



# A Carolina Landmark

1762

1962



## Bi-Centennial

## Southwest Church

Lenoir County, North Carolina

October 21, 1962



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# A Carolina Landmark

*Two Centuries of Southwest Church*

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Box 1164, Wilson, N. C.

October 21, 1962

## NAME AND FIRST BUILDING

Morgan Edwards, (1722-1795), native Welshman, and itinerant Calvinistic Baptist preacher from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, visited Southwest Church in 1772. He declared in his journal that this church was "so called from a creek by that name which empties itself into the Neuse near which the meeting house stands in Dobbs county." Dimensions of the house of worship then used at Southwest he did not give. However in the same county just outside of to-day's LaGrange, was Bear Creek, (organized 1752), which he also visited in 1772, about which he said: "The house is 20 feet by 15 . . . built on land given by Joshua Herring." It is highly credible that these primitive structures, shrines in the wilderness, were built of logs, and were exhibits of a common pattern.

## LOCATION

The Southwest Church site is in Lenoir County, North Carolina, at the eastern side of Southwest Creek bridge, five miles southeast of Kinston. It is one-half mile from the Jones County line which points an acute angle of boundary at the environs of Kinston. U. S. Highway 70 is off from Southwest two miles, and from State Highway 55, four miles. The lot is on the east side of Southwest Creek about two miles from its confluence with the Neuse River. The locality is cited in the Colonial Records, (S.R. XXII, 323), of January 6, 1751, as the "lower side of Sow West Crick" community. Captain Thomas Graves gave on that date the roster of 96 men in his "foot company of soldiers" made up from that area. At least sixteen of the family names in his "treu List" have been to an extent current in that section for 211 years. These are: Beasley, Caddell, Cox, Dohety, (Daugherty), Fields, Goodvine, Heath, Herring, Humphrey, Johnson, Lane, Loftin, Nun, Russell, Taylor, Ward. These were among the landseekers in the mid-eighteenth century cleaving to the lush lower valley of the navigable Neuse.

Through the years this landed area has been variously mapped. First in Bath County, 1692-1705; then in Archdale Precinct, 1705-1712; in Craven County, 1712-1764; Dobbs County, 1764-1791; finally, Lenoir County, 1791-1962. On November 26, 1762, Richard Caswell asked that this Southwest Creek segment of Craven be added to Dobbs, (later, 1791, named Lenoir). Hence by the laws of 1764 it was "enacted by Governor,

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Council, and Assembly", that the area "on the southermost side of Southwest Creek, and the upper branches of Trent River" by officially surveyed boundary "be annexed to Dobbs County".

## AFFILIATION

Extant sources indicate that for two centuries Southwest church has affiliated as follows:

1762-1789. Sandy Creek Association, Separate Baptists; listed by historians as a charter member.

1790-1793. Kehukee Association, United Baptists. Receding from the devastating effects of the American Revolution its scattered members had fellowship with a sister church, Trent, (Chinquapin Chapel), fifteen miles distant in Jones County.

1794-1818. Neuse Association, Regular Baptists. Southwest continued its status with Trent.

1819-1844. Neuse Association, Missionary Baptists. Southwest restored had membership as a distinctive church.

1845-1870. North Carolina General Conference of Original Free Will Baptists. Noted is a remnant also of about fifteen Union Baptists, (another denomination), at this "free church", who were registered there as late as 1879, in the Mount Zion Association, most of whom at Southwest had already united with its new Disciple group.

1871-1962. Christian Church, (Disciples of Christ) connection; Southwest, a duly constituted member of The North Carolina Christian Missionary Convention.

