A CENTURY AND A DECADE OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

a History of the
FIRST METHODIST CHURCH
Rome, Ga.
1840—1950

by
Walter P. Jones
106 Raymond Ave.
Rome, Ga.

The Present Church Built
1886—88
Introduction

When Mr. Walter P. Jones returned to make his home in Rome in 1947 after an absence of a number of years he early professed an interest in writing the history of the First Methodist Church. He had been a member and an official of this church during the years 1914-20 during the time that he served as Principal of the Rome High School. Even then he was interested in her history and heritage, and this work appears now as the fulfillment of a dream of long standing, his dream of giving to this generation of members of this church a record of the history and heritage that are theirs. The writing of this history then has been a labor of love in the true sense of its meaning.

Mr. Jones is equipped not only by his love for this church and her history to be her historian, but also by scholarship for he has spent his life in the public school work. During the years 1920-41 he served first as Principal and later as Superintendent of the Macon, Georgia, City schools. In 1947 he returned to Rome to make his home.

Elsewhere he will make his acknowledgments of source materials, but in this introduction we wish to acknowledge this church's debt to Mrs. Naomi Bale for keeping alive many interesting historical incidents which otherwise might have passed into oblivion. Her brief historical sketches have been invaluable to Mr. Jones in preparing this fuller history. Also much of the information as to personnel has been gleaned from the bound volumes of the church bulletins in the files of Mr. E. Pierce McGhee who has kept a copy of each church bulletin printed by this church.
The purpose of this history is to preserve for posterity a record of the stewardship of five generations of Methodists in Rome. Though our information concerning most of the charter members of this church is incomplete, we do know that there are in the church today third, fourth, fifth and sixth generation descendants of Mrs. D.R. Mitchell who is generally considered the founder of the church.

If members of First Church today are inspired by this record of loyalty and devotion on the part of men and women of the past, and are led to give greater love and faithfulness to God and this church, Mr. Jones will feel more than repaid for his efforts. First Methodist Church, Rome, Georgia, has had a great history. And as we study the record of 110 years let us resolve to be true to our heritage and to the ideals of our fathers and mothers and in this day present a record of like fidelity.

E.D. Rudisill
Resources

The writer is indebted to various persons and records for the historical information contained in this history. He wishes to make the following acknowledgments:


2. A History of the First Methodist Church written by Mrs. Naomi P. Bale in 1918 was a valuable source of help.

3. The Minutes of Quarterly Conferences from 1878-1950, preserved by Mr. Elbert T. McGhee who was recording steward from 1892-1927 and by Mr. Ralph N. McGhee, recording steward from 1928 to the present.

4. Bulletins of First Methodist Church bound volumes of all bulletins printed by this church and preserved by Mr. E.P. McGhee furnished much information as to personnel.

5. Mrs. L.D. Yeargan furnished the list of names of World War II Honor Roll.

6. Mrs. J.A. Roundaville was helpful by giving facts from her personal recollections of the early history of the church.
A Historical Statement.

The Cherokee Territory extended from the Chattahoochee River to the Tennessee Line on the North and to the Alabama Line on the West. On December 3, 1832, the Georgia Legislature passed an Act providing for the division of the Cherokee section into ten large counties. These ten counties were later divided into twenty-two counties covering all of Northwest Georgia and including Floyd County.

Floyd County was established by an Act of the Legislature in 1832 when the Cherokee Territory was divided into several counties, and was named for the Indian fighter, General John B. Floyd of Camden County, Georgia. The County was surveyed by James M. Scuttler, an employee of the United States Government and by an Act of Legislation on December 21, 1833, Livingston, a village on the Coosa River below Rome was named as the County seat and a log cabin Court House was built. Under authority of an Act passed December 8, 1834, the county seat was moved to Rome which has been recently incorporated.

About 1825 John B. McFerrin of Nashville, Tennessee, was sent as a Methodist missionary to the Indians of the Cherokee section. On his visit to Rome he preached at times in the home of John Ross, an Indian Chief, located in the vicinity of what is now West Fifth Street, in Fourth Ward. At other times he preached to whites, negroes and Indians, standing on a stump on or near the present Court House on the corner of Fifth Avenue and West First Street. At one of these meetings Chief John Ross was converted and later carried the gospel message to his own people.

The earliest house of worship in Rome of which any record is available, was a log cabin school located across the street from the
Rome Female College on Eighth Avenue. This building was used as a meeting place by the Methodist as well as other denominations. The annual conference of the Methodist Church held in Savannah in 1835 formed a new district - the Cherokee District, extending from Clarksville to Van's Valley and from the Savannah River to the Coosa River. Isaac Boring was placed in charge of this district, which was divided into two missions - the one extending from Carroll County to Chattanooga was known as Van's Valley Mission with J.T. Talley in charge. Apparently J.T. Talley held services in Rome, which at this time was a circuit - and was served by Whitfield Anthony, Joshua Knowles (Grandfather of Addison Knowles) and James F. Pierce.

