Salem

Salem Methodist Church is located in Choestoe District of Union County. This is one of the best farming and most progressive sections of the county. Methodism was rather late coming into this community. It was about 1850-55 when Methodist first began to work in this community. They were very likely converts of "Old Choestoe" camp ground located about three miles north of Salem community. As they came home still under the influence of the great revival held there, they wanted to work for their Lord. It was in this decade, 1850-60, that a house was erected to be used as a church and school. The people of the community came together, cut and hewed the timber for the house. Some of the material used in this building was again used when the church was rebuilt recently. It was in excellent condition.

In 1875 a separate building was erected for a Methodist Church and deeds were made out in the correct form. This building was used until 1911. At this time the roads had been re-located and the center of the community had shifted. It was decided to relocate the church. Under the leadership of V. L. Bray the Church was moved about a mile east of the old sight. A new building was erected and the church progressed, although it was in a strong Baptist community.

The early leaders of this church were the Twiggs, Lances, and Allisons. A Mr. Twiggs (his first name is not known) came from Scotland. He had prepared to be a Catholic Priest, but on coming to Salem Community, he became the outstanding leader of the Methodist church. One of his descendants, John Twiggs,
became a local preacher and made a great contribution to Salem and to the North Georgia Conference. He is the father of Rev. L. M. and W. M. Twiggs of the North Georgia Conference. John Lance also a local preacher made a great contribution to the church.

Many of the converts at Chestoe Camp Ground became members of Salem. In fact this was the churches' chief supply of new members. When the Camp Ground was closed down in 1910 or 11 its influence and contributions in converts was greatly missed.

Salem has had an unusual influence in the educational field. For some reason, very likely due to the influence of the Mr. Twiggs, that had prepared for the Catholic Priesthood, and those following him, the boys and girls of Salem church have gone off to school and college. This partly accounts for the progress of the community, but it also has caused many of its people to leave the community. It has been said that this community has produced more college trained men than any community in Georgia per-capita. One can not prove this, but one can readily see it has produced far more than any other community in Union county.

In 1925 Sunday School rooms were added to the old building and in 1946 the church building has almost completely torn down and rebuilt. It was covered with asbestos shingles and the interior was finished in a most attractive way.

Salem's growth has been very slow, but steady. It has never been gripped or "stirred" by revivals like many of the churches of this section, but it has gone on in a steady, straightforward way. The church just as the people of the community, are steadily dependable, practising religion in their every day lines--making
their religion "A way of life," rather than just something to talk about or to shout about.