## ORGANIZATION

Shubael Stearns, (Jan. 28, 1706-Nov. 20, 1771), and his small company began the Separate Baptist movement in the south, at Sandy Creek, North Carolina, in 1755. And George Washington Paschal, Twentieth Century Baptist historian of North Carolina, has declared: "I make bold to say that these Separate Baptists have proved to be the most remarkable body of Christians America has known." This thesis he then affirmed through many carefully written pages. The magnetic, evangelical preaching of Stearns, fortunately well-timed and wide-spreading through his able assistants, made marvelous impact on religion in the South Atlantic States. He baptized Philip Mulkey, of Halifax County, North Carolina, in December, 1756, who in turn baptized John Dillahunty, a co-founder with Charles Markland of Southwest church. Markland came to Southwest from New River of Richlands, (now Union Chapel, Disciples), in 1760, and in that year, according to Morgan Edwards, "preached to the conversion of fifteen." These were formally organized as Southwest church in October 1762, "by a presbytery sent by Sandy Creek Association," as related by Edwards who was at Southwest in 1772. He gives the names of these fifteen charter members as follows: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Markland, Mr. and Mrs. Kittrell Mundine, Mr. and Mrs. John Dillahunty, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Andrews, Mr. and Mrs. John Cox, Joseph Thraul, Mary Goodvine, Sarah Cox, Barbary Cox, and Margaret Busby.

Facts about some of these pioneers:

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Charles Markland. During the War for Independence and its aftermath he was an important person in the community. He served with 17 others on "a panell of Grand Jurors to attend at Kinston on October 27, 1773." He with four others ran the boundary line between Dobbs and Wayne Counties in 1779. He was one of the 12 trustees named in 1785 for Dobbs Academy in Kinston. As a fiscal commissioner for Governor Caswell he supervised allocation of supplies for Major Thomas Evans in his "march of near 400 miles thro a wilderness in a strange State," (Kentucky), in November, 1787. His son Charles was also a trusted fiscal agent of the Governor, returning to him from Hillsboro to Kinston in July, 1785, with about \$1200 cash procured on a warrant from Hon. James Read.

Kittrell Mundine. He was an assistant minister at Southwest. A responsible magistrate of the Revolution, he faced on June 15, 1778, 20 Tories who were required to take "the oath prescribed by law", failing which they should have to "depart this State within 60 days."

John Dillahunt, (1730-1816). He was of French Huguenot descent. Much impressed by a heart-searching sermon of George Whitefield, and later converted by the Separate Baptist preachers, Stearns and Daniel Marshall at Trent (Chinquapin Chapel), he was baptized by Philip Mulkey, and joined the initial group at Southwest. His plantation of 160 acres, in 1762, was on Strawberry Branch, near Southwest Creek. He "evinced much ability" and in 1781 was ordained to the ministry, having been formerly licensed. He served Trent fifteen years, removing to Tennessee in 1796. His wife, "with whom he had lived 68 years", died in 1816. He was an ancestor of John H. Dillahunt, (1810-1860), Disciple preacher at Chinquapin Chapel, who with John Jarman visited the home of Alexander Campbell at Bethany in the winter of 1850. Josephus Latham said of this John H. Dillahunt, "He was zealously devoted to the sublime principles of the current reformation."

John Cox. He was enlisted with Captain Thomas Graves' "Company of foot soldiers", mustered as of record, January 6, 1751.

Colonel Nathan P. Bryan, (1748-1798). A man of large affairs, his home was in Jones County within easy distance from Southwest, where he united in 1766. Joseph Biggs said that Bryan was "held in great esteem amongst men of the first character in this country," and "strove for peace amongst religious professors of every denomination and amongst all men." He served as a member of the House of Commons at Raleigh in 1787, 1791-1794, and later for two terms in the National House of Representatives at Philadelphia. He loved his church. He wrote on April 9, 1796, to John Koonce at Chinquapin Chapel that he could never "forget my brethren who are with you or cease to pray for you and the prosperity of Jerusalem."

The Separate Baptists of 1755 had a seeming miracle of expansion for more than three decades in the Carolinas, Virginia, and Georgia. Eventually they merged with other Baptists which they came to believe was ecumenically expedient. It was with distinct reservations however. Beyond the mountains in the Bluegrass State the merger was appreciably delayed and incomplete. Thousands of Kentuckians and Tennesseans who had remained Separate Baptists at heart until the 1820's and 1830's, enrolled in the columns of the rising Christian Churches, (Disciples of Christ), for

whom traditionally they had a real affinity. This in itself is a phenomenal story. Definitively, it is yet untold in the historiography of the Disciples.