The Methodist Church in Rome was organized in 1840 under the leadership of John B. McFerrin who had previously preached here. He had organized a church for slaves in Wilmington, N.C. with the help of Mrs. Meredith, mother of Mrs. Samuel Jack, who lived on East First Street in Rome. On a visit to Rome in 1840 Mr. McFerrin called on Mrs. Jack and they invited interested neighbors and organized a Methodist Church. The women who attended this meeting and were the original members of the First Church in Rome were Mrs. Samuel A. Jack, Mrs. James Hammet, Mrs. D.R. Mitchell, Mrs. Jessie Lambert, Mrs. Samuel Stewart, and Miss Emily McDow. These six faithful women formed the nucleus of the present church and met for worship in the residence of Mrs. Jack on East First Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenue. Sometime between 1840 and 1850 a wooden structure was built on a lot donated by Col. D.R. Mitchell on the corner of Sixth Avenue and East Second Street. This frame building was later replaced by a brick building on the same lot. James Lambert, Dennis Hills, D.R. Mitchell and John E. Parks were the trustees.
In 1845 the only stations in the Georgia Conference were Savannah, Augusta, Macon, Columbus, LaGrange, Milledgeville and Washington. So far as the records show Rome was the next church to be made a station in 1852 with Bradford Smith as first preacher and Alfred I. Mann as the first presiding elder.

During the War between the States, all furniture was moved from the church building and the Sunday School room in the basement was used to stable horses belonging to the Federal Army. In 1886 Alex M. Thigpen was assigned to the Rome Church and at once began repairing the building. Planks laid upon the chairs were used for seats and a borrowed table was used to hold a Bible, hymn book and lamp, but by the end of the year, the church building was put in fairly good condition. The first parsonage was built prior to the war at what is now 602 East First Street, but this parsonage had been sold and steps were taken by Mr. Thigpen toward building a new parsonage.

By 1880 the membership of the church had increased to such an extent that the church officials deemed a larger building necessary. At the Quarterly Conference June 30, 1880, J.I. Wright offered a resolution to appoint a building committee "with authority to procure, design plans and specifications, and to determine the size and style of the building and ways and means of raising funds. The committee was empowered to sell the present church building and parsonage when conditions were favorable". This committee was composed of Dr. Robert Battey, Mr. Duinell, E.D. Ford, J.P. Camp, Hamilton Yancey, C.D. Forsyth, R.E. Hargrove, J.W. Romeville, J.I. Wright, J.A. Stanbury with the Pastor, H.A. Evans, and his successors.

On September 20, 1880, the Trustees purchased a lot on the corner
of Elm and Franklin Streets which are now Third Avenue and East Second Street, the lot being 136 1/2 feet by 166 feet. When this lot was purchased in 1880, the Trustees were Jesse Lambert, S.W. Mills, J.D. Bailey, J.A. Stansbury, Joseph H. Cooper, J.L. Camp, R.T. Hargrove, I.D. Ford and Dr. Robert Battey. Jesse Lambert was relieved because of ill health and J.A. Rounseville was elected as his successor. At a meeting May 1, 1880, the chairman of the building committee reported that pledges had been made for $15,000.00 on a new building and that the old church on Sixth Avenue could be sold for $5,000.00. The Trustees voted to secure other funds and also to agree soon on plans and specifications for a new church building. Even though a lot for a new church was purchased in 1880, the best records available indicate that the church on Sixth Avenue was not sold until 1884 when the work on the new building began. As funds were not available bonds of $500.00 each were issued to meet the need. Between the time of the sale of the building on Sixth Avenue and the occupancy of the new church building church services were held in the city hall on Fourth Avenue. In November 1887 the Pastor, T.R. Kendall, reported that they hoped to have auditorium of the new church completed by conference. On October 15, 1888, Trustees reported that the building had been completed except for provision for heating at the cost of $40,000.00 and that there was bonded indebtedness of $8,000.00 on the church and a small amount due the contractor, Dr. Kolhein. The old church was sold to a negro congregation and continues to be used as an A.M.E. Church. It is in good condition in spite of its age. It stands on the corner of Sixth Avenue and East First Street.

The present church building was dedicated in 1888 by Bishop Haygood during the pastorate of Dr. W.F. Quillian. This dedication was premature as some of the bond holders had failed to redeem their bonds. Notwithstanding this failure, the dedication service was held. The last of these bonds was redeemed during the pastorate of W.W. Wadsworth in 1901 and the church
debt was cancelled. The bonds were burned at a prayer meeting service in that year. The first service in the auditorium was held July 8, 1888, and the sermon was preached by Dr. J.W. Lee, a former pastor. The choir was composed of Mrs. C.D. Wood, Mrs. W.P. Quillian and Mrs. Jesse McIhee, Soprano. Miss Fannie Wood and Miss Hattie Sanford, Contraltos. Mr. B.S. Barker, Mrs. J.G. Davis and H.M. Jack, Tenors. Mr. C.D. Gothran, Col. J.J. Childs and Mr. E.R. Smith, Bassos. At the evening service on that day the sermon was preached by Dr. T.R. Kendall, a former pastor. Two of the hymns used at this service were "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and "Jesus Hailed and Throned in Glory".

The First Methodist Church has been the host for the Annual Conference of North Georgia several times:

- In 1859 with Bishop Cavanaugh presiding
- In 1869 with Bishop Daggett presiding
- In 1880 with Bishop McTiere presiding
- In 1894 with Bishop Haygood presiding
- In 1901 with Bishop Galloway presiding
- In 1915 with Bishop Denny presiding

So far as the records show only three members of the church have entered the Conference: E.D. Hale in 1903, Walker Chidsey in 1931 and A.S. Trulock in 1916. In 1913 O.B. Tallent was licensed to preach. At present Ralph Black is a local preacher completing his education.

During the ministry of D.V. Cox in 1853 and 54 the church experienced the greatest revival that was ever known in the history of the church up to that time and during the pastorate of T.R. Kendall, Sr. in 1886-87, as result of the revival about 200 members were added to the church roll.
In 1915 the church had a membership of 602. The value of the church building was placed at $40,000.00 and the value of the parsonage was $7,000.00. At this time the pastor's salary was $2,100.00. The amount paid to the Bishop's Fund was $53.00, paid to conference claimants $266.00, to Foreign Missions $289.00, to Home Missions $340.00, to Church Extensions $156.00, to Education $205.00, to the American Bible Society $5.00, special Missionary Fund $100.00 and paid to the orphanage was $439.00. The total contributions to the church in that year was $12,500.00.

