The Rock Spring Methodist Church had its beginning at what was known as the
Rock Spring Methodist Camp Ground, which was located about one and one-half mile
Southeast of where the present Church stands, at a place where there was a spring
of clear, crystal water, known as the Lupo Spring. Members of the Lupo family say
that this spring and the great ledge of rock all about is what gave the place the
name Rock Spring. At this Camp Ground the people of the surrounding territory,
even from quite a distance, would lay aside all farm work or whatever type of work
they were engaged in, and meet together for perhaps from three to six weeks in the
summer for revival meeting, or protracted meeting, as it was more often called in
those days. No doubt there were many shouts of new born souls, as they would hear
the gospel preached in all its fullness. The Christian people enjoyed their
religion then to the fullest.

About five acres of land was donated, by a Mr. Satterfield, for the purpose
of erecting a building in which to worship. So the first Church was built during
the year of 1839. Tradition tells us that it was built similar to the first Church
where the Pilgrims worshipped. (Copied from Biography of James R. Jones, by the
late Mrs. Mary Jones Rouser.) It was built of logs and the seats were puncheons
on four legs with no backs. The building was heated by a large fire place.

The land was deeded on the twenty-second day of April 1844, to William Conley,
Thomas Evitt, Samuel Brice and William Satterfield, Commissioners and their
successors in office, so long as used for Church purposes. These brethren were
some of the Charter Members of the Church. Among other old members were the follow­
ing four local preachers: William Conley, H. J. Evans, William W. Tyner, and
Samuel Brice; Riley Payne was an exhorter; William Smith and H. J. Conley, and many
others whose names I do not have.
It should be recorded here that many of the women of the Church were very zealous as workers in the Church and were always ready to lend a helping hand in any way possible that they could help to promote the Kingdom of God. The names of a few of these good women were: Mrs. Ann Brice (who was the great-grand-mother of this historian), Mrs. Margaret Conley, Mrs. Sara Conley, Mrs. Adelaide Brice and many others whose influence, no doubt, still lives. To the honor and memory of these saintly old women, whether named or not, who have been sleeping in the adjacent burying ground now for these many years, it is desired to say a word of praise for their beautiful lives of unselfish devotion to the cause of Christ and the Church. (From the History of Walker County.)

The old log Church was used for a number of years. It was in this old Church, during the continual drought of 1845, that the good people of Rock Spring and vicinity met to pray for rain, and the prayers of the old saints found such complete and immediate response. One of the most beautiful expressions of unwavering faith of one of the old men, William Conley, "Uncle Billy", as he was called by most everyone, who, as was his custom, was among the first to arrive at the Church. He rode up, dismounted and began removing his saddle from off his horse, taking it to the Church. Someone standing near inquired, "Why are you bringing your saddle in?" He answered, "To keep it from getting wet; haven't we met to pray for rain?"

The meeting began and first one and then another would lead the prayer. Uncle Billy was called on to pray. It is said that he talked to God just as if there was no one present, just he and God. While he was praying, a small cloud began to rise in the West. It kept getting larger and larger and coming closer; soon there was heard a low rumbling noise of thunder and Uncle Billy prayed on. The cloud came closer as the prayer grew more intense and fervent; then the rain began to fall, and such a rain fell as had never been seen before or since. The crops were saved. There were showers of blessings within, as well as showers of rain without.

Probably the first preacher in this section was the Rev. David Lowry.
Missionary to the Indians. Whether he was of the Methodist Denomination is unknown by the writer. At his grave in the Rock Spring Cemetery is a "simple headstone rudely writ", reciting the name and age of this man of God.

During the late fifties there was built a more modern frame building, with two doors in the front, several windows to give light, and was heated with woodburning stoves. The cost of this building is unknown by this historian.

From this old Church went forth men and women of the Christian mould and type that help rear and make a nation. From its fold went preachers, teachers, doctors and lawyers. Notable among its later membership, went a son to far off China, who forged his way through the heathen gates, and was, as long as he lived, a great power in those mission fields. Dr. Hector Park, a Medical Missionary, from this old Rock Spring Church. In later years, the Church sent out another preacher, Rev. John Lupo, who is now in the North Georgia Conference.

