

A HISTORY OF WESLEY CHAPEL

This historic old church, named in honor of John Wesley is probably the second oldest Methodist Church in the county, with Concord the oldest, and Harmony Baptist Church said to be the oldest church of any denomination in Putnam County. The lot on which Wesley Chapel stands was deeded for the purpose of building a church by Rev. William Henry Rogers early in the last century, probably between 1810 and 1820, though all records were destroyed by fire in 1861, and so far no other information can be had. The first building followed the usual type of that period: a large log structure, with a big fireplace at one end and a door at the other. It stood just back of where the present building stands, but facing westward. 143

There have been rumors of a previous church called Elizabeth, near this church, but there is no one who knows positively where it stood.

An unusual event occurred at one time when Wesley Chapel was comparatively new, probably in the 1830's. The regular preaching day was then and has always remained the second Sunday morning, and one May morning was extremely cold and cloudy and when services were over, the congregation came out to see a sight they had never seen before--a snowstorm in May. It melted, of course, as fast as it fell.

Back in the camp-meeting days, there was a camp-ground near what is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Dennis, Sr. It was in a large oak grove, and in its time was a great meeting place and the scene of many great revivals.

The church record was revised in 1880, and only carries the roll of membership from that time till the present. It is deplorable that so much church history is lost by the old records being discarded and destroyed, as they contain much interesting and valuable information and history. Some of the names on the revised roll are:

Johns, Wilson, Dance, Turner, Rossee, Griffin, Denham, Pearmon, Carnes, Maddox, Ashfield, Bryant, Haskins, Knowles, McNatt and many others.

There was a great arbor meeting held on the church grounds in the 1930's, with the late Rev. W. H. Boring assisting the regular pastor. It was a wonderful meeting, and much good was accomplished.

The present building is very old, but is soon to be replaced by a large brick building, for which ground has already been broken. The church and school is flourishing as it has not done in many years.

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