

HISTORY  
*of*  
PURITY PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

*of*  
CHESTER, SOUTH CAROLINA

1787 - 1937

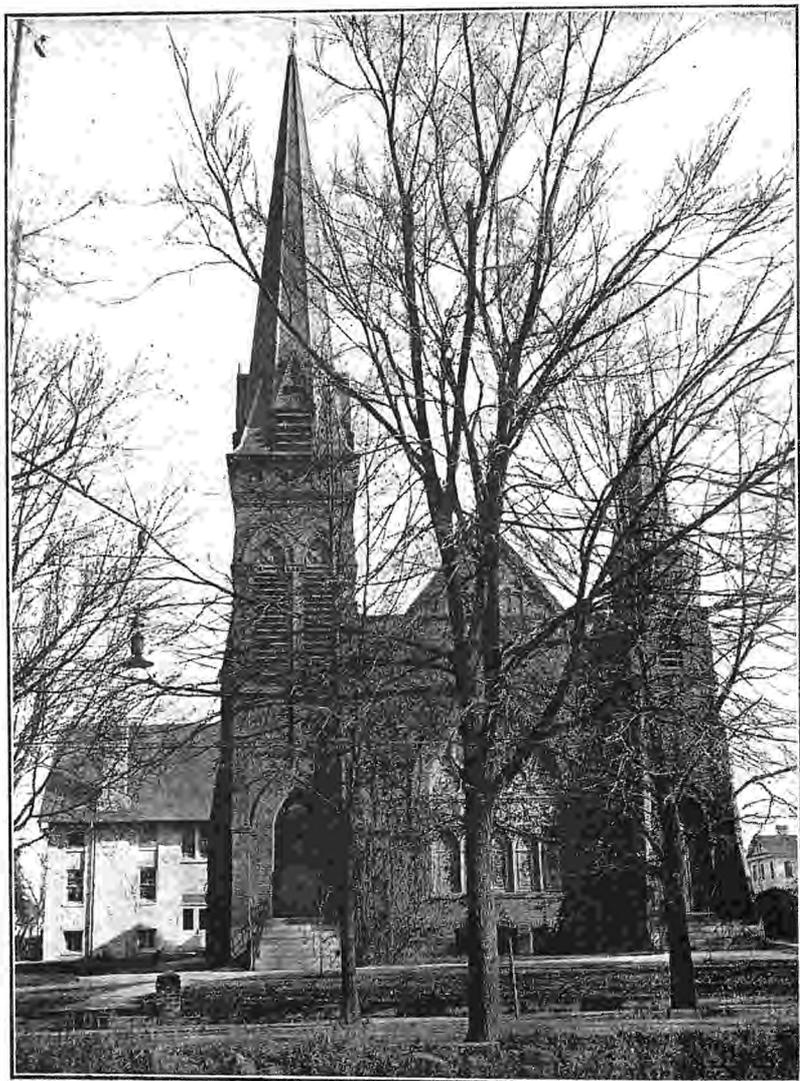
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*By*

DUDLEY JONES, A.B., D.D.

Professor of Philosophy and Psychology, Presbyterian College, Clinton, S. C. Editor and Author, "*History of The Presbyterian Church in S. C. Since 1850*," "*Thomas Walter*," "*The Grimke Sisters*," "*History of Liberty Springs Presbyterian Church*" and other historical pamphlets. President of the South Carolina Historical Association.



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**Committee For the Church**

R. B. CALDWELL, *Chairman*

JUDGE A. L. GASTON

J. H. McLURE

JOHN MCSWEEN, B.S., D.D.  
*Minister*

*Published By*  
THE STANDARD PRINTING COMPANY  
Charlotte, N. C.  
1938

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Frontispiece—Cut of Purity Presbyterian Church

## DEDICATION

*If you find pleasure or worth in this book, attribute it to my mother whose inspiration blessed my childhood ambitions and whose memory has sustained all my endeavors. Margaret Erwin was also a friend of many who loved Purity Church.*

## SOURCES *and* ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The materials that enter into the composition of this story of Purity Presbyterian Church are various as to kind and extent. They may be classified and listed as follows, with acknowledgments made in the proper connection.

1. *Minutes of Session*. January 6, 1874, to the present. All sessional records prior to this date seem to have been lost.

2. *Minutes of Presbyteries, Synods and of the General Assembly*. The Author, in his Carolina collection at Presbyterian College, had many of these at hand. He is indebted to Dr. S. M. Tenney, Curator of the Presbyterian and Reformed Foundation at Montreat, N. C., for transcripts of ecclesiastical items. Dr. Tenney was always courteous, prompt and helpful.

3. There are a number of odds and ends of memoranda, church accounts, etc., from the hand of John Walker, some dating as far back as 1797. These were furnished by Mrs. Nannie McAliley Walker, from the family records of her husband, the late James P. Walker.

4. In addition to the occasional incidental references in the body of the history we have as chief sources: Howe, Geo. *The Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, Columbia, S. C., Vol. I, 1870 and Vol. II, 1883. We have also two pamphlets: Douglas, John, *The History of Purity Church, Columbia*, 1870; Banks, Wm., *Catholic Church, Columbia, S. C.*, 1876.

5. We are indebted to Mrs. W. A. Corkill for the use of her file of "The Chester Standard" and for a copy of the same in the Patterson public library beginning in 1854. The reminiscences of James Pagan in part were furnished by Prof. Chalmers Gaston Davidson of Davidson College, his great grandson. Judge A. L. Gaston loaned his copy of the *Recollections of Judge Joshua Hudson*.

6. A number of typewritten sketches concerning current affairs have been supplied by different members of

the church which were modified and checked by the records.

7. A bound volume of the Bulletins of the Church from August 1921 to June 1926, comes by favor of Mr. Alex B. Craig. "The Purity Church Record" and other papers issued by Dr. George Summey and some later pastors were preserved at odd times by W. D. Knox and loaned by his daughter, Miss Emmie Knox.