In 1872, D. J. Weems was the pastor of the church. The Trustees were: H. J. Conley, Samuel Brice, A. I. Leet, William Smith and B. H. Wood. There were six people received into the Church that year, namely: J. Thomas Gill, William Stephen Smith, Margaret S. Conley, Saney McDaniel, Susan M. Jones, Elizabeth E. Rogers. In 1873, Rev. James Lupo was pastor. Brother Lupo was grand-father of Rev. John Lupo, and his home was at the place where the old Camp Ground was afore mentioned in this history. He was born in South Carolina in 1821; entering old Georgia in 1859 and served Fulton Circuit in 1859, and numerous other circuits. At one time, for a period of seven years he was Superintendent of the Orphans Home.

In 1874 there were one hundred and twenty members, with H. C. Christian as pastor. In 1875 there was one hundred and twenty-seven members, P. G. Reynolds as pastor. In 1872 Bro. D. J. Weems, as pastor of the Church reported at a quarterly conference: five hundred and forty Pastoral visits during the year and preached one hundred and thirty-six times. He gave the following statistical report:

Rock Spring Church History, Cont. Page 3
Statistical Report of the Rock Spring Methodist Church:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Quantity/Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School Scholars</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers and Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholars converted</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volumes in Library</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School Papers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Church Property</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sittings the Church affords</td>
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<td>Money Collected for Sunday School</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>For Missionary Cause</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Old Mission Debt</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paying Church Debt</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Book</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarterage</td>
<td>69.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is written just as it is recorded in the old Church Book.

Some of the Presiding Elders who have served this Charge are as follows: H. C. Adams, A. W. Williams, B. F. Allen, A. H. Pierce, Ford McRea, W. P. Lovejoy, T. J. Chastain, W. T. Irvine, S. B. Ledbetter, J. W. Yarbrough, S. A. Harris, Frank Quillan, R. R. Turner, C. H. Lipham, S. P. Manning, who is the District Superintendent at this time, 1950, has been our District Superintendent for three years.

In 1876 the Church had one hundred and thirty names on roll; in 1876 the Trustees were: H. J. Conley, Samuel Brice, J. I. Lect, J. H. Smith, William Smith, John F. Conley. In 1877 the number of members drop back to one hundred twenty-two, several having been removed by certificate and some by death. G. W. Duval was pastor. The roll in 1878 is still going backward, with only one hundred twenty members, with A. J. Hughes as Pastor. In 1890 still falling in numbers, having only one hundred eleven members. In 1883 we gain again, having one hundred twenty
I note here a Church Letter written by Bro. D. J. Tooms, who was in an Arkansas Conference. I copy word for word just as he wrote it:

"The Bearer hereof, Bro. Joe P. Smith has been an acceptable member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Waldron Circuit, Fort Smith Dist. Arkansas Conference.

David J. Tooms, P. C."

Nov. 10, 1883.

As this Certificate will be presented to the Rock Spring Church, where I spent a pleasant year as Pastor in 1872, I desire to send a word of greeting to the dear brethren, some I learn are no more, but we have a fond hope through grace of meeting them in the "Sweet Bye and Bye! I am here in Western Arkansas working for the Master. Pray for me, brethren, that I may fill well my appointed station in life.

To you, I would say, "And now brethren I commend you to God and to the word of His Grace which is able to build you up. and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

Your Bro in Christ
D. J. Tooms

This letter was written on the same sheet of paper with the Church letter.

In 1877 there were one hundred twenty-two members, forty-eight men and seventy-four women. It is interesting to note that, just as it was in seating themselves in the church, the men on one side, the women on the other, so on the church roll, the names of the men are enrolled together and the names of the women follow on another page. So, on it goes, with some years gaining in members and perhaps the next losing some members.

In 1878 Bro. A. J. Hughes was Pastor. We had one hundred twenty members.
Here I insert a Sunday School Report which was made at the Fourth Quarterly Conference, dated October 31, 1885.

"Rock Spring Sabbath School Report.

