

## Morton Memorial United Methodist Church: Monteagle, Grundy County, Tennessee

Anna Parker

The Tennessee Conference was organized in 1812 according to Cullen T. Carter.<sup>1</sup> Andrew Jackson was General of the Tennessee Militia. The War of 1812 and the Indian War were making him famous. The big earthquake and the formation of Reelfoot Lake also occurred in 1812.

A brief history of the town of Monteagle is essential to the history of the Methodist Church. In 1829, there were two land grants that affected the Monteagle Methodists. The first was the John E. Bostick grant of 5,000 acres. This plot of land began at the northwest corner of the then non-existent Monteagle Sunday School Assembly close to Highway 41 as it approached Monteagle from the north and ran due south to near the southern brow of the mountain, then east to about the Ingman place, north through Clouse Hill, and then back to the beginning. This made an approximate square. The second land grant was made to Basil Summers, also in 1829. No one had surveyed the grants, and it was not discovered until much later that the second grant (rectangular in shape) lay entirely inside the first grant to Bostick. This second grant was much smaller and encompassed what is today Summerfield.

In 1830, John Moffat bought what was supposed to be the John E. Bostick grant of 5,000 acres. Moffat later discovered that part of this land purchase contained the second land grant made in 1829 to Basil Summers. Mr. Summers himself had built and occupied a cabin on his land; this became known as Summerfield. The cabin was across the road from the Hollingsworth Trace to Tracy City. This trace was a part of the Nickajack Trace. Hollingsworth Trace was named for a Mr. Hollingsworth, who had settled near Wonder Cave. He had slaves, and they made stone fences and possibly roadways. The road ascending to Forrest Point was the Nickajack

Trace. In early Indian days, this was the Cisca Trail, which originated in St. Augustine, Florida, and led to the Old Stone Fort in Manchester, Tennessee.

The Cisca Trail went by the cabin of Basil Summers. Patty Purnell says that Mr. Summers built a church on the other side of Hollingsworth or Cisca Trail.<sup>2</sup> He built the church by himself because his son was too young to help. Mr. Summers alone raised the logs for a church in what is now the Summerfield Cemetery. Incidentally, in the Summerfield Cemetery, there are three flat stones, which date back to 1840. It is uncertain when Mr. Summers' church became known as the Summerfield Methodist Church. It was, perhaps, about the time the Beersheba community was occupied by settlers from McMinnville. **John Hiram Layne Jr.**

Methodists were spreading throughout the southeast from the Carolinas westward through Tennessee, perhaps by the circuit riders. One of the early preachers was ~~Isaac Layne~~, whom Miss Purnell calls Grandpa Layne.<sup>3</sup> His wife was an ~~Indian, Samantha Walker~~. Isaac Layne and his brother lived at the foot of the mountain in Layne's Cove (formerly called Hollingsworth Cove), and they walked up the mountain where they both preached. The Summerfield Methodist Charge came into being about 1880. Probably the first woman preacher that the church had was a Mrs. Smith, sister of Mr. Bradshaw, who was the first postmaster of Monteagle.

It is interesting to note that John Moffat, founder of Monteagle, worked as an immigration officer. He came to the mountain by train from Cowan (the railroad had been built earlier). He was on his way to check the Swiss Colony in Gruetli. The train ran over a cow near the place where the Highway 41 crossing is now located. This was the old Stage Road, and it descended the mountain to Pelham. While the train was stopped, Mr. Moffat walked along the Stage Road. He was impressed with the beauty of this land, the land that he later bought from the Bostick heirs. Monteagle was founded in 1840 and was called Moffat's Station. The name Monteagle may have been in honor of a friend of Moffat, Count Monteagle. This spelling came into use about 1880. However, before this time, hotel records call it Mount Eagle Springs; some say that this name was used because of the beautiful soaring eagles on the mountain.

The earliest record available of Morton Memorial Church (in 1880) shows the church to be on a charge with Summerfield, Pelham, and Layne's Cove. Apparently these churches were the first Methodist churches in the vicinity. There is a deed from John Moffat to the Methodist Episcopal Church South at

Monteagle. It was registered in Jasper, Tennessee, in September 1877. This deed was made to Isaac Layne, one of the trustees and a preacher at the Summerfield Methodist Church. Another witness and a trustee, R. J. Only, is mentioned in early church literature. Other trustees mentioned on the deed are Pleasant Mitchell, T. J. Tribble, and S. P. Goodman. This deed is not to the land on which Morton Memorial was built. Why the church was not built there is not known.