8. Especial and grateful acknowledgment is made for the help of Miss Mary Guthrie Sledge. Besides gathering various items, she has been most gracious in copying out and sending numbers of newspaper extracts and courthouse records that enliven and explain this history at several points since 1850. Her training and experience as an attorney at law, her wide acquaintance with Chester county affairs and her interest in this history have made her help most valuable.

The Committee appointed by the Session to care for this sketch has been courteous and ready to aid in every way. This committee appointed by the Session is Mr. R. B. Caldwell, Chairman, Mr. J. H. McLure and Judge A. L. Gaston. This committee has encouraged the Pastor and officers in providing for the expenses of gathering materials and publishing this history. Dr. John McSween, the Pastor, has been full of enthusiasm and encouragement of this enterprise.

## I

### LOCAL HABITATION *and* NAME

**P**URITY Presbyterian Church in Chester had its origin as a society of religious worshipers long before the town or county or district called Chester came into being. Under the name of Bull Run, a congregation of Presbyterian people was meeting as early as 1770. Religious services were held and possibly a formal organization existed at that time on one of the upper tributaries of Rocky Creek. These worshipers were of a community that had a general sort of designation as Bull Run. This term or title has its explanation in association with the fact that the early settlers were cattle raisers. Just as "Broad," "Rocky," "Sandy" river and creeks tell the tale of their own naming and as "Turkey," "Fishing" and "Terrible" creeks reveal how these names were applied by the pioneers, so also "Bull Run," as the name of a small water-course and community and church, discloses its own significance. The earliest new-comers into this wild country were cattle-raisers before they were agriculturists. There were many "Cow-pens" besides the one that has become forever fixed in our history as the site of the battle of the American Revolution. There are "Bull" creeks and "Bull" swamps and other bovine or cow-pasture place-names found in all parts of the State of South Carolina even to this day.

While many communities, towns and churches still bear the surviving signs of the crude, unesthetic forefathers, it may have been good taste or sentiment or theology, or a combination of these, that altered "Bull Run" into "Purity" within the second generation of settlers. The traditions, as well as the first-hand testimony and printed memoirs and sketches that lie behind Dr. Howe's history, indicate that there was a congregation known as Bull Run as early as 1770. It was published as such in October 1785, when formally appealing for ministerial supply to South Carolina

Presbytery. In April 1787, the minutes of that body show that it had changed its name to "Purity." From that date it was called Purity and is referred to frequently in Presbyterian minutes. Services were held at a succession of houses of worship, at one place two miles from the courthouse, until 1839 when the congregation began to worship alternately in town and in the country. This continued after the dedication of the church building in town in 1855. Until "Old Purity" was destroyed by fire in 1904 the same agreement as to part-time country and town services was in effect. Since that date the worship and regular meetings of the congregation have been wholly centered at the church building on Wylie Street in Chester.

## II

### ECCLESIASTICAL CONNECTIONS

**P**URITY Church has been under the jurisdiction of three General Assemblies, five Synods and six Presbyteries.

When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States in America was formed in May 1789, at Philadelphia out of the four constituent Synods, Purity was part of the supreme judicatory by virtue of its connection with the Synod of the Carolinas and of the Presbytery of South Carolina<sup>1</sup>. The name of Purity appears in the reports to the General Assembly as early as 1797<sup>2</sup>. On December 4, 1861 was organized the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States in America at Augusta, Georgia. In attendance on that momentous occasion was a Chester County Elder, Robert S. Hope, member of Bethesda Church, Commissioner from Bethel Presbytery, as was also at a later meeting in 1863 another Chester County Elder, James G. Lowry. As soon as the Confederacy failed, the church immediately altered its title at its meeting in Macon, Georgia, in 1865, to The Presbyterian Church in the United States. This is the name today. To the last meeting of the Assembly in the Confederate States Dr. J. A. Reedy of Purity was elected Commissioner by Bethel Presbytery<sup>3</sup>. The Pastor of Purity, Rev. J. E. White, who had been appointed a delegate to correspond with The Independent Presbyterian Church in 1863 reported to the Assembly of 1864 as follows: "To the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States: Dear Brethren: According to the appointment of the last Assembly it was my privilege to convey to the Convention of the Independent Presbyterian Church the salutations of our Church. The Assembly will be pleased to learn that our mission has resulted in the union of that body of the Presbyterian family with our own Church on the basis proposed by the Synod of South Carolina, to whom the subject was

referred by the last Assembly. Invoking the special presence of the spirit of wisdom and grace upon you, I am fraternally yours"—James E. White<sup>4</sup>.

Before the Synod of New York and Philadelphia was formed in 1758 Presbyterian ministers were visiting the settlers of upper South Carolina. The earliest resident ministers of the Rocky Creek people, of which Bull Run and Catholic were a part, were members of the Independent Presbytery at Charleston. Rev. James Campbell came as a supply in 1774 from Orange Presbytery by request, thus bringing Bull Run into the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. In 1788, when that body was cut up into four synods, Purity came within the boundaries of the Synod of the Carolinas. When the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia was set off in 1813 Purity, because of its presbyterial connection, was left in the Synod of North Carolina until 1828. From that time it was in the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia until 1845 when the Synod of South Carolina had its first meeting at Pendleton. Since 1845 Purity has been a member of the Synod of South Carolina<sup>5</sup>.

The first presbyterial relationship of Purity Church was with a separate and independent Presbytery composed of ministers and churches with Charles Town as a center. There had been a succession of Presbyterian ministers serving there and elsewhere from the beginning down to 1839. Aside from the earliest of these presbyterial bodies, there were three Charleston Presbyteries—one incorporated in 1790, Charleston Union Presbytery organized in 1823, and that part which united with the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia in 1839. However, South Carolina Presbytery reported low country churches to the General Assembly in 1797 and 1798, while both the Second Presbytery of South Carolina and Harmony Presbytery had jurisdiction at times over churches in that area before the more general accession of the low country churches to the Synod in 1839<sup>6</sup>.