We have had a very flourishing Sabbath School during the most of the summer months, I will say for four or four and one-half months, up to the time of the protracted meeting. During the revival season our Sabbath School got disorganized on the account of the school not meeting as early as they should have done on those days, and we have not met and reorganized as we ought to have done since that time. We had forty or fifty, average attendance; have eighty-five or ninety names enrolled on our record. They seem very much interested in searching the scriptures for knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We used our literature published at Nashville, Tennessee, the most of the time. I regret, very much, that the school did not go on longer, hope by the help of God we may do better in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Calvin Davis, Supt.

Oct. 31 1885

In 1907 the people began to feel the need of a larger Church, so the frame building was torn down and the present building was erected. The Building Committee for this house was C. H. Conley, Z. J. Jones, R. G. Wellborn and Dr. Lee Bird. The house was erected at a cost of $1,600.00. Mrs. Jack Jones, who resided in Chattanooga, Tennessee, but who was reared at Rock Spring, was active and instrumental in procuring and furnishing seats for the Church, and furniture for the pulpit. After the completion of the Church, it was dedicated by Rev. Ford McRae, Presiding Elder of the Dalton District.

Some of the Pastors who have served the Church are, H. C. Christian, 1874,
Rock Spring Church History, Cont. Page 7


In 1921 Epworth League was organized. Miss Jewel Deck, President, Miss Doris Henry, Secretary.

Before the Alter of this Church many lives have been dedicated to God. Infants have been brought by their parents and dedicated to God by Baptism.

In 1939 we celebrated the Centennial with a large assembly of people attending. Rev. Marvin Warwick was Pastor of the Church. There was a sermon at the eleven o'clock hour. At the noon hour dinner was spread under the large trees in the grove. This was really a home-coming day, as people from many places gathered there and enjoyed visiting with those they had not seen for many years. Several times since that date, we have had home-coming days when those who had lived in our midst and attended the Rock Spring Church would gather back at the dear old home Church for a day of worship and fellowship with loved ones and friends. These occasions have always been a time of great joy to all who would participate in them. May we have many more such occasions.

The Rock Spring Church was for many years with the LaFayette Church, they
having three Sundays a month, Rock Spring, one. Many were the occasions when we had sweet fellowship with the good people of the LaFayette Methodist Church. In the year 1906, LaFayette became a Station Church. Then we were then placed with Chincanoga. Soon after we were again changed, being placed with Kensingtown, with Kensingtown, Cove and Rock Spring as a Charge. In 1942 we were placed with Boyington and became a half Station. Being a weak Church in number, there was much doubt as to whether we could meet our financial obligations, but, as always, there were many who with great faith in God said "We can" and our efforts were blessed with much success. Again in 1949 we made another change, Boyington and Rock Spring each becoming a full time Church.

During the Pastorate of Bro. J. R. Phillips, in 1945-46, we felt so greatly, the need of Sunday School Rooms, and we did a great deal of planning, but the rooms did not materialize until 1947, when the actual building of them was begun. To have five, large, attractive rooms.

At the present time we have one hundred thirty-three members on roll in the Sunday School, with a cradle roll and home department. To give out literature to the members of the home departments. We do not have as large a membership in the Sunday School as we should have, but we are working to increase our membership, trying to bring the unsaved people under the teaching of the Bible that they might have a desire to be a born again child of God. Our average attendance is about eighty-five. This is not as large as it should be. We pray that the Lord will put it into the hearts of the people to come out to His Sanctuary to study His Word. Mr. S. F. Stevenson is our efficient Superintendent. Bro. Sheltor E. Adams is our first full-time Pastor. He is truly a man of God and is bringing rich spiritual messages each Sunday, both morning and evening, and on Wednesday at the mid-week prayer meeting. He and his lovely wife and two little daughters are living in a rented Parsonage located about one mile from the Church, while a parsonage is being built. This is being built on a beautiful lot located in the
heart of Rock Spring, which was donated to the Church by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Conger, who are members of the Church. It is very convenient to the Post Office, grocery stores, school and Church. The cost of building the Parsonage is estimated to be eight thousand nine hundred and seventy-five dollars.