#### TRANSITION

In the lean post-Revolution years, 1781-1810, it appears that Southwest suffered a dispersal of members. Some of their best trailed away to Tennessee. Perhaps in the exigencies of the time their meetinghouse had been destroyed or discommoded. Yet they could and did maintain a peripheral fellowship with a sister church, Chinquapin Chapel, where John Koonce long ministered. This Chapel reporting 44 members was host to the Neuse Association on October 19, 1811, when the "messengers" of its 22 churches with 8 ministers held annual conclave. Meanwhile a restoration was stirring at old Southwest Bridge. There Daniel Simmons, Jr., a "beloved nephew" of Abraham Kornegay, Sr., had inherited from this uncle a plantation. The will, probated in Craven Court, March, 1810, provided "that \$200 be applied towards building a Meeting House on the lands of Daniel Simmons near the Southwest Bridge to be free for the preachers of every denomination of Christians." Peculiarly he asked that a white and black inscription on the ceiling "over the door" invoke for him a prayer from "all Christians" observing it, based on Romans 14:9. Perchance a good idea, if thereby divers folk be prompted to study the Scriptures. Reportedly, first of the Kornegays in North Carolina was George, an orphan boy brought to New Bern, gateway of the Palatines, in 1710. His son, Abraham, Sr. made the will noticed above; his sister Mary, married Daniel Simmons, Sr., whose son, Daniel Simmons, Jr. inherited the Southwest plantation to which reference has been made. Daniel Simmons, Jr. married Penelope Hargett, and settled just west of Southwest Bridge near where Roland Vause now lives. Abraham Simmons, son of Daniel Simmons, Jr. was an early Baptist preacher at Southwest. This Abraham was the father of John W. Simmons, (Aug. 25, 1834—Oct. 8, 1825), and John W. was the father of Luther W. Simmons, (Feb. 25, 1875—March 12, 1962).

#### NEUSE BAPTISTS

On October 16-18, 1819, the Neuse Association met with the church at Toisnot, (Wilson). It gathered in the little frame sanctuary built sixteen years before at a primitive crossroads in that densely forested domain. This is today's busy intersection of Tarboro and Barnes Streets in "Wide-Awake Wilson." Reporting 18 members in 1819, having gained adequate prevalence in a local "free church", Southwest is first listed as a distinctive member of the Neuse. In this fraternity it was to have varied fortune for a quarter of a century.

Their number at Southwest had slowly increased to 23 in 1824, when the Neuse met there in annual session, October 15-17. Again it met there in 1832, incidentally marking an historic date for the incipient North Carolina Disciples of Christ. Eighty members it then reported, with Frederick Becton Loftin, (1802-1848), minister. Two years later their number was 72, William B. Rhem, Sr., minister, who, ten years later was preaching for Kinston Disciples in their "new church". At the start of the Neuse in

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1794, it enrolled 23 churches. In 1839, when Southwest was its host for the last time, only eight churches were in it. It was further reduced to six, of which Southwest was still one, in 1842, when it met at Fort Barnwell. Some Associational realignment together with a divisive trend in ecclesiology within the Neuse had reduced it in 1844 to its minimal merger with another Association.

Twelve delegates each attended one or more years in the annual meetings of the Neuse, from Southwest, 1819-1844, as follows: William Loftin, William H. Whitefield, Daniel Simmons, Jr., Jesse Jones, Joseph West, Shadrack Loftin, John Henry Jackson, (1826), F. B. Loftin. William Cox Loftin, Joseph Tilghman, Winston Andrews, and Samuel Loftin. These Loftins were in the ancestral line of Thomas Loftin Johnson, (July 18, 1854-April 10, 1911), a Disciple, and famous "Single Tax" mayor of Cleveland, Ohio. His mother was Mrs. Albert W. Johnson, (nee, Helen Loftin), six generations removed from Leonard Loftin, (1654-1720), "founder of the family in North Carolina."