It was to a Presbytery organized earlier than any of these to which Purity, or rather Bull Run, had relationship. This Presbytery was popularly called the Scottish Presbytery, because so many of its ministers and people came from Scotland. It was known by the name of Charles Town and also as the provincial Presbytery. Its true title was the Presbytery of South Carolina. It grew up about 1728, according to Dr. Howe. It may have existed before 1720, thought Dr. Girardeau. This body was extinguished by the American Revolution about 1780. Several up-county churches were dependent upon this Presbytery for supplies and several ministers from it were in the Catawba, Waxhaw, Fishing Creek and Rocky Creek area before the American Revolution. Waxhaw, Upper Fishing Creek, Lower Fishing Creek, Bethel, Bethesda, Catholic and Bull Run, Presbyterian congregations, were attached to this Presbytery through several ministers and through Rev. William Richardson and Rev. James Campbell who were members of it after 1758. Bull Run, associated with Catholic, had its first probable connection with this first provincial South Carolina Presbytery<sup>7</sup>.

Until Orange Presbytery was set off in 1770, or even afterwards, there was no clear border line between ecclesiastical bodies. James Campbell was sent by request of Bull Run and Catholic congregations from Orange Presbytery in 1774. When South Carolina Presbytery was erected in 1784 Bull Run fell under its jurisdiction and is listed as asking for ministerial supply in October 1785. The Synod of the Carolinas set up two Presbyteries in 1799, the First Presbytery of South Carolina and the Second Presbytery of South Carolina with the Broad-Santee Rivers as the dividing line. In 1810 the Synod found it necessary to resort to a piece of ecclesiastical politics and gerrymandering in connection with the discipline of Rev. W. C. Davis who, in 1787, was the first minister ever to receive a formal call from Purity church. Most of the churches of the First South Carolina Presbytery in 1810 by request of the Presbytery itself were transferred to Concord Presbytery while

the Second Presbytery of South Carolina dropped the "Second" from its title<sup>8</sup>.

Concord Presbytery had churches on both sides of the Carolina state line from 1810 to 1824. It belonged to the Synod of the Carolinas from 1810 to 1813 and to the Synod of North Carolina from 1813 onward. Purity was in Concord Presbytery from 1810 to 1824. Bethel Presbytery, with churches on both sides of the state line, was created in 1824 by the Synod of North Carolina. In 1828 Bethel Presbytery, to include only such churches as then belonging to it in the geographical limits of South Carolina, was transferred to the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia. Purity has been a member of Bethel Presbytery since 1824<sup>9</sup>.

Purity's ecclesiastical relations, as is true of a number of churches in upper South Carolina, may be briefly summarized as follows: Purity was in the old South Carolina Presbytery until 1774 but not in any Synod. Purity was a member of Orange Presbytery of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia from 1774 to 1784. It was a member of the Presbytery of South Carolina and of the Synod of New York and Philadelphia from 1784 to 1788. Purity was a member of the Presbytery of South Carolina and of the Synod of the Carolinas from 1788 to 1799. Purity was a member of the First Presbytery of South Carolina of the Synod of the Carolinas from 1800 to 1810. Purity was a member of Concord Presbytery of the Synod of the Carolinas from 1810 to 1813. Purity was a member of Concord Presbytery of the Synod of North Carolina from 1813 to 1824. Purity was a member of Bethel Presbytery of the Synod of North Carolina from 1824 to 1828. Purity was a member of Bethel Presbytery of the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia from 1828 to 1845. Since 1845 Purity has belonged to Bethel Presbytery of the Presbyterian Synod of South Carolina.

We have made this succinct aggregate of facts in connection with Purity Presbyterian Church. It is the first time these have been sought out and stated so as to clear

the ecclesiastical affiliations of this congregation as well as that of some other Presbyterian churches in the upper part of South Carolina. This summation gives the order and dates for the formation of the Synods and some of the Presbyteries in this area.

## REFERENCES

1. Minutes, Synod of New York and Philadelphia May 29, 1788 in "*Records of the Presbyterian Church*," Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, 1841, p. 548. Minutes of the General Assembly, May 21, 1789.
2. Minutes, General Assembly, May 18, 1797. p. 120.
3. Minutes, Bethel Presbytery, March 31, 1865, September 29, 1865.
4. Minutes, General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States in America, pp. 5, 6, 120, 141, 282, 357.
5. "*Records of the Presbyterian Church*," 1841, p. 548, Minutes General Assembly, May 20, 1813, p. 527. Minutes Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, 1844, p. 19.
6. Minutes Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, 1938, pp. 17, 26, Howe, V. I pp. 672-676, Howe V. II pp. 164-171, 323-324, 569, 573. See also Minutes of General Assembly, 1797, p. 120.
7. Howe, V. I. pp. 189-191, 672-674. Historical Address of John L. Girardeau, Centennial Addresses, Chester, S. C., October 1885. (Whittet and Shep-  
person, Richmond, Va., 1886) pp. 60, 61.
8. Howe, V. II, pp. 157-166, 189-190, 279-280, 307-308.
9. Howe, V. II. p. 324. Minutes of the Synods at appropriate places. Minutes of General Assembly—But the minutes of the General Assembly must be carefully interpreted, as the listing of "First" and "Second" Presbyteries of South Carolina was continued while the adjudication of the Davis case was going on.

### III

#### SETTLEMENT *and* ORGANIZATION

FOR more than half a century after the Lords Proprietors planted this colony in 1670, population did not extend further inland than thirty miles from the tide-water. During the two decades of 1730 and 1740 there was considerable extension of settlement, but the up-country did not receive any great numbers of white home-makers until about 1750.