Our Church is one of the best Country Churches in the North Georgia Conference. A new roof has been put on the building during the last year. It is now heated by gas, which gives a warm, comfortable Church on the coldest days. The ceiling of the Church is twenty feet high, this makes it more expensive to heat in winter, it also makes it cool and pleasant in hot weather. Large windows give an abundance of light and makes it cool and comfortable during the summer months. A new pulpit stand has been added this year, which is a very attractive addition to the Church.

The Rock Spring Church has been blessed with many revival meetings. One outstanding revival which I recall to mind was conducted by Rev. J.W. Brinsfield, during his pastorate at the Rock Spring Church. He gave himself, his entire soul, mind and body to his preaching and souls were saved. Someone told him that he was wearing himself out preaching so hard. His reply was, "I would rather wear out than to rust out." I shall never forget one sermon that he preached (among many others) from Isaiah 6. It was such a powerful sermon that when he came to the close and as was his custom, when he had finished, he would say "Let's Go!" After this sermon when he said, "Let's Go", the people sat for a few seconds without saying a word, as if they could hardly realize that they were in the Church and not in some Heavenly place, and that it was time for the benediction. Many other of our preachers have given their whole soul, mind and strength to their preaching in an effort to get men and women, boys and girls, to forsake their sinful ways and accept Christ as Lord and Savior.

Our first Women's Missionary Society was organized in July 1925 with eight or ten Charter members. Miss Vera Dock was the first President, Miss Willie Tynor, Vice-President and Miss Nora Dock, Secretary. The first meeting was held in the
Rock Spring Church History, Cont., Page 10

home of Mrs. Hattio Deck. So far as I know, we have not missed holding a meeting once a month since it was organized. We are always represented at our District meetings. Our Society is doing a great work and we believe much has been accomplished for the Kingdom of God. We have thirty-four members at the present time, with Mrs. Winston Killiebrew, as our very able President. We have paid, for all purposes, three hundred and twenty-six dollars, this year.

In 1941, the Wesleyan Service Guild was organized, under the supervision of Mrs. Essie Williams, who was President of the Woman's Missionary Society at that time, was assisted by Miss Poor Bowman, of the Boyington Church in perfecting the organization. Miss Juanita Carlock was the first President; others have been Mrs. Margie Henry, Mrs. Beatrice Graham. The Guild had seven or eight Charter members. Mrs. Mary Bowman is the President at the present time. She, in her winsome way, is doing the work in a very effective manner. The Guild has grown to twenty-two members, and has paid, this year to all purposes, three hundred fifty-eight dollars and forty-nine cents.

We have a very active and inspiring Methodist Youth Fellowship, with Miss Mildred Clarkson as President. Mrs. Kell Lupo is Youth Councilor. Our young people are very able and willing to respond whenever called upon. They are indeed the Church of tomorrow. We pray that God will use them for carrying the Gospel to others, perhaps some in foreign lands.

Our Church membership is now one hundred and eighty-eight. We use the Budget system in meeting the finances of the Church and it has paid out this year, to all purposes, over five thousand dollars.

The Trustees of the Church, at this time, are: T. A. Bird, H. B. Potts, Raymond Payne, W. H. Potts, Raymond Andrews, Mrs. Leon Ramsey and E. B. Carlock.

Our Board of Stewards consists of T. S. Potts, Price Henry, Raymond Payne, John Stephenson, Mrs. Ed Congor, Mrs. H. R. Andrews, Miss Beatrice Graham, Mrs. Jack Bowman, R. H. Coulter and Kell Lupo. Mrs. Joe Shields is an Honorary Steward,
and Miss Willie Tyner is Communion Steward. We also have eight Junior Stewards.
The Official Board members are all alert, wide awake men and women, which, thru
their efforts, the Church has accomplished great things. Though our membership
is not what we want it to be, we have a group of people who work together in
harmony and love for their fellow man. Many of the women of the Church of today
are untiring in their work for the Church and for God's Kingdom here on earth.
These young women are following in the foot steps of their fore-fathers, and their
influence will live long after they have departed from this earthly sanctuary.
They are letting their light shine to far distant lands as well as at home. They
will not go empty handed before the Master when they are called to give an account
of the deeds done while here on earth. They will have an inheritance with the
saved of all the earth. May this Rock Spring Church go forward in greater strides
than she has ever done. The Harvest is white, the time is short. Let's do more
for the Master.