However, the deeds (there are two of them) show that the land, on which Morton Memorial was erected, was purchased in two lots. The first lot (the south half of the property) was purchased on 30 July 1895, from Robert and Elizabeth Riddle for \$100. This deed was made to D. T. Tucker, one of the trustees of Monteagle Mission Methodist Episcopal Church South of the Tennessee Conference. This deed was registered in Jasper, Marion County, on 29 August 1895, by the registrar, E. H. Cravens. It is interesting to note that the deed calls for the counties of Grundy, Marion, and Franklin. The second lot (the north half of the property) was purchased the next year, 18 November 1896, from Robert and Elizabeth Riddle for \$140. This deed was made to R. C. Francis, H. C. Parker, and D. T. Tucker, trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in the counties of Grundy and Marion. For some reason, this deed was not registered in Jasper until 2 March 1982. Eunice Turner was the registrar of Marion County at that time.

Many people attended Summerfield church, but with the building of the first Monteagle Hotel, some Methodists began attending the old Union Church, which was also used as the public school. This church was on the hill behind the present Dairy Queen. The Methodists attended on the first and third Sundays. The Presbyterians and the Church of Christ had one Sunday each. Records show this Union Church in existence from about 1880 until the early 1890s. There was also a Union Sunday school.

About 1880, John Tucker and his wife, Mary K. Howell, who are commemorated on the entrance arch to the church, brought their family of four sons and a daughter, Mandy, from Pelham. John Tucker came to help in the building of Fairmont Women's College (now DuBose Conference Center). Tom Tucker also came and set up a sawmill. He bought land at \$0.50 an acre and cut chestnut wood for the construction work.

Will Richmond, Sr., came from Sequatchie Valley to work on the construction. He married Mandy Tucker. The Tuckers and the Richmonds were staunch Methodists. Together they were building a Methodist church

from wood on the lot where the rock church now stands. Addie Hoss, wife of North Carolina Bishop E. E. Hoss, interrupted and wanted the church built of



**Morton Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South, circa 1920** (photo submitted by Anna Parker)

mountain stone. At the time, it caused some differences of opinion among members and those interested in the church. However, this was soon erased by the excitement of building a new church.

A new plan was secured, and finally, a stone church was started in 1897. Building of the church was an ambitious job. There were many stone masons on the

mountain because of Sewanee's growth, but the Methodists had money for only one mason, Jim Meeks from Pelham valley. He walked up the mountain to work. Other people worked, and many just gave their help a few hours at a time to pick up stone chips. It is hard to realize the amount of human labor that it took to erect the church. The cornerstone is dated 1897. The memorial windows are dated 1903. However, the church was already in use. The windows had been covered with brown domestic soaked in linseed oil until the stained glass windows could be purchased.

The mountain stone came from the Robert C. Francis' land. The quarry was on the north side of the mountain. It is somewhat east of where the westbound Interstate I-24 rest stop is now located. Much stone was quarried here and used for many other buildings as well as for Morton Memorial.

It was on the last Sunday in August of 1904 that Bishop E. E. Hoss dedicated Morton Memorial Methodist Church in memory of David Morton, who was the first secretary of the Church Extension Board of the Methodist

Episcopal Church, South. It was David Morton who had been instrumental in securing large sums of money to help with the construction. He had become ill and died. It was a fitting memorial to dedicate the church in his memory.<sup>4</sup>

Monteagle is now a progressive city with many businesses, churches, clubs, organizations, and community and social events. Monteagle and Morton Memorial Church can take pride in all that John Moffat saw in the untamed land so many years ago—the beauty of the mountain scenery, the aesthetic value of the views from both the north and the south sides of the mountain, and in the healthful clean air that one breathes.

Morton Memorial is unique in many ways. Its location on a main highway and in a resort town makes it easily accessible to tourists and others, and thus many visitors attend the services of the church. Almost never is there a Sunday without visitors. They are an important part of the church. The church is also unique in that everything about it is a memorial or a special gift. Beginning with the entrance arch and proceeding throughout the sanctuary and educational building are found items that were given by, in memory of, or in honor of many people. Some of these memorials are the church itself, the stained-glass windows, the pews, the communion table with its accessories, the vases, the carpet, the organs, the pianos, the chimes, the hymnals, the flags, the church signs, and back to the entrance arch which was dedicated to John Tucker. On the arch are inscribed these unusual words, “He did what he thought was right.”

From the many events in the history of Morton Memorial, the following were chosen because they are representative of the history, and also because more details were available.

## **The Youth**

The General Conference in 1890 provided for the organization of a youth group—the National Church Youth Club.<sup>5</sup> The first report of a youth group at Morton Memorial was in 1907 when a Junior League was organized with 14 members. In 1923, a senior Epworth League was organized with 30 members. There have been several names used by the young people since then—the Epworth League, Methodist Youth Fellowship, and United Methodist Youth Fellowship.