But a great change came about the middle of the century. The back-country of Carolina began to fill in with pioneers. Neither the people nor the colonial authorities waited for a treaty with the Indians for occupancy of their lands, perhaps, as early as 1749. Into this region, of which Chester was a part, came a great throng of people during the twenty-five years prior to the American Revolution. We may paraphrase the opening words of Bassett's "Life of Jackson" in describing the settlement. The country felt the tide of vast pioneer enterprise. Southward toiled many white-topped wagon trains from Pennsylvania, Virginia and North Carolina. Another throng of settlers also poured in through the port of Charles Town. They sought the uplands where meadows bordered a thousand creeks and brooks. Before this host primitive nature quickly gave way. The hill-sides and tree trunks that had heard only the winds or thunder or shout of savage or cry of beast now began to listen to the music of singing axemen. Black bear left the cane-brakes to domestic cattle. Where wolves had been howling was soon sounding the bleat of lambs within a rude fold. Forests were replaced by orchards and grain-fields. A mother's voice, crooning a Christian's lullaby in a log hut, followed the last child-song of some red-skinned squaw. The skill and arts and presence of a fair haired race announced that the white man's civilization had come to displace immemorial savagery<sup>1</sup>.

We are indebted to Dr. D. D. Wallace for a precise understanding of the circumstances under which the early settlers came into this region. He says, "The statement at second hand by numbers of writers that Governor Glen acquired the area included in the present counties of Abbeville, Edgefield, Saluda, Laurens, Union, Spartanburg, Newberry, Fairfield, Richland, Chester, York and Cherokee, about half the up-country appears to be entirely unwarranted." Governor Glen supposed and the Cherokee Indians themselves understood by the treaty of 1753 that only a fort and necessary acreage for it was arranged for with a wide wagon road to the southward from Ft. Prince George to Ninety Six. Nothing except a liberal fort, pastures, field, woods for the support of its garrison and the road were involved. Assumption by the whites in following years to settle pretty much as they pleased in the Piedmont region was simply an expression of their usual determination to take good lands wherever found. Warping, misunderstanding or disregarding the terms of cession of 1753 would equally serve their purpose. The agreement regarding Fort Prince George made at this time did not give a treaty for settlement up to the lines named. It was not until the close of the French and Indian War, ten years later, 1763, that a definite boundary was first established<sup>2</sup>.

While some more adventurous and hardy pioneers may have ventured to establish permanent homes on the west side of the Catawba in Chester County before 1750, we are certain that they did so soon afterwards.

To the generosity of Prof. R. L. Merriweather of the Department of History of the University of South Carolina we are indebted for much precise and competent research now being formulated into a history of the up-country. From both sides of the plateau on which the county seat of Chester now stands streams run into the Catawba and Broad Rivers. Rocky Creek and Fishing Creek run eastward to the Catawba, Sandy River and Turkey Creek run westward into the Broad. The sources and upper reaches of

these creeks are not far apart from one another, nor at great distances from the site of Old Purity Presbyterian Church. The land grants sought out by Professor Merriweather give the names from the official records of those who entered this area and planted their homes. The following lists contain names still on the roll of communicants, as well as others whose names are found on the church roster for decades but have now disappeared.

John Willis took 250 acres in 1752 (Plat Book in Secretary of State's office, Vol. V. p. 358) on Rocky Creek; Frances Lee, 50 acres in 1753 (Plat Bk. Vol. V p 378); George Taylor 400 acres, 1753 (Plat Bk Vol V p 378); Thomas Land, 400 acres 1754 (Plat Bk Vol V p 416); John Jacob Culp, 150 acres, 1756 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 80); Tom Luen, 50 acres, 1756 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 144); William Taylor, 200 acres, 1756 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 288); Phillip Walker, 200 acres, 1757 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 302); Ephriam Lisle, 100 acres, 1757 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 326); Alexander Walker, 100 acres, 1758 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 328); Francis Henderson, 150 acres, 1758 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 329); John McFadden, 100 acres, 1756 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 266); James McCluer, 100 acres, 1760 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 280). Those listed above occupied lands on Rocky Creek. Farther north along Fishing Creek the following persons took up holdings, viz: John Gaston, 100 acres, 1760 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 221); Lawrence Callahan, 157 acres, 1757 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 288). On Sandy River some of the pioneers of this same decade were: Christian Miller, 200 acres, 1756 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 149); John Sealey, 200 acres 1758 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 362); Samuel Wells, 100 acres, 1758 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 365). Farther west on Turkey Creek was George Fowser, 100 acres, 1759 (Plat Bk Vol VI p 49); Nicholas Vansant was also on Terrible Creek, Broad River, in 1750, when he received 500 acres (Plat Bk Vol VI p 454). This last is the earliest land grant noted in this enumeration.

We may continue with land titles within the same general

area for a few years into the next decade. The country at this time began to fill in more rapidly. According to Dr. Howe there was a great increase in 1768. We reproduce the findings of Dr. Merriweather in regard to some settlers in the early 1760's. On Rocky Creek, Richard Carroll is recorded as having acquired 100 acres in 1762. On the same stream also: James McCluer, 100 acres, 1760 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 280); John Abbott, 100 acres, 1762 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 301); Peter Culp, 100 acres, 1763 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 317); David Hunter, 300 acres, 1763 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 334). Somewhere along Fishing Creek, William McKennis, 200 acres, 1763 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 339); John Rattan, 100 acres, 1763 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 342); Henry Culp, 100 acres, 1763 (Plat Bk Vol VII p 350). Sandy River settlers at this time were Richard Evans, 100 acres, 1765 (Plat Bk Vol VIII p 361); Stephen Terry, 200 acres 1765 (Plat Bk Vol VIII p 194).

