogeechee District. (I do not know whether the Districts were named for the rivers as were the circuits in Bishop Asbury's reorganization of the Georgia work in 1801; no, Georgia was divided into two districts in the Conference of 1805).

at the Conference in Charleston
In 1809, Lewis Myers came to the Ogeechee District, Lovick Pierce went to the Oconee, and Joseph Tarpley to the new Sparta District, all Georgia south and south-west of Sparta. Little River Circuit, James Russell(?).

Now the troubles which led to the War of 1812 grew more serious and in 1811 War with England was declared. Preachers were not exempt and some of ablest ones were called into service, among them Lovick Pierce. There were now 3,380 members with 85 preachers; 742 members in Little River Circuit, and the "second generation Methodists" enter the work. There were no paid preachers and the yearly assessment of $100.00 for expenses could easily have been paid in the Little River Circuit by David Merriwether or Thomas Grant and neither would have missed the money!

In 1812 the Conference met in Charleston, Dec. 19, 1812, and the Georgia Oconee work was changed. Joseph Tarpley took the District in place of Lovick Pierce, then in service; the Sparta District was dissolved and divided between Lewis Myers and Joseph Tarpley; Little River Circuit was given to Samuel K. Hodges with Allen Turner, junior preacher. James O. Andrew was admitted and sent to the Warren County Circuit in Ga.

The war was upon the country and the Church suffered; little of importance was reported at the 1814 Conference which met in Fayetteville, N.C., on Jan. 12th. Bishop Asbury was present but was increasingly ill and feeble.
This was the last year of the war and a year when many of the leading men retired from the Church, or "located," leaving the circuits to be served by young and inexperienced men. The districts remained the same besides Tarpley and Myers.

In December, 1815, Bishop Asbury made his last tour of the work in Georgia. He met Joseph Tarpley, presiding elder, in Elbert County, and they went on to Athens and, thence, to Milledgeville, where he attended his last Conference in Georgia. From this meeting he went on to Charleston for the Conference of Dec. 23, 1815; came near the city, grew too feeble to travel farther; left the business of the two-state Conference to Bishop McKendree who maintained daily contact with him thirty miles away. Again the Georgia districts remained the same with the same appointments and a few new preachers came to the state. It was a sad Conference and a sad year; Bishop Asbury made every effort to reach Baltimore for the General Conference which was to meet in May, reached Richmond, preached there, and passed on into Spottsylvania County where he died, March 21, 1816, in the home of a friend.

The decline in the work of the Church which began in 1812 went steadily forward and a loss of 700 members was reported.

At the Conference of 1816 the Georgia work remained the same with many changes in the local appointments, and the decrease in membership continued. Wightman C. Hill had with him on the Little River Circuit a young man, Andrew Hammill, from S. C; Joseph Tarpley in charge of the District.

In 1818, January, the Conference met in Augusta and it was necessary to make some changes in the district "presidents"—Joseph Tarpley went to the Oconee District, Samuel K. Hodges to the Ogeechee, and Lewis Myers was sent to Charleston. For nearly eight years there had been only decline in the Church in Georgia, a decrease of another 500 members and a loss of spiritual power --- or the other way round!

At Camden in 1819 and the Athens District was formed from circuits.
the Ogeechee and the Oconee Districts, Joseph Tarpley its first Presiding Elder; W. B. Barnett had the Oconee; Samuel K. Hodges, the Ogeechee. The Athens District consisted of the Broad River, Grove, Apalachee, Alcovii, and Sparta Circuits, the present counties of Hart, Madison, Franklin, Jackson, and part of Clarke, all those churches and preaching-places in the upper part of the state bordering on the Indian Nation. The Ogeechee District was enlarged to include the Black Swamp Circuit in S. C. During the year (1819) there were great revivals in Warren County, in Augusta, and "decided improvement" in Savannah. The Methodist Church was on the march again!

Conference in Charleston Jan. 13
In 1820 the Districts remained the same. James O. Andrew came to Augusta, with Joseph Travis on the Ogeechee. In the Columbia Conference of 1821 (Jan 11) Isaac Smith was made the presiding elder of the Athens District. We remember him as one of the preachers present at the first Georgia Conference in 1788, and was about sixty years old at the time of his appointment to the Athens District.

Conference in Augusta in January
In 1822 the Ogeechee District was still partly in South Carolina and Joseph Travis was the presiding elder. Washington Town, with only fourteen members was made a station with Thomas Darley as pastor. The Methodists and in the academy had been preaching at Coke's Chapel, three miles from Washington, for nearly thirty-five years; still, there were only fourteen members and no church building in the town. No Sunday-schools except in a few of the larger cities, Savannah, Augusta, etc.