The Neuse meeting at Southwest Church, October 20-22, 1832, was indeed a momentous one for the pioneer Disciples in the State. That very month the congregation at Rountree, (founded 1827), a constituent member of the Neuse, had been led by its pastor General William Clark to join deliberately a "no-creed-but-the-Bible," movement, with a solemn intention to practice it. This should not have been considered in dire conflict with the Neuse Baptists, certain of whose leaders had unequivocally confessed adherence to the same principle. Conservatives however, who were often in the majority, ruled that there must be extra-Biblical "Articles of Faith", denominationally conceived to validate the bonds of a restricted ecclesiastical fellowship. To this, Disciples with mature convictions demurred. American Baptists have evidently been divided on this explosive issue. Frances Wayland, (March 11, 1796-Sept. 30, 1865), a very able and outstanding proponent of their thought and polity, wrote with utmost clarity against such creeds. Francis Oliver, a lesser light, but an honored leader in the Neuse itself, had done likewise. The Separate Baptists had developed amazingly well with "no creed but the Bible."

Clark of the Disciples was supported at the Southwest Convention, by colleagues at Rountree, Little Sister, Grindle Creek, and Chinquapin Chapel, all four of these churches being members of the Neuse. At this crisis their eleven representatives were: Isaac Baldree, Charles Rountree, Orlando Canfield, Abraham Congleton, John P. Dunn, General William Clark, Benjamin F. Eborn, Louis Spier, James Reynolds, William B. Rhem, Sr., and Thomas Alphin. Little Sister asked to be enrolled as a new member of the Association. This required an examination by the appointed committee which reported favorably for its forthwith admittance. This the entire body approved. Later, however a fatal complication erupted when their fifteen articles of faith were so redrafted as to retain the predestinarian 9th article. This enjoined "that the doctrine of election is contained in the Scriptures and that it is our duty to believe it upon the authority of Him Who has revealed it," (page 4 of the Neuse Minutes, 1832). These Minutes which in due course came from the press occasioned at once the fatal offense to Little Sister, and by corollary to the entire

Disciple group involved. In this document the clerk interpolated surreptitiously a misleading passage in the Examining Committee's report. This erroneously stated that Little Sister's "delegates had acceded to the Articles of Belief drawn up by the Committee, and she was recognized as a Constituent member of this body." Disciples knew that this tactically misrepresented them. They remonstrated but the reputed Neuse Clerk posed an alibi for the controverted error. He reported in next year's Minutes that "Brother Saunders" had composed the creedal "Outlines of Belief," which had been routinely adopted at Southwest in 1832. With a talent for denominational conformity he had foisted upon Little Sister the onus of the Creed.

Clark forthrightly gave his true position in a pamphlet, now lost to us. Some day it may be found. It is known however that there was such clarified cleavage that the Disciple leaders were excluded by the Neuse in October, 1833. A new movement among Tarheels had come to life. There must linger here an affectionate word. Creditable to the Neuse was a leading statement in their approved "Circular Letter" of 1842. It said: "The Word of God contains a complete scheme of religion, exactly suited to the wants of man." That was good Separate Baptist doctrine.

#### ORIGINAL FREE WILL BAPTISTS

The Neuse Baptists declined at Southwest in the early 1840's. Its remote members on the east found ready attachment at Fort Barnwell. Others in 1844 established Harriet's Chapel, a few miles west of Southwest, and two miles southeast of Kinston. It was named for Harriet Jones "who gave the land and paid for the buildings." Here William Phillips Biddle. (1788-1853), was pastor before its congregational removal to Kinston in 1857, where it has since flourished. Meanwhile the Free Will Baptists who were strongly evangelistic, having six churches in Lenoir County in 1842, developed a nucleus at Southwest in the "free church". The Bethel Conference which had been the affiliation of these Free Will people had undergone a reformation for a decade or more, when on May 2, 1845, at Hookerton, N. C., a majority of its constituents united conventionally with the Disciples of Christ. Southwest with a bare potential at that time did not enter the above compact. It was involved with those who were reorganized at Hood's Swamp in November, 1847, as the North Carolina General Conference of Original Free Will Baptists. When this group met in their yearly meeting at Free Union, Greene County, November 6-9, 1851, representatives from Southwest made a glowing report. Recorded was its membership of 43, of whom 35 had been baptized that year. A working evangelism had found them. Its delegates of 1851: T. A. Heath, (later a Union Baptist); John Henry Jackson, (later a Disciple); and T. Hill. The clerks of this Conference in 1857, when Southwest's growing membership reached 68, were: William A. Brand, (later, a Disciple), and John Henry Jackson. Jackson had also been a Neuse Baptist leader there as early as 1826, and 31 years later, as noted, a trusted Free Will leader with responsible tasks Associationally committed to him. During this crucial period the Free Will body, in common with other such democratic societies, was torn with sundry controversies relevant to secret societies, creedal conditioning, and recurring problems. In 1865, Southwest was off