The Treaty of Paris, 1763, by which the Seven Years War was terminated, made a vast and world-wide difference in geographical and racial distribution. This war was known in South Carolina as the Cherokee War. Its termination gave opportunity and encouragement for settlement in the up-country as had not been afforded before in the life of the colony. The back country filled up rapidly, not so much by those who had left Pennsylvania on account of Braddock's defeat in 1755, as because of a convergence of circumstances very wide and complex in their historical significance<sup>3</sup>.

These people who filtered in from the middle of the century onward until after the American Revolution were not without letters and the ordinances of religion. John Fiske speaks highly of the literacy of the Scotch-Irish who were a large element among these early peoples<sup>4</sup>. We have been reliably informed that there were about ten per cent of Revolutionary soldiers who signed with their "marks" their indents for pay. In 1916 more than 18 per cent of white voters, men listed on the Democratic Club rolls, could

not write their own names. Pioneer life and the hardships of the wilderness quickly affected the incomers, yet the decencies and proprieties of civilized life were by no means obliterated. The rude manners of the frontier forefathers were not characteristic of every household nor of every person. Numerous families of the stretch of country from York across Chester to Fairfield have maintained the amenities and signs of vigorous intelligence and gracious gentility in all the six or eight generations of their American life. This is reflected in Purity Church today.

One of the first Elders of Purity Church was James Kennedy. He had lived in the community for more than half a century before his death in 1820. The items listed in the sale of his domestic and plantation belongings mention several lots of books brought by half a dozen bidders at the vendue. John Douglas purchased a copy of that work by Rev. W. C. Davis that had precipitated the controversy and schism in the Church, "The Gospel Plan," published in Yorkville in 1809. Besides Bibles and Psalms, there was sold a copy of Edwards on "The Effectations," Luther on "Galations," Pike on "Conscience," the works of Boston and Dodderidge, Gibb's "Review," as well as miscellaneous volumes of different kinds. These books, as well as other household effects, indicated that here was a home that possessed not only comforts but signs of culture that had accumulated in the lifetime of a man who had come in his early days to a frontier settlement. His were less than the average advantages among his neighbors. It must have been his wife, Margaret, that did the reading or his nephew, John Walker, as both he and Agnes Kennedy affixed their cross marks to the will of 1804.

Nor was the church in the wilderness without the lively oracles of God. The Minutes of the Presbyteries and Synods mention frequent appointments of Presbyterian Ministers who were on the ground as early as the settlers themselves. Some fifteen or twenty, either young probationers or regular pastors detached temporarily, were sent south-

ward by early ecclesiastical bodies to minister to the spiritual needs and perform church ordinances for the pioneers. At the same time ministers from the Presbytery at Charleston before and after the Revolution had representatives in this area. Almost all of them were college-bred. These itinerants were not casual and irresponsible claimants to sacred office, but were selected and authorized, as the records of the Presbyteries and Synods show. As early as 1752 Rev. John Brown was at Landsford and was preaching for people on both sides of the river. Hugh McAden, on his notable tour, visited the Catawba area as he traveled as far westward as the Tiger and Enoree rivers. But by that time, 1755, two Presbyterian societies had already been formally constituted. Some one of these early ministers had organized Waxhaw and Fishing Creek Churches as early as 1753 or 1754, the oldest organizations of any sort in upper South Carolina.

It was an interesting providence in connection with these two churches that gave rise to and furnished the background and beginning of Purity Church. In 1758 William Richardson of Egremont, England, a graduate of the University of Glasgow, ordained by Hanover Presbytery, was directed by his Presbytery immediately after his assumption of the Ministry to proceed to the Cherokee Indians as a missionary. On his way overland he stopped in the Waxhaw community where he learned that it was impossible to fulfill his mission to the Cherokees, as they at that time were engaged in war with the Colony. Richardson was asked by Fishing Creek Church on the west side of the Catawba as well as by the Waxhaw congregation to remain as pastor. He proceeded to Charles Town, deposited his certificate as a minister with the Presbytery there and returned to the Catawba settlements in the spring of 1759. Here he remained until he died by his own hand in 1771. He was a man of prodigious energy. His activities extended as far southward as Williamsburg and as far westward as Fair Forrest. Besides his services in this area and his

pastorates at Waxhaw and Fishing Creek, he left as permanent survivals of his labors the following churches: Bethel, Bethesda, Lower Fishing Creek and Catholic. To this list of churches the writer is inclined to add the name of Bull Run, although no documentary authority is given for Richardson as its founder, as in the case of the congregations just mentioned.

No explicit and direct statement has been discovered to certify to the formal organization of Purity Church under the name of Bull Run before October 11, 1785. However, the circumstantial evidence points certainly to a worshipping group at Bull Run as early as 1770. By a careful study of all the references in Howe, Douglas and Banks, and by a reduction of their statements to reasonable consistency, we are led to infer that this group of Presbyterians was left as a formal organization by William Richardson at the time of his death in 1771. It requires a tedious and somewhat repetitious narrative to give a clear account of Purity's ecclesiastical existence and history during the fifteen years after Richardson's death.

At the time that William Richardson joined the Presbytery at Charles Town in 1758, James Campbell, another graduate of Glasgow University also deposited his letter of ministerial membership in that Presbytery. Campbell went to the Scottish Highlanders on Cape Fear River, North Carolina, while Richardson went to the Catawba settlement. It is presumed that the two men were acquaintances if not friends. Rev. William Martin, a Covenanter Minister, direct from Ireland, appeared among the Rocky Creek people in 1772 and resided the rest of his life within twelve miles of Bull Run and served the surrounding population more or less acceptably, but James Campbell seems to be the successor of William Richardson as the pastor of Catholic and Bull Run. Richardson, out of the four or five kinds of discordant Presbyterians organized a church to which he gave the significant name of Catholic. This congregation was regularly constituted sometime before 1770.