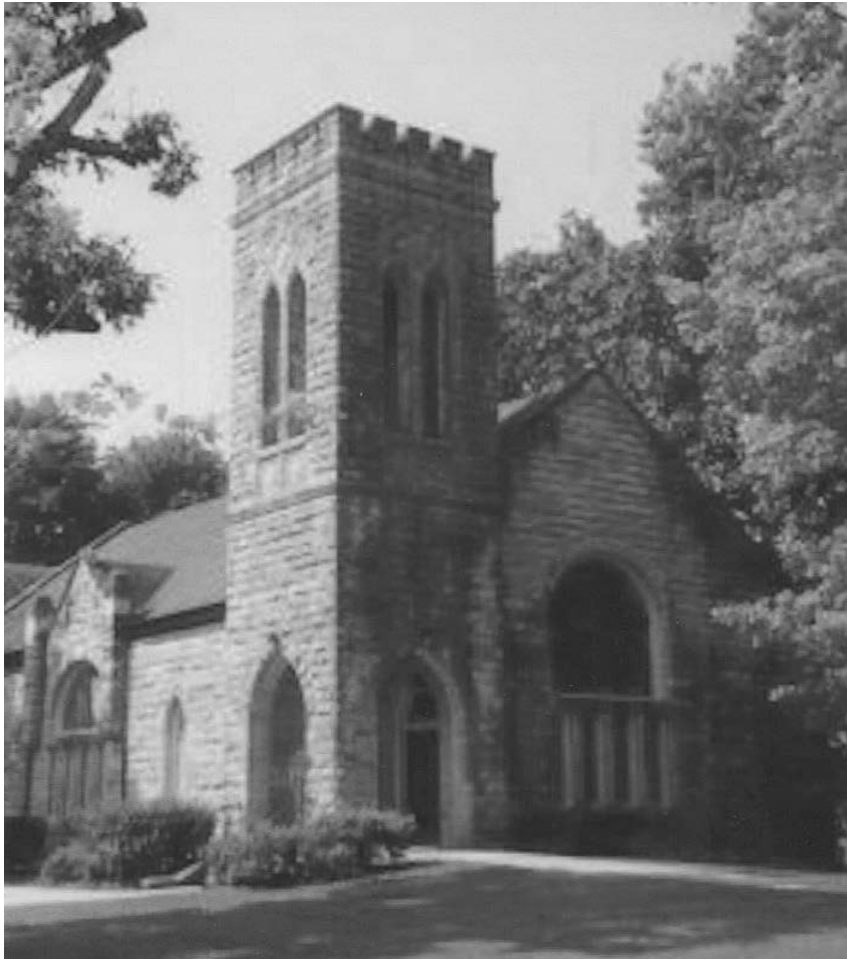
Records show that there has always been an active youth group in the church. They report their time as pleasant and enjoyable. They have had weekly religious meetings, monthly trips to various places in Grundy County

for Sub-District Meetings, ball games at home and elsewhere, swimming trips, trips to the Smoky Mountains and Fall Creek Falls, as well as many other enjoyable and uplifting events.

### **The Methodist Women**

The Methodist Women were organized in 1895 and were called the Ladies Aid Society. In 1910, a Women's Home Missionary Society was organized. At one time, there were two societies—one for home missions and one for foreign. This soon changed and became one. In 1940, the name became Women's Society of Christian Service, and in 1968, the name was changed to United Methodist Women.

By 1952, the church had grown large enough to support a night missionary



**Bell tower at Morton Memorial UMC** (photo submitted by Col. E. C. Stewart)

group. The Wesleyan Service Guild was organized to serve the women of the church who were working. The members of both groups worked closely together. Later, the Guild became a circle of the United Methodist Women.

### **The Bell**

Much has been said about the bell tower, but little is known about the bell itself. The original bell is a beautiful brass bell with a melodious tone. The inscription on the bell is Vanduzen and Tift, Cincinnati, Ohio. George Otis contacted the Historical Society

of Cincinnati, and they gave him the following information. The company

was founded in 1839 as the G. W. Koffman Co. In 1865, the name was changed to Vanduzen and Tift. They were located at 102 East Second Street and were in the business of making brass fittings, castings, gages, and all types of bells. They went out of business in 1943.

At a meeting of the Quarterly Conference on 30 August 1915, permission was granted to secure a donation in the amount of \$200 from the Board of Church Extension for the purpose of purchasing a bell. In view of this record, it is assumed that the bell was bought soon after the meeting in 1915.

### **Various Statistics**

Statistical records in the Journals of the Tennessee Conference from 1880 to the present and in the Archives in Nashville have given interesting facts about the church at Monteagle.<sup>6</sup> The membership has varied from 115 in 1894 (no number of churches), to 576 in 1902 (six churches), to 87 in 1917 (no number), to 729 in 1928 (again six churches), to 140 in the 1930s, to 253 in the 1950s, to 157 in the 1980s, to 196 at present.

Sunday School enrollment and average attendance have also varied. The top was reached in 1954 with 277 on roll and in 1958 with an average attendance of 142. The one Sunday that the attendance really soared was 11 May 1958, when the attendance count reached 385.

The pastor's salary has progressed from nothing at first to \$3.50, \$195, \$810, \$3,700, \$14,500, to the present salary of over \$32,500. Yes, these figures are the annual salary, and the decimal point is in the correct place.