their roll, and the whole of Lenoir County had but two small churches of their faith. And a new order had beckoned.

At this tragic time was the great American War of Brothers. Wherefore this community was laid prostrate. A battle raged for hours at Southwest's doorstep, beginning at 9 o'clock on Friday morning December 12, 1862, succeeded by another on Sunday, the 14th. Forces of General John Gray Foster, (1823-1874), from Federal headquarters at New Bern, attacked the Confederates along the way to the Yankee capture of Kinston at the bleak Christmas time of '62. Soldiers of Captain Cole, Co. K, Third N. Y. Cavalry, faced the Boys in Gray "at a place called Southwest Creek." There at the western side of the bridge was "an earthwork thrown up directly across the road," behind which were the guns of the Southerners. The residual entrenchment mound may be seen from Southwest's churchyard of to-day. Confederates were brave but were overcome in this instance by superior forces. "Foster's Raid" went devastatingly as far as Mt. Olive. The bridge at the Creek destroyed in the battle was hastily rebuilt from the timbers of the old "free church." It was fourteen years before the next meetinghouse appeared on the historic site. Then it was the work of the Disciples, where previously only "brush arbor" accommodations had seasonally obtained for the services.

#### UNION BAPTISTS

These were in ante-bellum churches organized and led by James W. Hunnicutt, and later by Bushrod Washington Nash, (March 24, 1831-January 26, 1911), and their respective associates. Nash was said to be "of Spurgeon's faith". These North Carolina leaders worked for a half-century to form a corporate fellowship of Baptists who favored the practice of open communion in their churches. Congregations of this faith existed in Lenoir County at Southwest, Bethel, Hickory Grove, and Lousan Swamp. Four other such churches were in adjacent counties. Disciples of the area had friendly relations with them and received several of their ministers into fellowship at the sharp decline of their communion in the early 1870's. Union Baptist records of 1887 claim 13 members at Southwest which had long been inactive. Their entire body in eastern North Carolina had been reduced to 442 individuals in 1892. Curtis William Howard, (Oct. 28, 1853-July 23, 1932) long residing near Southwest, had been a Union Baptist communicant, but became a Disciple preacher in 1876, continuing in that honored service for 56 years. James Latham Winfield, (1852-1897), likewise came from the Union Baptists. He preached to Southwest Union Baptists while they had no home—it was in the "gin room of the grist mill at the Lake Side." This was near the place where the Armenia Christian Church now stands. Here Winfield developed a Disciple nucleus destined to reconstitute Southwest upon the course which it has now followed for 91 years.

#### CHRISTIAN CHURCH, (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

C. W. Howard in June, 1885, wrote a short account of the beginning of the Southwest Disciples, of which he was then one. About "12 persons," he said, formerly of Union Baptist faith there had decided in 1870 to allay their perplexities stemming from "human creeds" by uniting with the

Disciple brotherhood which owns no creed but the Bible. Further, said Howard, John Henry Jackson becoming a Disciple, "was a prime mover in this little church." Then "it was favored by ministerial visits from J. L. Winfield, A. C. Hart, Jeseplus Latham, Dr. J. T. Walsh, and J. H. Foy, which gave great encouragement." Moreover, Jackson the zealous layman "succeeded in getting a small but comfortable house of worship completed at Southwest in 1876." As first organized, Jackson was deacon, and W. G. Watts, clerk. Next officers of record, 1885, were: Levi T. Russell, and James H. Haddock, elders; John Irwin Vause, and D. L. Williams, deacons.