It was hoped that Rev. William Martin would be accepted as the pastor at Catholic but that hope was not fulfilled. Within a year after Rev. William Richardson's tragic demise, Rev. James Campbell, his fellow presbyter, came as minister for Catholic and Bull Run. The record shows that he became a member of Orange Presbytery in 1774 by transfer from the Presbytery at Charles Town at the same time of the ordination of John Simpson, who was so significant at Purity eleven years later<sup>5</sup>. It is probable that Campbell came as a temporary supply soon after William Martin appeared as a minister in the community which gives the historians confusion as to the order of their tenancy. William Martin was never more than a visiting preacher for these two Presbyterian congregations, while James Campbell came upon their request to Presbytery as the appointed supply minister to Bull Run and Catholic. He remained with Bull Run for a while after his relation with Catholic ceased. This would seem to indicate that Bull Run was an organized church, though not necessarily so. He remained until 1780, for the direct statement to Rev. William Banks that Campbell baptized Ezekiel Hicklin, born in 1777 and his brother, William Hicklin, born in 1780, is too clear to admit of any other conclusion. He returned to his North Carolina home where he died and was buried on his plantation near Bluff Church in 1781. It is alleged that he was unacceptable to the people on account of his age but the partisan strife of the American Revolution became violent at that time and he may have felt more at home as a fellow Loyalist with his Highland Scotch friends on the Cape Fear<sup>6</sup>.

The records of Orange Presbytery were lost by fire before Howe and Douglas composed their sketches of Purity Church. The only certain direct evidence as to whether Campbell was sent to Bull Run as an organized church along with Catholic Church is not in existence. None of the memoirs or other sources behind these historians seem to be in existence. The General Assembly within ten years

of its organization began to call for the histories of all the congregations and Presbyteries. This call was repeated for many years, as the minutes of the Assembly and of other bodies show. Such sketches as have survived and as have been sought out by this writer, including the journal of Archibald Simpson in the possession of the Charleston Library Society, have not yielded any more information than has heretofore been published<sup>7</sup>.

From the departure of James Campbell in 1780 to the formation of South Carolina Presbytery in 1785 we have a fair understanding of Presbyterian affairs and people in the Chester area but no reference to Bull Run except the surmise of Dr. Howe that the church was disorganized in the confusions of the period. Chaos and entire alteration of community, social and church affairs occurred in many parts of the commonwealth. Rev. William Martin and Rev. John Simpson, who had been preaching at Fishing Creek during the Revolutionary period, were often in camp with the patriots. Martin was imprisoned at Camden and Simpson came near being captured at the battle of Fishing Creek when Sumter suffered such a dismal and inexcusable disaster. Some of the first settlers had moved on. New-comers arrived from the mother country as well as from the northern states. A number of Reformed and Associate Presbyterians appeared as early as 1780, increased in numbers, organized several congregations and before the end of the century had inaugurated the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Among these was John Hemphill, a tailor by trade, who made a respectable fortune, prepared himself as a minister as a graduate of Dickinson College and became pastor of Hopewell Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Chester County. Among his eminent and worthy descendants was his son, Hon. James Hemphill, long an Elder in Purity<sup>8</sup>. Three "New Light" ministers from Ireland visited the people of Rocky Creek immediately after peace came. One of them, Hugh Morrison, died in the community, while the other two, John McCosh and

Robert McClintock, founded Presbyterian Churches elsewhere in the State. There was much conflict and theological strife among these Presbyterian peoples. The controversies were bitter and continued off and on for two generations. Another minister in the neighborhood was Rev. James Templeton who was present in 1784. He was a great Presbyterian missionary and pastor for a long period and the first commissioner to the General Assembly from South Carolina Presbytery. Either he or John Simpson of Fishing Creek or some other agent carried to South Carolina Presbytery at its second meeting a request for ministerial supply for Catholic and Bull Run. Simpson had been furnishing occasional services to these congregations in connection with his pastorate at Fishing Creek<sup>8</sup>.

This second meeting of South Carolina Presbytery at Jackson Creek, October 11, 1785, carries in its minutes a list of congregations requesting ministerial supply. Following the name of Bull Run is the notation by the clerk "unformed." It is not certain what this term, "unformed," means. We have no outside sources by which to check it. The clerk may have intended to indicate a congregation not yet organized at Bull Run or the term may merely show that the Bull Run Church was in need of reorganization.

Howe says of Catholic and Bull Run after Campbell left, which was in 1780, that "They remained vacant a considerable time, and the congregation of Purity was almost dissolved by the troubles of the times." Douglas thought that "the organization of these two congregations was nearly coexistent." If so, the word "unformed" refers to the practical dissolution of the church due to the chaos of the times. There had been a rude house of worship built at an early date. At least once before, it had asked for supply from Orange Presbytery. James Campbell spent some years as joint pastor for both Bull Run and Catholic and had remained for a period with Bull Run after his relations with Catholic had closed. At the first meeting subsequent to the initial organization of South

Carolina Presbytery written application came up for supply. All this seems to suggest the existence of an organization during the fifteen years following the death of Rev. William Richardson.

There are three considerations that offset and render uncertain the formal organization at so early a date. At the present time two requirements are necessary for a proper organization of a Presbyterian congregation, viz: the ordination and installation of one or more Ruling Elders, and enrollment by Presbytery. Enrollment by a Presbytery was not regularly observed in the Presbyteries until after the creation of the General Assembly. Unless Elders were appointed, groups of worshipers among the pioneer peoples were called "Societies" after the manner of the Scottish origins, though this designation does not always have definite significance either in the older church historians or church records. There were a number of Presbyterian "Societies" in the Chester area during the first thirty-five years, some of which became "churches" and remained such in the accepted sense. In any case, there is no record or tradition or recollection of a bench of Elders at Bull Run before the report to Presbytery in 1787. This is the first adverse judgment against any earlier formal organization there. The second is, that in connection with Richardson's work an organization is not definitely named, as was the case at Catholic and other churches, though it is difficult to interpret Campbell's work except as supply of an actual church. The third item that raises some doubt is the notation that Bull Run was "unformed" when the written supplication was made for a minister to Presbytery. However, in view of the equivocalness of this last statement; in view of Campbell's settled pastorate of some years and his longer tenure at Bull Run than at Catholic; in view of the possible disorganization incident to the war time strife and consequent dislodgements; and, finally, in view of the judgment expressed by Purity's historians heretofore, we may be justified in saying that the church was reorganized

at the direction of South Carolina Presbytery at the hand of Rev. John Simpson sometime during the eighteen months before the formal enrollment was made under the name of Purity Presbyterian Church at the meeting of South Carolina Presbytery, April 10, 1787. Unquestionably to William Richardson and James Campbell must be attributed the origin and founding of the Church.