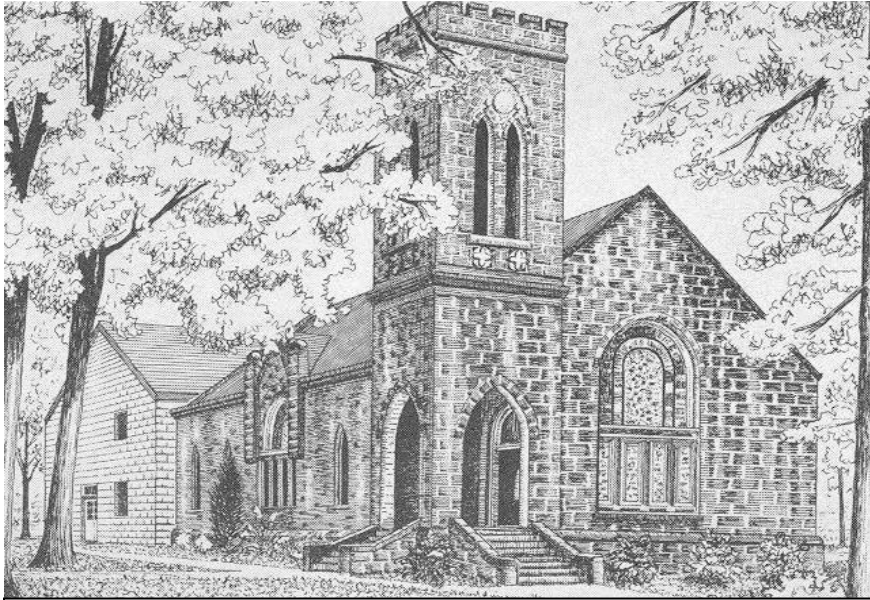
The church was originally valued at about \$5,000, but now it is valued at \$1,100,000. The parsonage has been valued as little as \$500, but its present value is in excess of \$210,000.

### **The Educational Building**

The sanctuary was the only building that Morton Memorial had. Two rooms had been partitioned off in the pulpit area. Twelve classes were meeting in this building. The need for an educational building was obvious. These needs were finally met with the building of the two-story block structure behind the sanctuary. Some teachers moved in before the building was completed. There were no ceilings, just open to the roof of the gymnasium. There were no doors, and at one time, a part of the building was used before the floor was poured. The weather was cold, but no one complained; they had space.

The first floor has classrooms, pastor's office, kitchen, dining area, and

restrooms. The archives cabinet is housed in one of the classrooms. On the second floor is a full-sized gymnasium.



**Drawing of Morton Memorial UMC, showing location of education building.**

The Educational Building was dedicated on 11 September 1955. Bishop Roy Short was asked to preach the dedication sermon. Other ministers taking part in the ceremony were J. Dallas Bass, Allen Hardison, Rauzelle Johnson, W. J. Fesmire, R. L. Benton, W. A. Swift, and J. T. Blackwood.

The new gymnasium was used frequently for practicing, playing games with other churches, or just having fun. The young people were the biggest users; the public school used it until a gym was built at the Monteagle Public School; the Guild women had a basketball team and played with other Guilds; dinners were served to make money; fellowship dinners were enjoyed.

### **Blackwood Day**

19 November 1957 was an important day at Morton Memorial. It was important not just for the church here but for the church at large, the district, the conference, and most of all for the Rev. James Thomas Blackwood and his family. This was the day set aside by the Tennessee Conference to celebrate Brother Blackwood's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was born in Wayne County, Tennessee on 19 November 1857.

At the age of 14, the Rev. J. T. Blackwood became a member of the Methodist church. He was licensed to preach on 4 May 1878, and became an elder in 1884. He had begun his ministry as a Circuit Rider, and for over 50 years, he was an active minister. He was a Presiding Elder for 16 years and was a delegate to the General Conference three times. After his retirement from active ministry, he enjoyed filling the pulpits of other ministers when



they were away. But the most impressive of his extra preaching activities was on that one Sunday in May when he preached his annual sermon at Morton Memorial to commemorate the occasion of his receiving his license to preach in the Methodist Church—4 May 1878. This annual sermon was delivered every year after his retirement through his 99<sup>th</sup> year.

Although Brother Blackwood became ill and was unable to be present, the service was held as planned. Bishop Roy H. Short delivered the sermon. Allen Hardison presided over the meeting. Other ministers taking part were J. Dallas Bass, R. L. Benton, R. M. Johnson, Farris F. Moore, E. P. Anderson, Harvey W. Seay, Cullen T. Carter, Frank Haley, and Lynn Hays.