Pansy Chapel was founded by Mrs. George Horton about 1885, and under her leadership and sponsored by the Pansy Missionary Society of the First Methodist Church which she organized, the Mission became an established project of the church. The mission grew and after the death of Mrs. Horton in 1891, Mr. Junius George took the work in hand, and with the advice and financial aid of co-laborers in the First Methodist Church, purchased a lot and erected a small chapel to serve the people of the Rome Cotton Mills.

Mr. George served long and faithfully as Superintendent of the Sunday School and Rev. Caleb Dowdle served as pastor. Later Ben F. Hale became Superintendent, and served faithfully for many years. Interest on the part of the church in the mission waned and it was deemed wise in 1931 to sell the property.

The First Methodist is the "Mother Church" of several suburban churches. Quarterly Conference of November 3, 1890, authorized the purchase of a lot in South Rome to cost $650.00. On June 3, 1890, a committee consisting of H.B. Parks, Hamilton Yancey and F.M. Garvile was appointed to raise money and secure lot in East Rome for the purpose of building a Methodist Church. On August 16, 1918, a committee was appointed to select a lot for a church in West Rome. The South Broad Methodist Church and the Second Avenue Methodist Church, both strong and
useful, are the result of the first two of these projects. The West Rome project did not materialize and at this writing, thirty-two years later, is being considered again as a task of the near future. Trinity Church, formerly known as Second Church, had been built prior to this time. Its history shows it first as the DeSoto Church and the head of the DeSoto Circuit. The North Rome Church has a long and honored history also.

The parsonage, a frame building built in 1905, was torn away in 1941 in order to provide space for a Sunday School Annex and a parsonage apartment. These improvements cost $35,000.00. In 1948 the church auditorium was redecorated and the pipe organ installed in 1914 was renovated. These improvements cost $20,000.00. In 1949 a residence on Notasulga Drive was purchased for $22,500.00 and the former parsonage apartment converted into offices and ladies' parlors with additional space allotted to class rooms for Sunday School. The total value of church property in 1950 is $175,000.00.

Memorials in the Church

The following memorials have been given to the church during the past years and are in evidence in various parts of the church:

In the main sanctuary of the church, on the left side there is a marble tablet erected to the founders of the church. It is inscribed as follows:

Commemorating the Founders of
The First Methodist Episcopal Church, South
Rome, Georgia
Organized in 1840

Mrs. Samuel A. Jack  Mrs. Jesse Lambert
Mrs. D.R. Mitchell  Mrs. James Hammett
Mrs. Samuel Stewart  Miss Emily McDow
First Presiding Elder  Rev. Alfred T. Mann
First Station Pastor  Rev. J. Bradford Smith
Give her of the fruit of her hands and let her own works praise her in the gates!
In the entrance vestibule of the church is a plaque to the memory of A. Walton Shanklin, the only member of this church to lay down his life for his country in World War I. The plaque is engraved as follows:

Lieut. A. Walton Shanklin
Superintendent of
First Methodist Sunday School
Killed in Action
Oct. 15, 1918
Argonne Forest

There is a similar marker on the door to the Intermediate Department of the Church School.

In 1941 a church school and parsonage apartment were erected at a cost of approximately $40,000.00. The Building Committee that supervised this project was: W.O. Tarpley, Chairman, Hugh Jolly and George Byrd.

At the time of the completion and dedication of this building, departments and rooms were set aside in memory of various ones, or inscribed in honor of certain ones. This represented large gifts to the building.

On the first floor rooms are inscribed as follows:

Frances Elizabeth Yeargan
1913-1917

Harry E. Kelly
1862-1928

Leila Hill Wright
1881-1936

Florrie Henderson Burney
1973-1928

Second floor departments and rooms are inscribed as follows:

Grace Erwin
1908-1938

Hattie Trippel Broach

E.T. McGhee Room
In appreciation of faithful service.
Supt. Sunday School 1889-90.
Steward for fifty years.
Secretary Quarterly Conference 1892-1927
A Loyal Servant of His Lord.
In 1948 a new pulpit Bible was presented to the church by Frances McArthur Wilde inscribed:

In Memoriam
Cary Judson King
1874-1946

While the windows in the church are not listed as memorials it is thought that they were given by individuals and families in memory of loved ones. The windows installed soon after the erection of the building in 1888 are considered unusual in their beauty. They are foreign made, possibly in Hungary, and to replace them today would be a matter of considerable expense.

PRESIDING ELDERS - 1852-1948

The following ministers have served as Presiding Elders of the Rome District since 1852. The title Presiding Elder was changed to District Superintendent at the time of Methodist Union in 1898:

Alfred T. Mann 1852-53
James E. Payne 1854-56
John W. Yarbrough 1859
John W. Glenn 1860-63
James B. Payne 1864
Benjamin Arbogast 1865-66
A.E. Haygood 1867-68
William Harrison 1869
H.J. Adams 1870
Gad Pierce 1871-72
Thomas F. Pierce 1873
W.P. Cook 1874
W.P. Fledger 1875-76
Simon Peter Richardson 1877-79
W.P. Glenn 1880-83
Thomas F. Pierce 1884-87
J.W. Roberts and R.J. Bingham 1888
A.O. Thomas 1889-90
W.P. Lovejoy 1891-92

J.B. Gibson 1893
Thomas F. Pierce 1894-97
James H. Eakes 1898
J.F. Mixon 1899-1900
W.P. Glenn 1901-02
W.E. Foote 1903-04
S.E. Lobbett 1905-08
John S. Jenkins 1909-11
W.B. Dillard 1912
J.H. Eakes 1913-16
J.R. King 1917-20
W.T. Irvine 1921-24
J.P. Erwin 1925-28
G.L. King 1929-32
J.W. McCubbin 1933-36
H.C. Holland 1937-39
W.E. LePrade 1940-43
Frank Prin 1944-47
Willa M. Jones 1948-
Pastors During One Hundred and Ten Years.