Conference met in Savannah, Feb. 20, 1823, and the corps of preachers for Georgia was a strong one. The wonderful work of the Board of Missions was begun and the Monroe, the Yellow River, the Gwinnett, and the Appling Missions established. The 1824 Conference met in Charleston Feb. 10th, 1824. Joseph Travis was for his fourth year on the Ogeechee District and made his home in Washington. Samuel K. Hodges to the Athens District. The Conference for 1825 met in Wilmington, N. C., Jan. 20th, with Bishop Roberts presiding. The Ogeechee District which Travis had traveled was abolished and the Augusta and the Savannah Districts were formed. The Oc-
nee District became the Milledgeville District; and the Athens District was continued. The old system of naming the districts for rivers and the circuits for the smaller streams now gave way to the plan we know today of naming the districts for the principal towns in them with the circuits named for the counties or the chief county towns. John Howard again to Washington(?). Nicholas Talley in charge of the Augusta District. The 1826 Conference met in Milledgeville, January 12, 1826. Stephen Olin. The 1827 Conference met in Augusta on January 11th with three bishops present, McKendree, Roberts and Soule. John Howard again to Washington; Thomas Stamford in charge of the Athens District; this year Jesse Boring was given his first circuit, the Chattahoochee, riding 300 miles each month along the frontier; and from this difficult work at eighteen he was to make his name known all over Southern Methodism and become one of the foremost pulpit orators in America. The year was marked by great revivals and John Howard at Washington was joined by Lovick Pierce and Stephen Olin, both powerful men, in a revival here. Dr. Smith says, "The population of that promising town was noted for wealth, hospitality, refinement, and, alas, for skepticism and wickedness." At the revival of 1827, 100 members were added to the church and "Washington became a most desirable appointment".

When the 1828 Conference met in Camden, S. C., the Church had doubled its membership since 1823. John Howard was returned to Washington and James Danelly was sent to the Little River Circuit. On the Warren Circuit with Allen Turner was a young man, W. P. Arnold, nephew of William Arnold, who for forty years was to serve the cause of Methodism, active, popular, and useful. Genial, social, full of humor, simple in his manners, without ambition or jealousy, few men have been more lovable or more loved. This was our beloved "Brother Arnold," who as minister on the Norwood Circuit, served Raytown Methodist Church, 1883, '84, '85, and '86, and who, on Sept. 24, 1886, organized the Methodist Church at Sharon. He died in 1870. At this Conference Wilkes County for the first time became a separate Circuit. The Conference of 1829 met in Charleston, January 28th, and Henry Bass was given the Augusta District. Thomas Samford continued on the Athens District. James O. Andrew was stationed at Athens-Greensboro. The negro work.
The next Conference was held in Columbia, S. C., 1830, and was the last session in which Georgia received her appointments from the South Carolina Conference. The natural line of division was the Savannah River and the Georgia Conference covered Georgia and Florida; the South Carolina, South and North Carolina. There were now five districts in each Conference; of the 40, 335 white members (total), Georgia had 20, 585; seventy-five ministers received Georgia appointments; there were four stations, Augusta, Savannah, Macon, and Columbus; the rest of the work laid out in large circuits. The districts remained the same except that the Columbus was greatly enlarged.

The first Georgia Conference met in Macon, Jan. 5, 1831; no bishop but with Lewis Meyers presiding, John Howard, Secretary; eleven young men admitted, among them George Foster Pierce, eldest son of Dr. Lovick Pierce; Wm. J. Parks on the Athens District; John Howard, the Milledgeville; William Arnold, the Augusta; Woman's Societies in Savannah, Columbus, and Macon; Education, Sunday-school and Mission causes emphasized; the Thomas Grant legacy of $1,500 in cash reported.

January 5th In 1832, in Augusta, the Conference reported 4,000 additions to the Georgia membership. The districts remained the same and no new circuits were formed. There were men of power in the cities: Augusta, J. O. Andrew and G. F. Pierce; Athens, Lovick Pierce; Columbus, Ignatius A. Few; Milledgeville, Jesse Boring, Macon, Benjamin Pope. The circuits were still much too large and the Little River Circuit covered the whole of Taliaferro and Lincoln Counties with parts of Greene, Oglethorpe, and Warren, and Columbia, with 25 appointments and requiring a ride of 300 miles to meet them. Appointments were for every day and were supposed to be kept every two weeks!! In 1833 the Conference met in LaGrange in January.

The Conference of 1834 met in Washington, Bishop Emory presiding, and Bishop Andrew present; in 1835 in Savannah, and in 1836 in Macon with Bishop Andrew presiding. George F. Pierce was made Presiding Elder of the Augusta District and we enter into a more familiar era of Methodist history.