### **The Sesquicentennial**

The Sesquicentennial of Methodism in Middle Tennessee celebrated 150 years of the existence of the Tennessee Conference. Of this occasion, Cullen T. Carter wrote, “It [Methodism] spread over Middle Tennessee like the dew of heaven. The Methodist Church in Middle Tennessee was never better housed, better located, better organized, better financed, better unified, with greater morale, the membership better trained, the ministry better educated, in higher favor, never larger numerically nor had a more efficient leadership. What will be the story after another hundred and fifty years?”<sup>7</sup> At Morton Memorial, this occasion was celebrated on 24 May 1962. The celebration consisted of three episodes.

Episode I was the arrival of the Circuit Rider (Grapple Smith) on his horse. The Circuit Rider was welcomed by the Exhorter (Wilburn Sampley) as well as by other members of the congregation.

Episode II was a picnic on the church lawn. Alene Partin and Josephine Sampley were the hostesses. Songs by the people and speeches by Grapple Smith, Wilburn Sampley, Franklin Taylor, and Mildred Smith were enjoyed while everyone feasted.

Episode III was a program in the sanctuary. Various members of the congregation were on the program as well as the pastor, Rev. Jerry Hilton. A special quartet from Tracy City sang. The entire program was under the leadership of Ethel Blanton Colston.

### **Many Weddings**

Morton Memorial has been in demand for a variety of weddings, some quite elaborate, some simple, but all beautiful. Many people have said their

wedding vows here—the members, those of other churches seeking a pretty setting, and those with no church ties at all.

### **The Parsonages**

There have been four parsonages. Before the first parsonage was built, the ministers either rented a house or boarded with the Wrenn family. Rev. John L. Taylor rented the Garland Foutch house. Some ministers were students from Vanderbilt University and came only for weekends.

At the Quarterly Conference on 1 December 1919, it was decided to find a suitable parsonage. This parsonage was on the street behind the former Monteagle Motel and across the street from Rhoda Condra. The first pastor to occupy this parsonage was Felix Coleman. The parsonage was used until World War II. In 1943, Waddell Roberts, who was pastor at Tracy City, was also assigned to Monteagle because of the manpower shortage during the war. He continued to live in Tracy City. Rather than leave the parsonage vacant, the trustees rented the parsonage to a family. This parsonage burned during the time that it was rented. When R. L. Benton came, he lived in the Jim Francis house on the corner near the church. O. H. VanLandingham lived there also.

The second parsonage was the Annie Bennett house. It was on the corner across from Greeter's Building Supply. It was bought in 1946 while O. H. VanLandingham was here, but the first minister to live in it was Rauzelle Johnson. This parsonage was sold to the Marion Lumber Company in the 1960s.

Charles U. Bowden gave the lot on which the third parsonage was built. Jerry Hilton helped with the plans, and he was the first occupant of this third parsonage. Dedication of the parsonage was on 28 June 1981 by Mark Ashley.

The fourth and current parsonage was bought in the 1980s. The house was originally the home of the J. M. Colston family. However, several families had lived in it. When this house became available, the church bought the property. It is in an ideal location because it is on Highway 41 and next to the church property. The Rev. J. D. Spencer was the first minister to live in the fourth parsonage.

### **The 100-Plus-Two Homecoming Celebration**

The centennial should have been celebrated in 1980. Time slipped by, and preparations were not completed until two years later, 9 May 1982. That is

why it is called the 100-Plus-Two Homecoming. Perhaps, this is as it was meant to be. The preparations were complete, the day dawned beautiful and bright, the expectations were high, the house clean, the food prepared, the video camera adjusted—all was in readiness. More than 200 people attended the services. Bishop Edward L. Tullis had the sermon with other ministers taking part—James Beaty, Mark Ashley, Jerry Hilton, Woodward Adams, Walter Schaerer, and Donald Bailey.

The day was divided into five parts: the gathering hour, the worshipping hour, the feasting hour, the remembering hour, and the social hour. The program was under the direction of a large committee, chaired by Anna Parker.

### **The Membership Roll**

The story of the membership roll is complicated. Fires, neglect, and carelessness have interrupted record keeping. In the early years, one pastor complained in almost every report to the Quarterly Conference that Morton Memorial kept its rolls alphabetically rather than chronologically as the Discipline required. Of course, that same pastor made not one entry regarding whom he had received or removed, and his tenure is one of the blank eras in the church roll.

As successive pastors have come and gone, the roll has been posted or partially posted, spelled or misspelled as the pastor's hearing and handwriting allowed, re-posted by faithful membership secretaries to the best of their ability, and burned by the parsonage children. Some records of quarterly and charge conferences were preserved and have given clues to the membership at various times. However, in a few cases, one pastor would report a group of persons received on profession of faith in his last report before annual conference, and the next pastor would report the same group in his first report after his appointment to the charge. The names were identical. Also, other pastors delighted in reporting a wife and husband as being received into the membership on a certain date without regard to the fact that one or both of them had been on the church roll for many years.

In the process of writing the church history in the 1980s, the Church Historian Anna Parker became interested in finding the “lost” ones and getting a more accurate idea of just how many persons had actually been members of Morton Memorial in its 100 plus years. She piqued the interest of Church Treasurer Cam Stewart, who put all the names and dates that could

be found into the computer and pumped out volumes of results. Then, the work began and continued into the 1990s.