The only extant list of the earliest members at Southwest names the following: Elizabeth Hines, Elizabeth Jackson, John Henry Jackson, W. G. Watts, Mary G. Watts, and D. L. Williams, for 1870; Lucetta Gates, Mary E. Howard, Bettie A. Outlaw, Pussie Watts, and Lou H. Frazier, for 1876—in all, three men and eight women. Jackson was a community leader, and prosperous planter, residing near the church. He is said to have owned 570 acres on the eastern border of Southwest Creek extending to its mouth. In 1872, a year after Southwest Disciples had organized, when only fifteen in number, he represented them at their Kinston State Convention, October 10-12. It had been reported to the Convention in 1871 as a "new church", one of thirteen such entries in that banner year. As of record other delegates from Southwest in these annual Conventions until 1889, were: C. W. Howard, J. C. Kennedy, Levi T. Russell, D. L. Williams, J. I. Vause, J. Parker, James Huggins, W. B. Isler, and G. T. Grace. Church clerks serving here until 1915: J. I. Vause, C. F. Russell, Mrs. Bettie Hines, and Joel E. Vause.

It struggled to survive throughout its first ten years. During 1877-1879 the membership was a lowly ten. Its revivals, however, each summer made growth, so that its number in 1886 was 60. A pastoral unity embraced it in 1883 with Stony Branch and New Bern, then a tiny mission, E. L. Sowers, Minister. Next year the unity had Southwest, Haskins Chapel, Pleasant Hill, Deep Springs, and White Oak, minister, J. W. Trotman. In 1886 they remunerated pastor Nathan B. Hood with \$75 for the year, and evinced a missionary awakening by giving \$35.75 in cash and pledges to the State Service. Next year it raised the preacher's pay to \$80 per annum, and made a token contribution to the cause of ministerial education.

Their earliest church school of record was for 1885-1886, Jesse Vause, superintendent, enrolling 54, including 4 teachers. It was an "all-year school," average attendance, 35; books in library, 15; others owned by individuals, 12; 20 "Sunday School papers used", and the total year's contribution, \$15. The enrollment grew to 71, including 10 teachers, in 1888.

Church membership in 1887 was 82, and pastor J. R. Tingle received a salary of \$6.25 per month. On September 3, 1887, 51 of their members went to the founding of the Armenia Christian Church, a few miles away. Thus in 1889 they could list but 31 members and the pay of their faithful pastor, Jesse T. Davis was but \$2.50 per month. Then it was Armenia's turn 58 years later to yield 47 members for the founding near-by of Southwood Memorial Christian Church, December 12, 1945.

A native son, Joel E. Vause, (Aug. 29, 1890-June 26, 1962) became a spiritual leader at Southwest while yet a youth. He helped his home church to decide to make timely housing improvements in 1908. Another recruit

from that community, C. F. Outlaw, (Jan. 27, 1883-May 12, 1950), while pastor there, helped his cousin Joel to raise the needed building funds. Pastor S. W. Sumrell in September, 1909, reported: "Southwest has taken on new life and bids to be one of our best congregations. A. A. Ferguson, Kinston preacher, held our meeting; 16 added. We have built a new house there this year, or nearly so. It is nicely painted and is in a good neighborhood, has a beautiful location and is doing well." Its property was then valued at \$1,000.

Etta Nunn of New Bern, state organizer for the Women's work spoke there on September 19, 1909, and organized their "Mission Band" of 25 members. A local correspondent said: "She did our church good and made a very favorable impression for the missionary cause."

Other sons which Southwest has given to the ministry besides Vause and Outlaw mentioned above, are A. F. Whitehead, Leo Simmons, and Charles B. Vause, (Baptist). A Southwest pastor at the turn of the century was William John Gible, (1840-1938). His home was not far away at Bonus, and Dover. His son, a native Tarheel, James Nicholas Gible, ministered to the large and influential First Christian Church of Springfield, Illinois, 1955-1957. He married a lovely woman from the "Sooner State", June 19, 1913. Their son, William Theodore, is of the third generation in this line devoted to the Christian Ministry. Their leadership has "extended into many activities of brotherhood life."