In 1787 Purity and Catholic presented a call to Rev. W. C. Davis, who did not accept. Supplies were furnished by Presbytery until 1794 when on April 9 a call was presented to Rev. Robert McCulloch. He was immediately installed, began his service for both Catholic and Purity and maintained his residence for two years within the bounds of Purity congregation. From this time onward the continuity and course of the church lies clearly before us in the church records.

Since this is intended as a complete and, it is hoped, an accurate history, it may be well to reproduce here a transcript of the allusions to Purity in the minutes of South Carolina Presbytery down to the first presentation of a call for a settled minister. There are three record books of the Presbytery of South Carolina for the early period: One called "Rough Draft," 1785-1788; another Record, 1785-1790. There is a third Record Book, 1785-1799. These original documents, which are largely duplicates of one another, give notes for writing up the minutes or are the minutes themselves of South Carolina Presbytery from its first meeting. No reference to Purity is found in the notes of the initial meeting at Waxhaw, April 12, 1785, but the name of the church occurs regularly after that time. It will be of historical value and interest to quote these allusions as they occur. Punctuation and other features are given as in the original.

"Jackson Creek, October 11, 1785 ordered that the written Petitions for Supplies be laid before Presby . . . Bull Run unformed."

"Bethesda, October 10, 1786, ordered that Supplies be

made out. Ordered that . . . Mr. Simpson one at Bethesda, one at Catholic and two at Discretion."

"Catholic, 1787, April 10, ordered that calls, supplications, etc., be brought in and read. Catholic and Purity in conjunction."

"1787 October 9. Bullock Creek, Purity and Catholic petition for supplies. A call was presented for Mr. William C. Davis by Twenty-Three Mile Creek and George's Creek. Likewise a supplica'n from Catholic and Purity for said Mr. Davis' labours for one year."

"March 20, 1788, Bethel, ordered . . . Mr. McColloch to supply three Sabbaths at Fair Forest, three at Union, one at Catholic, two at Beaver Creek, one at Purity and the rest at Discretion."

"Duncan's Creek, October 14, 1788. A supplicat'n for Supplies from . . . also from Catholic and Purity, particularly for Mr. Stevenson. Ordered that Messrs. Edmonds and Alexander as a Committee make out Supplies who appointed . . . John Simpson Purity and Catholic one each and two at Discretion."

"Fair Forest April 13, 1790 . . . Suppli'cations were brought in and read from Broadway, Purity and Cambridge."

"XVI Sessions Purity Sept. 25, 1792. Query from Purity Church. What shall be done in the case of John Weir and his wife who apply for baptism to their child born within the limited time after marriage? Judged that they be suspended until they make public acknowledgments and be publicly rebuked. Appointment of Supplies made out, viz . . . McCulloch 1 at Purity 1 at Catholic and to catechise each . . . McCaule 1 at Catholic . . . Cunningham 1 at Purity."

With such information as this growing more frequent and fuller in detail, we are able to present a clear account of this congregation from this period onward.

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## IV

### PASTORAL SUCCESSION

**B**Y FOLLOWING through the pastoral succession from beginning to end, we may give continuity to the story of Purity. At the same time we are able to give many references to the church as are made from time to time in the ecclesiastical records. Biographies of all regular pastors are available but only brief statements concerning the many supplies need be made.

The first of these biographical sketches is that of

#### REV. ROBERT McCULLOCH

It is more often spelled McCollough, says Douglas. This is confirmed by the following memorandum in an account book of the church, apparently from the hand of Robert Walker. "For Purity congregation, January 23, 1799, the trustees for Purity Congregation met in order to enquire into the state of the congregation with respect to the payments that have been made to Mr. McCollough for the year 1797." It is written "Mcolough" in the earliest existing record of Purity dated 1797, when it is noted in the memorandum just mentioned that "William Shaw Dr. to Mr. Mcolough 8-2-0" and in 1798 "William Shaw Cr. 1-19-3½." Sterling, instead of decimal dollars, was the monetary system to which this church officer clung until 1800.

Robert McCulloch, who on April 9, 1794, was installed at Purity, the first pastor, was born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, near Charlotte, and there he received his elementary education which was interrupted by "The War." From 1781-1783 he taught at an academy he established at Bethel, York County. One of his pupils, it is said, was Andrew Jackson. McCulloch was instrumental in the moulding of many lives through his power as a teacher. He finished his education at Mt. Zion Academy some time

after Rev. T. H. McCaule began his service there in 1784. He was received as a candidate for the ministry on October 12, 1786 by the Presbytery of South Carolina. He was licensed to preach on December 13, 1787. His first call was to a joint pastorate of Beaver Creek and Hanging Rock, where he preached for three years. In 1794, he was installed as pastor of Catholic and Purity churches. John Douglas, Purity's historian, must have heard the story as in childhood he knew the man. An abbreviation is given.