Historian Anna Parker convened a knowledgeable group of members and former members who combined church and family records, conference archives, and personal memories to comb the mass of data and refine it into the best possible substitute for actual records. The list went in and out of the computer dozens of times and was screened again after each reentry and sorting. There is no way of determining the actual dates when most of the early members were received, the method of their reception or removal, or the date of removal. However, it is felt that both the list itself and the order of membership numbers are close enough to serve as a basis for the keeping of accurate records of the more than 1,300 persons who have been members.

To everyone who kept and preserved the church records throughout the years, the church owes a debt of thanks. Special appreciation goes to those who devoted countless hours to the reconstruction and resurrection of this record of the membership of Morton Memorial: Eloise Partin (487), Alva Lee Hassler (495), Anna Mary Parker (512), Mary Elizabeth Francis Shelton (593), Virginia Ann Francis Thompson (613), and most especially to Ellis Cameron Stewart, Jr. (918).

### **The Epilogue**

A history of Morton Memorial is, at best, incomplete; actually a history of any church is incomplete. Records are partial or missing completely. Although minutes of meetings have been written, they have not been preserved. There was no central storage place. (Morton Memorial now has an Archives Cabinet.) The accounts of meetings have been misplaced, or stored away, or lost in an attic somewhere. Attempts must be made to capture the past in order to pass it on to the future. Those early Christians worked hard, diligently, and lovingly to build Morton Memorial.

An effort was made in the 1980s to preserve as much as possible the accomplishments of these early Christians in a history published in 1984—*Memories of Morton Memorial—a History of the People and the Place*. Those persons primarily responsible for that history are remembered here: Thomas Franklin Taylor, Jr. (491), Mary Elizabeth Francis Shelton (593), Josephine Rogers Sampley (658), Charles Wilburn Sampley (626), Mary Preston Peck (948), Ellis Cameron Stewart, Jr. (918), Willa Francis Parker McCullough (510), Eloise Partin (487), Clara Wooten Blackwood (480),

Leda Pirtle Kelso (484), Helen French Partin (677), Rhonda McDaniel Winton (931), Mildred Ridley Stewart (919), Katie Goforth Fults (724), and Anna Mary Parker (512). Others who assisted include Dr. Thomas Binford, III, Rev. Mark Ashley, Frances Fults, Carolyn Franklin, and Howard Peck.

Thomas Franklin Taylor, Jr., (co-historian of Morton Memorial for a number of years) wanted to call the church “The Little Brown Church in the Vail,” but the other historian felt this was not quite correct because the church is on the mountain. She wrote (with apologies to Dr. William S. Pitts) a poem to honor his wishes. Dr. Pitts’ tune may be used with this poem.

### The Little Rock Church on the Hill

There’s a church on the mountain by the highway,  
No lovelier spot on the hill;  
No church means so much to our people  
As this Little Rock Church on the hill.

Oh, come to this church by the highway,  
To the spot set aside as a place  
For us all to sing and worship,  
And to learn of God’s love and his grace.

How great on a fine Sunday Morning  
To list to the loud ringing bell;  
And appear once again at God’s House.  
Oh, come to the church on the hill.

At this church on the mountain by the highway  
Where we’ve learned our lessons well;  
It’s time to tell of this God,  
Oh, come to the church on the hill.

Chorus: Oh, come to the church by the highway,  
Oh, come to the church each Sunday;  
No church is so dear to our memories  
As the Little Rock Church on the hill.

Current events in the history of Morton Memorial must also be preserved and kept in good repair—physically, morally, and spiritually—so that this current history can be passed on to those who will inherit it. Morton Memorial’s history must be preserved and not left to “silently steal away.”

Francis Bacon said it well: “Out of monuments, names, words, proverbs,

traditions, private records and evidences, fragments of stories, passages of books, and the like, we do save and recover somewhat from the deluge of time.”

### **Bishops, Presiding Elders (District Superintendents), and Ministers**

Morton Memorial has had 32 bishops, 35 district superintendents, and 60 ministers. It has also been a part of five different districts. The church remained on a circuit until it became a station church in 1938. The Rev. W. L. Hays was the first full-time minister.

#### **Bishops**

Nineteenth-century bishops included Robert Paine (1880), Holland Nimmons McTyeire (1880–1881, 1884–1885), John C. Keener (1882, 1888–1889, 1893), George F. Pierce (1883), Alpheus W. Wilson (1885, 1887, 1891, 1895), E. R. Hendrix (1886, 1897), Robert Kennon Hargrove (1890), Charles B. Galloway (1892, 1899), William Wallace Duncan (1894), John C. Granbery (1896), and J. S. Key (1898).