Southwest's old building stood at the water's edge of the Creek. A summer's flooding impaired their baptizing place and washed away the "old river road" which ran by the meetinghouse. For a secure replacement on higher ground in due proximity to the new hard-surfaced road the plant was lifted on mobile rollers in 1930. It was prudently left thus suspended overnight that the united judgment of the congregation might be obtained as to the best place for its reseating. Their building fund of \$1400 faithfully assembled during critical months was fortunately paid out just before the bank closings of 1931. "A new section had been built into the side of the old making a T." They now could say that they "had an attractive rural church," and were "going forward in spite of the depression." Again in 1941 enlarged educational facilities at cost of \$200 were completed.

Their World War II Service Flag, in June, 1943, represented these 15 young men: Raymond Casey, Horace Faulkner, William Jones, Jasper Jones, Marvin Jones, Hoke King, Linwood Noble, Reid Sutton, Thomas Sykes, Austin Tilghman, Johnnie Tilghman, Jimmie Ward, Edward Vause, Jack Vause, and Floyd Casey, Jr.

Their first Daily Vacation Bible School was held in August, 1949, enrolling 36. The teachers: Mesdames: Roy Gray, J. F. Tilghman, Jr., Joe Casey; Misses: Louise Casey, Stella White, and Jean Allen. This enrollment reached 293 in June, 1960. Their new annex contained four church school rooms, kitchen, two rest rooms, and a recreation room. Stained windows and gas heaters were installed. A paid music director, Mrs. T. S. Maynard was engaged; other choir directors had been Mrs. Hilda Smith Duke, and Mrs. Lucy Edwards. A hundred new hymnals were bought.

Opportunity came for their recent pastors with loyal helpers on the field, to strengthen the overall church organization. Their missionary society began in 1913; their Ladies Aid in 1930. Mr. and Mrs. W. O. Henderson had started their Christian Endeavor Society on August 7, 1923, with 44 members. Their Christian Women's Fellowship began in 1955 with 27 participating members, Mrs. Hoke King, president. Their Christian Youth Fellowship had organized in 1947, with 22 young people, sponsored by Mrs. Joe Casey, and Mrs. Thelma Spell. Their Christian Men's Fellowship started with 12 men in March 1956, Roy Gray, president. Southwest's cash offering to construction of Camp Caroline dedicated in June, 1954, was \$338.31.

As a matter of course the title to the church site through the long years has never been in dispute. But many courthouse papers at Kinston had perished in flames. Thus the need was felt by Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Sutton and others that an up-to-date deed should be of record. This was accomplished on January 17, 1953. The present site on the premises hal- lowed by centuries, was given by Lamb T. Waters, (1871-1960), and O. Adair Kennedy. Its lines in footage: west 253; north, 228.6; east, 237; south, 229.8. The church trustees in 1956: Roland Vause, Jack Tilghman, Decatur Noble, Pete Tilghman, Jerry Sutton, Sr., Leonas White, and Floyd Casey.

On the official board in 1958 were: Roy White, chairman; Roy Gray, vice chairman; Jack Vause, treasurer; and Mrs. Thelma Spell, secretary. The chairmen of Functional Committees: Worship, Mrs. Floyd Casey, Jr.; Evangelism, Mrs. Leonard Vause; Education, Mrs. Jack Vause; Stewardship, Hoke King; Building and Grounds, Archie White; Librarian, Mrs. Roy White. Officers in the C.Y.F.: Linda Vause, president; Linda Noble, secretary; these young persons accepted landscaping of the grounds as a special project.

The seven children of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Tilghman, Sr., for a memorial to their parents, presented an organ to the church on May 3, 1959. The father born in April, 1879, had superintended the church school at Southwest for 20 years. Oldest member of the church, born in May, 1861, is his mother now in her 102nd year. She is Mrs. John Abner Tilghman, (nee Nettie Miller). When seventeen years of age she married, and with her husband "built a small home in the woods" at Southwest. She was "baptized in the creek behind the church during the pastorate of C. W. Howard." She may be the oldest resident in Lenoir County. A couple that were long a sturdy factor in sustaining Southwest were: John Irvin Vause, (May 24, 1857-April 25, 1922), and Mrs. Vause, (nee Attie Elmore), (Aug. 8, 1866-Aug. 25, 1950), parents of Joel E. Vause, who has held 20 revivals there, 11 of which were conducted in succession while his mother yet lived.