Fifty-six ministers have served as pastors of the Church in its one hundred and ten years of existence. From 1840 to 1851 Rome was a point on a circuit becoming a full station in 1852 with Rev. J. Bradford Smith as first station preacher. The following pastors also served terms as presiding elder: A.G. Haygood, T.F. Pierce, W.F. Cook, J.H. Eakes, W.B. Dillard, Atticus G. Haygood was elected Bishop in 1886.

The Pastors of the church since 1840 have been:

- Whitfield Anthony served the church as T.R. Kendall, Sr. 1886-87
- Joshua Knowles served pastors while Rome was W.F. Quillian 1888-90
- James E. Pierce served Circuit 1840-1852 W.W. Bayes 1891-93
- J. Bradford Smith 1852 J.T. Gibson 1894
- D.D. Cox 1853-54 S.R. Bell 1895-98
- Lewis E. Payne 1855 J.H. Eakes 1899-1900
- Charles A. Pullwood 1856 W.W. Wadsworth 1901
- William H. Evans 1857 F.F. Fraser 1902-04
- William H. Crumley 1858-59 L.G. Johnson 1905-06
- Weyman H. Potter 1860 C.O. Jones 1907
- James W. Hinton 1861-62 J.B. Robins 1908
- Thomas F. Pierce 1863 C.C. Jarrell 1909-11
- Atticus G. Haygood 1864 Walker Lewis 1912
- W.F. Rivers & W.H. Hickey 1865 W.B. Dillard 1913
- Alex N. Thigpen 1866-68 C.E. Wason 1914-17
- Harwell H. Parks 1869 T.R. Kendall, Jr. 1918-20
- W.T. Cook 1870 E.F. Dempsey 1921
- W.P. Kreaser 1871 Wallace Rogers 1922
- Thomas F. Pierce 1872 Rembert G. Smith 1923-24
- Wm. M. Crumley 1873-75 R.A. Edmondson 1925-26
- W.H. LePrade, Sr. 1876-77 M.C. Clemmer 1927-30
- Geo. W. Tarbrough 1878 L.W. Collins 1931-35
- C.A. Evans 1879 C.M. Lapham 1936-37
- J.E. Evans 1880-81 J.W. Johnson 1938
- Weyman H. Potter 1882 Nash Broyles 1939
- Josiah Lewis 1883 G.M. Acree 1940-42
- W.D. Anderson 1883 Claude Hendricks 1943-46
- J.W. Lee 1884-85 E.D. Rudisill 1947-

In 1947 Conference year changed to begin in July instead of December.

In 1939 title of the Presiding Elder was changed to District Superintendent.
Atticus G. Haygood

Atticus G. Haygood, who was pastor of the First Methodist Church in 1864, was born at Watkinsville, Georgia, in 1839. He was graduated from Emory College in 1859, and immediately joined the Georgia Methodist Conference. He served as army Chaplain during the War between the States. In 1870 he became editor of the Sunday School publications of the Southern Methodist Church. He was President of Emory College from 1875-1884, Agent of the John F. Slater Funds and Bishop of the Methodist Church South 1886, died January 17, 1896.

Bishop Haygood was the author of several books including: "Our Brother in Black"; "Freedom and His Future" (1881); "Sermons" (1883); "Man of Galilee" (1889); "Jack Knife and Brambles" (1893) and "The Monk and the Prince" (1893).

Chairmen of Boards of Stewards and Trustees

Much of the success of any organization is due to its leadership. First Church has been fortunate in having strong consecrated men to guide its affairs through the years. Much of the success of the church in the matter of the conduct of its business has been due to the type of men who have served as chairmen of the Board of Stewards through the years. Though our record is not complete we do find that the following men served terms in this office:

| 1885-88 | J.I. Wright |
| 1889   | J.A. Rounsaville |
| 1890   | J.I. Wright |
| 1892   | Samuel Funkhouser |
| 1903-07| H.E. Kelly |
| 1910-15| A.S. Harvey |
| 1916-18| Gary J. King |
| 1923-24| W.M. Woodruff |
| 1925   | Conley Strange and E.W. Best |
| 1926-27| Evan P. Harvey |
| 1928-29| Bernard Hale |
| 1930   | E. Pierce Hoehne |
| 1931-33| H.F. Yeargan |
| 1938   | Hubert Quillian |
| 1939-42| Hugh Jolly |
| 1943-44| Victor B. Yeargan |
| 1945-50| Ed. L. Fryer, Jr. |
| 1951   | Ralph E. McCord |
Through the years the outstanding and representative men of the church have served on the Board of Stewards to support these officers. The present Board of Stewards is as follows:

R.P. Adams  R.C. Gibson  Paul McWhorter, Sr.
Charles Alexander  R.C. Gilmer  Arthur Ragsdale
F.L. Baker  Wallace Grant  J.R. Read
R.M. Ballard  Dr. Herman Gray  J.B. Robins
Dr. E.L. Bowworth  Bernhard Hale  G.N. Richardson
Ed. Brown  R.A. Hall  Dr. Jack Runniger
P.S. Cherry  Hollie Horton  George Flickman
W.M. Coppcedge  F.W. Jennings  W.M. Smith
Dean Covington  Linder Johnson  Fred Stivers
San Davis  Hugh Jolly  W.D. Tarpley
Temp S. Davis  H.L. Lanham  H.R. Thomasson
J.B. Dodd, Jr.  W.P. Lovejoy  Harlan Trammell
Jere Dodd  J.F. Malone  Frank West
W.A. DuPre  J.P. Malone  Sid Willingham
Merrill Ewing, Sr.  C.A. Milhollin  R.L. Yankee
F.E. Ford  R.A. Morgan  H.P. Yeargan
E.L. Fryer, Jr.  C.S. Mcdonald  E.L. Yeargan
E.L. Fryer, III  Dr. H.M. McCord  L.B. Yeargan
R.M. Gibbons  Dr. Ralph B. McCord  V.B. Yeargan
G.D. Young

An incomplete list of men who have served as chairman of the Board of Trustees:

1885-1887  G.W. Mills
1888-1889  J.A. Rounsaville
1890-1895  J.A. Stanbury
1896-1898  W.P. Simpson
1907-1909  W.P. Simpson
1912-1921  H.E. Kelly
1923-1933  E.P. Harvey
1947-1950  H.F. Yeargan

It is probable that the same men served during the years for which we have no record. Also during some of this time it is likely that the Board of Trustees was not properly organized. We are sure that this was true during the years immediately prior to the election of Mr. Yeargan in 1947.
The Sunday School

In its history of more than one hundred years, First Church, Rome, has had many members who have been known for their long and faithful service. Prominent in official positions for more than forty years were E.T. McIlvee, J.A. Rounsaville, J.W. Rounsaville and John L. Brannon. Mrs. Naomi P. Bale for years kept the church record and was very active in church work. Many others have rendered an equally devoted service but for a shorter time. Among the present membership there are both men and women whose loyalty and efficient service have resulted in a steady growth and development of the church now numbering more than twelve hundred.

There is no available record giving the date of the organization of the Sunday School of the First Church, Rome. The minutes of the Quarterly Conference of 1878 show that the Sunday School had four officers, five male teachers, seven female teachers, forty male members and sixty female members. Hamilton Yancey was Superintendent and R.T. Bragrove, Assistant.

Mrs. J.A. Rounsaville had charge of the Primary Department of the Sunday School for a long period of years. She rendered an efficient and devoted service.

Mr. E. Pierce McIlvee has served as treasurer of the Church School since 1925.

In 1894 the Sunday School had an enrollment of two hundred and sixty-five with fourteen teachers. In 1949 the Church School had about six hundred members and forty teachers.
List of Superintendents

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years</th>
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<th>Years</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hanil ton Yancey</td>
<td>1878-1879</td>
<td>R.C. Sharp</td>
<td>1920-1922</td>
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<td>Euclid Johnson</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>E. Pierce McGhee</td>
<td>1923-1926</td>
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<td>H.B. Parks</td>
<td>1890-1901</td>
<td>Alec Harris</td>
<td>1929-1930</td>
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<td>H.H. McClure</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>E. Pierce McGhee</td>
<td>1931-1932</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sam Powers</td>
<td>1903-1907</td>
<td>E. J. Closer</td>
<td>1933-1934</td>
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<td>A.P. McKay</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Warren Coppedge</td>
<td>1938-1941</td>
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<td>A.W. Shanklin</td>
<td>1917-1918</td>
<td>H.L. Lanham</td>
<td>1942-1945</td>
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<td>A.W. Shanklin</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Henry Fullbright</td>
<td>1946-1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.P. McKay</td>
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<td>Temp Davis</td>
<td>1950-</td>
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Missionary Societies

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized in 1879 by Rev. C.A. Evans who was at that time pastor of the First Methodist Church. Mrs. J.L. Camp was made President. In 1886 the report of District Secretary showed that the First Church Auxiliary had fifty-two members and total contribution was $149.00. Though the membership of the society was small, the interest in the work was great and they did much to foster and build a missionary spirit in the church.

The Missionary Society was organized in 1894 during the pastorate of Dr. J.T. Gibson. Mrs. Naomi P. Bale was President. This Society aided the Orphan's Home, sent boxes of food and clothing to destitute people and gave liberal support to the church.

The annual meetings of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society were held in First Church in 1887, 1899 and 1911. In 1912 the Home and Foreign Societies were combined and the new organization became the Woman's Missionary Society. The annual meeting of this group was held in First Church in 1923. At the time of the Unification of the Methodist Churches the name of the organization was changed to Woman's Society of Christian Service.
The Woman's Society of Christian Service has in its membership faithful and interested women, who manifest a zeal that assures success. For several years, largely through the efforts of Mrs. E.T. McGhee, the society supported a worker in the foreign field. In the Advance for Christ and His Church, and under the leadership of Mrs. Joe Franklin, there has been increased interest. The present membership is two hundred and fifty-five, and total contributions the past year were $2,765.63.