Twentieth-century bishops included Charles B. Galloway (1900, 1905–1906), Oscar P. Fitzgerald (1901), Alpheus W. Wilson (1902), A. Coke Smith (1903), William W. Duncan (1904), Elijah Embree Hoss (1907–1909), Warren Akin Candler (1910), J. C. Kilgo (1911), Collins Denny (1912–1913), W. B. Murrah (1914–1915), James Atkins (1916, 1918–1921), James H. McCoy (1917), Edwin D. Mouzon (1922–1925), Horace M. DuBose (1926–1933), U. V. W. Darlington (1934–1937), Paul Bentley Kern (1938–1951), Roy H. Short (1952–1964), H. Ellis Finger, Jr. (1965–1976), Earl G. Hunt, Jr. (1977–1980), Edward L. Tullis (1981–1984), Ernest W. Newman (1985–1992), and Kenneth L. Carder (1992–2000).

Our present bishop is William W. Morris (2000—Present).

#### **Presiding Elders (District Superintendents)**

McMinnville District presiding elders included Robert M. Haggard (1880–1882), George W. Anderson (1884–1885) and Thomas L. Moody (1886).

Shelbyville District presiding elders included Robert M. Haggard (1883), Thomas L. Moody (1887–1888), Thomas J. Duncan (1889), and Green P. Jackson (1890–1893).

Fayetteville District presiding elders included Henry S. McBride (1894), Lewis R. Amis (1895–1897), Thomas A. Kerley (1898–1899), William H. Cotton (1900–1901), William R. Peebles (1902–1903), Herschel B. Reams

(1904–1906, 1913–1916), J. T. Curry (1907–1909), William H. Johnston (1910–1912), William V. Jarrett (1917–1920), E. R. McCord (1921–1923), Andrew E. Clement (1924–1927), Watson M. Cook (1928–1929), John W. Baggett (1930), and John J. Stowe (1931).

Pulaski District presiding elders included John J. Stowe (1932–1934), Watson M. Cook (1935), and Cullen T. Carter (1936–1939).

Murfreesboro District district superintendents have included Watson M. Cook (1940–1944), J. Dallas Bass (1945–1948, 1955–1960), Thomas W. Mayhew (1949), Grady L. Wall (1950–1952), A. J. Davis (1953–1954), Henry T. Tipps (1961–1966), Frank A. Calhoun (1967–1968), J. Elma Broyles (1969–1974), H. Fred Blankenship (1975–1979), James L. Beaty (1980–1982), William W. Morris (1983–1987), Louis Johnson (1988–1991), Billy Ray Panter (1992–1993), Randall C. Ganues (1994–1996), James R. King, Jr. (1997–1998), and Jim Clardy (1999–Present).

### CLERGY APPOINTED TO MORTON MEMORIAL UMC

YEAR	MINISTER	CIRCUIT	DISTRICT
1880	George Davidson Guinn	Hickory Creek Circuit	McMinnville
1881	John Gillentine Molloy	Hickory Creek Circuit	McMinnville
1882	To be supplied by R. J. Only	Mont Eagle	Shelbyville
1883	George Davidson Guinn	Mont Eagle Mission	McMinnville
1884	George Davidson Guinn	Mont Eagle Mission	McMinnville
1885	George Davidson Guinn	Mont Eagle Mission	McMinnville
1886	James G. Blackwood	Mont Eagle Mission	McMinnville
1887	J. D. Massey	Fayetteville Circuit	Shelbyville
1888	George Davidson Guinn	Tracy City Mission	Shelbyville
1889	A. A. Mooney	Monteagle & Cowan Mission	Shelbyville
1890	John R. Reagin	Mont Eagle	Shelbyville
1891	John R. Reagin	Mont Eagle	Shelbyville
1892	John R. Reagin	Mont Eagle	Shelbyville
1893	John R. Reagin	Mont Eagle	Shelbyville
1894	Samuel Wilson Bransford	Mont Eagle Mission	Fayetteville
1895	Samuel Wilson Bransford	Mont Eagle Mission	Fayetteville
1896	Samuel Wilson Bransford	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1897	John Owen Blanton	Mont Eagle & Decherd Mission	Fayetteville
1898	John Owen Blanton	Mont Eagle & Decherd Mission	Fayetteville
1899	Thomas Reau Curtis	Mont Eagle & Decherd	Fayetteville
1900	William Skelton Taylor	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1901	W. H. Carter	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1902	W. H. Carter	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1903	Houston Thomas Allen	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1904	Houston Thomas Allen	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville

1905	Bruce Lofton Lyle	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1906	Bruce Lofton Lyle	Monteagle Station	Fayetteville
1907	Bruce Lofton Lyle	Monteagle & Cowan Mission	Fayetteville
1908	Jerome Winford	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1909	William Winton Alexander	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1910	L. B. Ellis	Tracy City & Monteagle	Fayetteville
1911	Thomas Lipscomb Moody	Monteagle Station	Fayetteville
1912	Thomas Lipscomb Moody	Monteagle Station	Fayetteville
1913	Samuel Milo Keathley	Tracy City & Monteagle	Fayetteville
1914	Thomas H. Gilbert	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1915	John Lafayette Taylor	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1916	R. B. Burks	Monteagle Station	Fayetteville
1917	H. M. Henley; James Edward McCulloch	Monteagle Station	Fayetteville
1918	Fred Amacher	Monteagle Station	Fayetteville
1919	Felix Herndon Coleman	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1920	Felix Herndon Coleman	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1921	Felix Herndon Coleman	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1922	Thomas M. Wilson	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1923	John Randolph Simpson	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1924	James Thomas Blackwood	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1925	James Thomas Blackwood	Monteagle Mission	Fayetteville
1926	Thomas M. Wilson	Monteagle & Pelham	Fayetteville
1927	Woodward Abernathy Adams, Sr.	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1928	Woodward Abernathy Adams, Sr.	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1929	Edward Lee Knowles	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1930	Edward Lee Knowles	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1931	James Elijah Trotter	Monteagle Circuit	Fayetteville
1932	James Elijah Trotter	Monteagle Circuit	Pulaski
1933	James Elijah Trotter	Monteagle	Pulaski
1934	James Elijah Trotter	Monteagle	Pulaski
1935	William Comer Morehead	Monteagle Circuit	Pulaski
1936	Thomas Erle Hillard	Monteagle Circuit	Pulaski
1937	R. D. Hill	Monteagle Circuit	Pulaski
1938	W. L. Hays	Monteagle-Summerfield	Pulaski
1939	W. L. Hays	Monteagle	Pulaski
1940	W. L. Hays	Monteagle Station	Murfreesboro
1941	W. L. Hays	Monteagle Circuit	Murfreesboro
1942	W. L. Hays	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1943	James Waddell Roberts	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1944	Rayburn Lawrence Benton	Tracy City & Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1945	Rayburn Lawrence Benton	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1946	Omar Hiram Vanlandingham	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1947	Rauzelle Margrave Johnson	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1948	Rauzelle Margrave Johnson	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1949	Rauzelle Margrave Johnson	Monteagle	Murfreesboro



1950	William Jesse Fesmire	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1951	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1952	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1953	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1954	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1955	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1956	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1957	Allen Hardison	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1958	Paul Faucette Allen	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1959	Paul Faucette Allen	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1960	Jerry Martin Hilton	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1961	Jerry Martin Hilton	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1962	Jerry Martin Hilton	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1963	Jerry Martin Hilton	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1964	Jerry Martin Hilton	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1965	O'Hara Sturgell	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1966	Leo Norman Pennington	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1967	Leo Norman Pennington	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1968	Robert Hilton Case	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1969	Robert Hilton Case	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1970	Robert Hilton Case	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1971 <sup>8</sup>	Jerry Harber, Philip Porter	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1972	Philip Porter	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1973	Henry Houston Bixler	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1974	Henry Houston Bixler	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1975	Henry Houston Bixler	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1976	Donald Edward Bailey, Jr.	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1977	Donald Edward Bailey, Jr.	Monteagle	Murfreesboro
1978	Donald Edward Bailey, Jr.	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1979	Jack Kirby Sides	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1980	Mark F. Ashley	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1981	Mark F. Ashley	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1982	Thomas W. Binford, III	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1983	Thomas W. Binford, III	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1984	Thomas W. Binford, III	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1985	Steven Bryant Angus	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1986	Steven Bryant Angus	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1987	Steven Bryant Angus	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1988	Steven Bryant Angus	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1989	Jep Daniel Spencer	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1990	Jep Daniel Spencer	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1991	Jep Daniel Spencer	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1992	Jep Daniel Spencer	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1993	Joseph Kenneth Ervin	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1994	Joseph Kenneth Ervin	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1995	Joseph Kenneth Ervin	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro

1996	Joe Rutherford	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1997	Joe Rutherford	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1998	Allison Cook Gilliam	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
1999	Allison Cook Gilliam	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
2000	Allison Cook Gilliam	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro
2001	Anthony “Andy” Perry	Morton Memorial	Murfreesboro

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<sup>1</sup> Cullen T. Carter, *History of the Tennessee Conference and a Brief Summary of the General Conference of the Methodist Church*, (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1948), pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Wilkins Purnell, *John Gamp or Coves and Cliffs of the Cumberland*, (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Publishing Company, 1901), pp. 123-124.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.

<sup>4</sup> This early history is based on the work of Thomas Franklin Taylor, Jr. He spent many hours digging in old records (church and county) and dusty books, as well as interviewing numerous people.

<sup>5</sup> Carter, *History of the Tennessee Conference*, p. 247.

<sup>6</sup> Journals and Archives of the Tennessee Conference were used extensively in this research.

<sup>7</sup> Cullen T. Carter, *Methodist Leaders in the Old Jerusalem Conference, 1812—1962*, (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1961), p. 222.

<sup>8</sup> Local records show that Harber served two months.