There was a beginning in 1959 of funds to build "a much needed new sanctuary." A "School of Missions" was held at the church in March, 1960. The auditorium has been newly carpeted and air-conditioned. Serving the pulpit each Lord's Day is D. L. Warren from Atlantic Christian College. The local correspondent beams: "With church every Sunday we are growing in spiritual strength as well as members."

Membership at Southwest is reportedly 226, of which 118 are resident.

### LIST OF MINISTERS AT SOUTHWEST

1763-1765,	Charles Markland.	1887, 1890,	
1766	James McDaniel.	1891,	J. L. Burns
1767-1795,	John Dillahunty.	1888,	J. R. Tingle
1797-1818,	John Koonce.	1889,	Jesse T. Davis
1832-1833,	Fréderrick Becton Loftin.	1892-1906	W. J. Gibble
1834-1835,	William B. Rhem, Sr.		Heaton Petree
1870-1876;	J. L. Winfield.		A. F. Leighton.
	A. C. Hart	1907, 1908,	Cecil F. Outlaw
	Josephus Latham	1909-1921,	S. W. Sumrell
	Dr. J. T. Walsh	1922-1924,	W. Otto Henderson
	Joseph H. Foy.	1925, 1928-1935,	Losker B. Bennett
1877-1879,	C. W. Howard.	1926, 1927	Lawrence J. Bickers
1880-1883,	Dr. H. D. Harper.	1936-1938,	Everett J. Harris
	D. W. Davis	1939,	W. J. B. Burrus
	H. C. Bowen	1940-1951,	Rupert A. Phillips
	E. L. Sowers.	1952-1954,	Morgan C. McKinney
1884.	J. W. Trotman.	1955-1957,	Kenneth Rouse
	Jesse T. Davis.	1958,	David Blackwood
1885, 1886,	Nathan B. Hood.	1959, 1960,	F. T. Riley
	H. C. Bowen.	1961, 1962,	D. L. Warren.

### AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was pleased when the pastor and officers of Southwest Church asked me to write this monograph for their Bi-Centennial. Some sources obscure and hard to come at, I have had to use in part. My story, I submit is authentic. At any rate I have done my human best to make it so. To begin with there were no adequate guide lines for a full two-century account of this church continuing through vicissitudes many. I must needs have picked up the threads wherever found.

The Southwest Church Scrap Book created by Mrs. Hoke King and helpers was very useful. It is of nice appearance and admirable content. A rescript of old documents by Mrs. Thelma Spell, the local church secretary, was a gracious help. From the Jerry Suttons and the Vauses came excellent suggestions. An historical article in the *Kinston Free Press* was of service. A letter to the author from Daniel W. Fagg, Jr. of Mt. Olive, N. C., gave factual intelligence on the hitherto unrelated developments at the Southwest of 1810.

Other sources I can only indicate here. Media in the Carolina Disciplina Library, of Atlantic Christian College, gathered through several decades, served us basically. Specifically, Morgan Edwards in his *Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of North Carolina*, Vol. 4, was indispensable for revealing the Southwest Separate Baptist Church of October 1762. The *Colonial and State Records of North Carolina*; George W. Paschal's *History of North Carolina Baptists*, Vol. 1; the Johnson-Holloman *Story of Kinston and Lenoir County*; W. W. Howe's *Kinston, White Hall, and Goldsboro Expedition of December, 1862*; and the MS. *Genealogy, Loftin and Allied Families*, May, 1936, with the foregoing have been for us a chain of invaluable reference.

This centuries-old saga of a rural people is offered with gratitude for manifest providential help in its telling.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Copies of this Historical Monograph can be procured from C. C. Ware, Curator, Carolina Disciplina Library, Box 1164, Wilson, N. C., at \$1.00 each.

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