The following is an incomplete list of the Presidents of the Woman's Missionary Society. The early records are even more incomplete than those of recent years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>President</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Mrs. Mac pi Bale</td>
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<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>Mrs. C.C. Bass</td>
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<td>1917-19</td>
<td>Mrs. J.R. King</td>
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<td>1920</td>
<td>Mrs. C.A. Jamison</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Mrs. H.B. Vangum</td>
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<td>1922</td>
<td>Mrs. E.B. Yearyan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Mrs. H.A. McKay</td>
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<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Mrs. Bernard Hale</td>
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<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Mrs. Rose Bosworth</td>
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<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Mrs. A.S. Burney</td>
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<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>Mrs. Rose Bosworth</td>
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The Epworth League

Though our information about the beginning of the Epworth League is very limited we do know that there was an active League as early as 1896. In the Epworth Era of March 5, 1896, Dr. S.A. Steel in his column 'On the Wing' tells of a visit to Rome and to the Epworth League of the First Methodist Church. He writes under the caption 'Bearing Witness in Rome' borrowing the figure from Paul and his relation to ancient Rome. He writes as follows:

'The Etohah, yellow as gold, and roaring among its rocks, sweeps in from the east, and the Oostanaula, turbid as the Tiber, rushes headlong from the
north, and where they meet and mingle their rolling floods in the dancing Coosa River, Rome rises on her swelling hills. The most conspicuous thing I saw in Rome was Shorter College, a Baptist school for young girls. It sits like a mediaeval castle of a central height, and so far as position is concerned literally puts the Baptists on the top. The Romans claim 15,000 population. There are four or five Methodist churches, The First Church is a massive structure, spacious and beautiful.—— I had a delightful time with the Romans. Belk is a hustler. He is up to date all round. There is nothing little about him either. Brainy, brawny, brave as a lion, gentle as a woman, cultured and enthusiastic, a son of thunder, with a home like a nook of paradise in its sweetness and light. I was greatly cheered by the sympathy and encouragement of my stay at that manse. Rev. S.R. Belk is a tar-heeler. He has been vast. That is enough. The leaguers won't miss it to have him on their course of lectures for next season. He has several that are first-class. The one on ' the Crest of the Rockies ' is said to be a masterpiece. I met other clergy, genial, cultured men. The Roman Leaguers are resolved not to be behind. They have their eyes on Toronto too.

Another item of interest from the Epworth Era is that Dr. C.O. Jones, who was pastor of this church in 1907, was the writer of the Epworth programs for a dozen years or more, and during his pastorate was reorganized and reached new heights of interest and usefulness.

The present Epworth League of Rome First Church was organized September 30, 1895, with thirty-six members. Apparently this organization did not thrive very well as the records of the Quarterly Conference show...
that it was reorganized April 15, 1986 and again January 29, 1998, and was revived January 4, 1907, during the pastorate of C.O. Jones, with thirty members.

**Presidents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>President</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>John W. Bale</td>
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<td>1899</td>
<td>T.J. Munson</td>
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<td>1901</td>
<td>Sam J. Powers</td>
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<td>1902</td>
<td>E.P. McIhee</td>
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<td>1909</td>
<td>H.T. Gray</td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>B.F. Coleman</td>
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<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Rebecca Yeargan</td>
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<td>1924</td>
<td>Sara Wicker</td>
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<td>1925</td>
<td>Ellen Hagan</td>
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<td>1926</td>
<td>Hugh Jolly</td>
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<td>1927</td>
<td>Sarah Moss Cleckler</td>
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<td>1928</td>
<td>Grace Erwin</td>
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<td>1929</td>
<td>Gladys Beason</td>
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<td>1930</td>
<td>Catherine Wilkerson</td>
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<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>W.E. Atkinson</td>
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<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Gladys M. Collins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Grace Arrington</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>Sidney Willingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Camilla Faust</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

President officers of the Youth Fellowship, successor to the Epworth League are:

**Intermediate:**
- Linton Vandiver, Pres.
- Mac Audismill, Vice-Pres.
- Robert Turner, Sec. & Treas.
- Tommy Robinson, Program Chair.

**Senior:**
- Spencer Willis, Pres.
- Don Trammell, Vice Pres.
- Cecelia Cooper, Sec. & Treas.
- Clarence Baker, Program Chair.
- Glover Robinson, Recreation Chair.

For several years (1947-50) Mrs. Christine Horn has served as Director of Youth Work. During the year 1950 she has been assisted by Milton Black.
Honored Roll

World War No. 1

1918

"Lt. A. Walton Shanklin"

Allen Battle
Russell Beysiegel
Will H. Bignes
Howard Branda
George E. Briggs
J. Y. Bruce
Walter Coker
E. W. Darby
Charles Davis
Stimson Dean
J. N. Dempsey
Roland Dolph
Wilber Dolph
Walter Fletcher
L. E. Floyd
George H. Garrison
David Harvey
Burrell Henson
Gordon Howell
Wymn T. Huff
Foster Huffman

Charles M. Jones
W. E. Kennedy
Edward Lewis King
Fleetwood King
Earnest Ledbetter
John Ledbetter
Lewis Ledbetter
Harry Logan
H. L. Marks
Millard Maxwell
Grady White
George Middleton
Ransom Middleton
Leon Mitchell
W. T. Noah
Allgood McDuffie
William Paen
Eugene Purviance
Robert Rogers
Frank Shanklin

Earle Shanklin
Walton Shanklin
Garrett Sharp
Felix Shell
Fred Snell
James H. Starr
Ray G. Stewart
Yeargan Tarpley
Roland Turner
J. Walter Turner
Charles Vandiver
Edward Vandiver
Rollie Vandiver
Hugh Vandiver
Dick Watts
Phil F. Wilby
Claude Wilkerson
Robert Wilkerson
George McN. Wood
Vaughn Newton Wood
Gardner Wright

Robert Wyatt
Sam Yeargan

A. Walton Shanklin entered the army in World War I while he was Superintendent of the Sunday School of the First Methodist Church.

Walton Shanklin was born in Rome September 26, 1886. His father was a prominent lawyer but did not live to see his son reach manhood. As a youth, Walton attended Young Harris College and later studied law at the University of Pennsylvania. After completing his law course, he returned to Rome where he practiced law. He married Miss Zirkle, of Virginia, and a daughter, Walton, was born while he was in the army.

Mr. Shanklin was active in church work and was equally interested in civic and cultural matters. He gave promise of great success in his chosen profession and was much beloved by all who knew him. He went over seas in service and was killed in the Battle of the Argonne October 15, 1918, just a short time before the Armistice. He was the only member of First Church who gave his life for his country.
Honor Roll
World War II
1942

James S. Best
Hugh R. Best
H. J. Brown
Marion J. Byers
Dean Covington
James E. Caldwell
Frank C. Bacon
Charles W. Brannon
Joe Franklin
Ed Fryer, III
W. B. Gibbons
Charles M. Gibbons
Harry Gibbons
Wallace Grant
Jack B. Harris
A. H. Huff
Gary J. King
Henry Landers
Warren Langston
John J. McConnell
Oscar McWilliams
Charles J. McConnell
S. A. Marshall, Jr.
Charles G. Morgan
T. L. Morgan, Jr.
Robert Morgan
J. R. Smith
Sid Willingham
Walter Wheeler
A. H. Wilson
Hunter Wilson
George W. Smith
Henry C. Smith
Brannon E. Carson
 Homer S. Carson
 Lemuel D. Carson
 Joe E. McConnell, Jr.

William A. McConnell
Fred Snell
Edward Bosworth
W. T. Jackson
W. J. Neathery
Milton Dye
Marvin P. LaPrade
Sam J. Davis
Allen N. McShee
C. W. Clover
William D. Barton
William H. Smith
John E. Haigwood
Frances A. Watson
John L. Barton
Rose M. Coker
W. O. Coker
Jack Rogers
Charles H. Milhollin
Ralph B. McCord
Malcolm McCord
Clinton M. Roth
O. D. Bibble
Hubert Boggs
Malcolm Skeleton
Robert C. Gilmer
James C. Ledford
Millard B. Coker
Marian Harris
Amelita Horn
Lillian Brannon
Mary Will Jolly
Sarah Turner
Virginia C. Turner

(This list may be incomplete and inaccurate as the church list has been misplaced).
The Decade of 1940-1950

The church passed her 100th anniversary during the year 1940. Though there was no special observance of the important event many were conscious of the significance of the year and recognition was taken of it in regular service of the church and various organizations.

The beginning of the second century of old First Church found Rev. George M. Acree beginning the first year of his pastorate, he having been appointed to the church at the conference in November 1939. Mr. Acree came to this pastorate from that of First Church, Athens, where he had served for four years. He was one of the outstanding men of the conference having a record of service in prominent churches in both the South Georgia and the North Georgia conferences.

The pastor found that there was a growing interest in enlarging the church plant by erecting a church school building. The old church, built between the years 1844-82, had been well built. At the time it was erected it was one of the most commodious churches in the conference with adequate class rooms for the type Sunday school of that day. But with the coming of departmental church school work it was not adequate. An earlier building had been planned during the pastorate of Rev. C.H. Lipham, but has not been realized but new interest and need demanded that it be postponed no longer. So during the year 1940 the church school annex of three stories and including a parsonage apartment was erected at a cost of approximately $38,000.00. The building committee was W.O. Tarpley, Chairman, Hugh Jolly and George Byrd. The building, one of the most modern in arrangement and one of the most complete in furnishings, was occupied in February of 1941.

After serving three years as pastor. Mr. Acree was transferred to the pulpit of Decatur, First Church, and he was succeeded here by Rev. Claude
Hendrick in the conference of 1942, who served four years until the conference of 1946. Mr. Hendrick had completed four years of service as District Superintendent of the Gainesville District and had served other important North Georgia conference since joining the conference in 1914. His two earliest appointments were Armuchee and Lindale, so that he found friends in Rome from other days when he became pastor of First Church.

During Mr. Hendrick's pastorate occurred the Crusade for Christ and he led this church to exceed all set quotas for the quadrennium of advance. The financial goal in the Crusade was met in one year and was led by Hugh Jolly. During the last year of Mr. Hendrick's pastorate the goal in evangelism resulted in over 200 additions to the membership of the church.

It was during the pastorate of Mr. Hendrick that the church took a forward step in establishing a church office. Miss Martha King was employed as church secretary and as director of youth work. Under her leadership the youth work was reorganized and revitalized, and her work in the church office helped to put the church on a very progressive basis in the matter of its business and financial matters. This work was of great benefit to the church, and marked the beginning of a new era in some phases of its work. Miss King served until December 1946 when she resigned to return to her work in public school work. At this same time Mr. Hendrick was transferred to Newnan, First Church.

The conference that transferred Mr. Hendrick to Newnan, brought Rev. E.D. Rudisill from that church to First Church Rome. Mr. Rudisill had joined the conference in 1928 and before going to Newnan had served the following appointments in the North Georgia Conference: Assistant, St. John, Augusta; Avondale; Lakewood Heights, Atlanta; Sparta; Patillo Memorial, Decatur; First Church, Milledgeville.
Early in the conference Mrs. Christine Horn was employed as church secretary and part time youth director. Later in the spring of 1947 Mrs. Horn began to give full time to this work and has been able to carry on the work begun by Miss King. During the year 1947 Horrell Robinson, an Ebenezer Student, came on week-ends and assisted Mrs. Horn. During intervals in the following year Mrs. Horn was assisted by Mrs. Ben Lucas and Mrs. W.W. Leake. In July 1949, Mrs. Horn resigned her position and Mrs. John Howard Brauda was employed as secretary. And in the fall Eugene Brown came as youth director. When he resigned in January Mrs. Horn and Milton Black were persuaded to do this phase of the work on a part time basis.

Two important groups were organized during the early part of the year 1947, the Young Adult Fellowship and the Junior Church, which meets at 11 A.M. each Sunday under the direction of the youth work director.

The Young Adult Fellowship was organized on Sunday February 23, 1947, with Grady Jackson as the first president. The fellowship has met regularly each Sunday since that day. There is a fellowship supper each Sunday afternoon. The group has grown in attendance and in interest, and is one of the most effective groups in the church. George Wallis is now serving as president.

After much planning, the work of renovating our church sanctuary and redecorating it, began in July 1947. The work was directed by a special committee composed of J. Fred Malone, Chairman, Jere Dodd and C.B. Alexander. Mr. Malone gave personal supervision to the work which was under the supervision of the J.E. Roberts Company. The work was quite extensive and required more than four months. The only structural change was the rebuilding of the choir loft and pulpit and the enlarging of the choir to take care of a new organ installation. The organ was rebuilt with detached
console and changed from tubular to electric action. The work in the
auditorium included cleaning and refinishing all woodwork and walls,
installation of a new and modern lighting system with gothic lanterns
and a projected light from the ceiling, new carpets, new cushions for the
pews and refinishing of all furniture. When completed the church was re-
stored to its original beauty and is considered one of the most attractive
church interiors in the conference. The total amount spent was about
$23,000.00.

On May 16, 1948, a Men's Club was organized in our church. The first
president was J.W. Franklin. Monthly meetings have been held regularly since
organization and the club has become a vital part of the life of our church
and our men. Mr. Richard P. Adams is the president this term.

As this is being written we are approaching the close of the conference
year, marking the end of the fourth year of the pastorate of B.D. Rudisill.
Earlier in the history we listed a summary of a financial report in 1915.
It will be interesting to make a comparison 35 years afterwards (see the
report on page 9). This year's report shows the following information:
Present membership 1291; paid on world service $2100.00, orphanage $1500.00,
raised by W.S.C.S. $2800.00, Missionary specials $900.00, Superannuate
fund $1604.00, church property $175,000.00. Total raised for year $36,621.00.

The outstanding fact during this conference year was the purchase of
a parsonage. When the church school annex was built in 1940 the old
parsonage was torn down and the building erected on the parsonage lot. An
apartment was included for the pastor in the new building. It was intended
that this be used for a few years and then replaced by a parsonage being
built or purchased. In the summer of 1949 a definite movement was begun
at the meeting of the Board of Stewards toward the realization of this
goal. A committee was appointed to investigate acquiring a parsonage. The committee was: Warren Coppedge, H.F. Yeargan, Frank Mann, Edward E. Bosworth and J.Fred Malone. After investigating several prospects they recommended to the trustees and quarterly conference the purchase of the property at 27 Notasulga Drive in East Rome. This recommendation was consummated in October 1949 and the pastor and his family moved to the new home on December 9th, 1949.

The purchase of the parsonage made possible an expansion of the church school plant into the former parsonage apartment. This greatly improved the class room and department arrangement of the church school. The first floor of the apartment has been arranged as a church parlor and a young adult department. Also the kitchen was maintained so that the rooms can be used for small meetings. On the second floor are the church office, pastor’s study and an intermediate department. The moving of these groups also permitted expansion in the old building, and today each department and class has adequate space. The choir has a practice room and a robe room. The Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts have their own separate rooms.

The home is one of the best parsonages in the conference. While not a real new house it is modern in every respect and easily adaptable to large or small families. The grounds are lovely, both front and back and the entire property is one of which the church can be rightly proud. The purchase price was $21,750.00. The purchase was made without raising a special fund and will be paid for during four years at the rate of more than $5000.00 per year.

Descendants of Mrs. D.R. Mitchell

We know little of the other founders of our church, but we find that Mrs. D.R. Mitchell (Elizabeth Mau) has had a real influence in our church life in every generation through her sons and daughters and later
descendents. One hundred and ten years after she had a part in organizing this church there are second, third, fourth and fifth generation descendents of Mrs. Mitchell who are still members of this church. For the assistance of later historians who may wish to trace back to our founders we are listing here by generations the descendents of Mrs. Mitchell who in this year 1950 are still active members of the church of their loyal and faithful ancestor. They are as follows:

**Second Generation:** Mrs. Florence Mitchell Kelly, Mrs. Claudia Mitchell Irvin, Mrs. Bessie McCrory Cochran, Mrs. Jessie McCrory Walsley, Mrs. Ann Hill Newcome.

**Third Generation:** Ross Bosworth, E.M. Vandiver, Mrs. Leila N. Marshall, Gardner Wright.

**Fourth Generation:** Yancey Lipscomb, Marshall Vandiver, Elizabeth Vandiver, Edward L. Bosworth, Gardner Wright, Jr., Mrs. Arlena M. Warner

**Quarter Century of Service**

For more than a quarter century a father and his son have served the church in the capacity as sexton and caretaker giving faithful service during almost one fourth of the period of the church's history. For more than six years Tony Hawkins was sexton of the church. At his death in 1930 he was succeeded by his son Clarence Hawkins who in July completed twenty years of service. Clarence is a Methodist, being a member of St. Paul A.M.E. Church on Sixth Avenue, which congregation now occupies the former First Church building. He is a trustee of the church property and is an active member of his church.