"Entering upon this new field of labor, he first settled in the bounds of Purity congregation, about two miles south of the village. Here he resided only a few years, when he found it would be more to his convenience or interest to live somewhere between his churches. In finding his new home, it placed him nearer to and more within the bounds of Catholic Church. He did not, however, retain this joint pastoral connexion more than six years. For about this time he was ensnared by the devil, and an evil spirit came over him, and, as a fruit of it, a sad blight fell on his churches. He was publicly charged with a sin such as ought not 'so much as to be named among the Gentiles,' and for which a common sympathy should cause us to walk backwards and throw over him the mantle of charity. He was charged with the sin of adultery. Upon this charge he was arraigned before his Presbytery, to answer for this alleged crime. The Presbytery met at Catholic church, in whose bounds the offence had been committed, and where they could have the advantages of a fair and full investigation." So great was the excitement and feeling that it was found necessary to apply for a military guard to protect his person while the trial was pending. From the testimony adduced, it was manifest there had been great imprudence on the part of Mr. McCulloch and a criminal intent; this after a full and impartial investigation, did pronounce him guilty, and deposed him from the ministry and the discharge of all its public functions, and declared his churches vacant. This sentence was pronounced by the 'First Presbytery of South

Carolina' on the Thirteenth of November, 1800. He seemed to be deeply impressed with this decision, but bowed submissively to it. From this time he continued at his former home, in the midst of the same community and annoying rumors. Though he was debarred, by the very act of his deposition, from exercising any of the functions of his former sacred office, yet as occasion offered, and whenever propriety would justify it, he held prayer-meetings through the congregation, accompanied with the word of exhortation. In this way he was instrumental in keeping the church together, and he rekindled their first love to him. In a short time the affections and confidence of the Catholic congregation began not only to return to him, but their feelings and sympathies were strongly enlisted in his behalf. And in evidence of this, it need only be stated that he was, by a petition from this church to Presbytery (March 18th, 1802), restored back to church membership and to the work of the holy ministry. But Purity church, not being willing to receive him back again, did not unite in the petition. Consequently they remained vacant from this time (receiving only occasional supplies) till 1806. Soon after his restoration at Catholic, he resumed his labors there and at Concord church. In this pastorate he continued to labor, as health and strength would permit, till his death. He was a large, corpulent man, with a stentorian voice. For years, however, previous to his death, he suffered from a painful malady, which often disqualified him for the performance of his pulpit duties. The last time Mr. McCulloch preached at Concord church, an incident occurred, while of little historic importance, yet from its rarity we venture to record it. To those of superstitious temperaments, or accustomed to prognosticate coming events by the flight or sight of birds, this occurrence must have produced some fearful forebodings of impending sorrows. While he was in the midst of his services, a night-bird of ill omen came in broad day and perched itself in the window, by the side of the pulpit, and there began its plaintive song, 'whip-poor-will,

whip-poor-will.' This was looked upon as an occurrence so extraordinary and ominous, that all prognosticators were ready to give as their interpretation of it, 'something is going to happen to Mr. McCulloch.' and, strange to tell, it so proved: this was his last visit and sermon to the Concord congregation! He died on the 7th of August, 1824, in the sixty-fifth year of his age."

For more than a generation after 1800 theological strife of different sorts divided the Presbyterian peoples of the York and Chester districts. Very soon after his ordination Rev. William C. Davis began to raise questions and arouse controversy. Under his leadership a dozen congregations withdrew and formed The Independent Presbyterian Church. It would take great patience, care and skill to disentangle the details in the church minutes and intricacies involved through which the schismatic group of congregations was separated mainly out of the First Presbytery of South Carolina. The conflict not only carried away whole congregations at the beginning, set up new organizations later and invaded the domain of the regular churches but maintained this divisive body till reabsorbed into the Synod of South Carolina in 1863. Incidentally, Purity Church was weakened by this disaffection as well as by other sorely vexing differences. Bethany church of the independent group was close to the edge of Purity and the property there long afterward fell into the ownership of Purity. While this ecclesiastical disruption was troubling Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly, the Associate Reformed and the Covenanter churches were not only maintaining congregations on the border of Purity, but the sectarian spirit concerning the propriety as to which version of Psalms to use or whether to sing hymns afforded debate. Such is the background that explains very largely the retarded growth of Purity and often imperilled its existence down to 1836.

From the close of Robert McCulloch's tenure to the installation of Rev. Thomas Neely in 1806, the church had

supplies. Neely was called in 1802, by Catholic and Purity, but the call was denied by Presbytery as irregular. At this same time discontented members of Purity sent up to Presbytery four complaints, all of which were disallowed. These were: (a) objection to camp meetings as a means of grace and salvation and without warrant of Scripture; (b) ministers of other denominations in assemblies and association "with our ministers without the approbation of our church;" (c) members of the Methodist persuasion were admitted to communion. "We do conceive that the Methodist are very erroneous in some of the most important articles of the Christian religion;" (d) "a regular system of Psalmody has been introduced contrary to our consent or approbation . . . we must claim the privilege of worshipping God agreeably to the dictates of our consciences, and in the way which was formerly practiced by this congregation." Perhaps it was "the Ishamelites" mentioned by Douglas who brought forward these difficulties which were but a thin disguise for personal differences. Some years later the belated controversy over hymns resulted in a running contest to gain control of the church grounds which is stated in another chapter and caused the removal of Rev. F. H. Porter after a short stay. In the meantime the record disclosed the pastorate of

#### REV. THOMAS NEELY

Edmond Church united with Purity church on March 11, 1806 to call Rev. Thomas Neely who was ordained on Oct. 17, 1806.

Mr. Neely was born in York district, South Carolina, where he received his academic education. It is doubtful if he had the opportunity to follow a collegiate course of study. His theological studies were obtained under Rev. Joseph Alexander of Bulloch's Creek Church.

Mr. Neely married Miss Martha Feamster and later was the father of two children—a son and a daughter. Mr. Neely's life was devoted to the two churches he served in

spite of the terrible handicap of very poor health. His death occurred on Nov. 26, 1812, when he was only 40 years old. His wife died two years later. His memory was regarded with deep reverence by the members of his churches among whom he had sowed good seed for the future harvest.

He was a member of a family widely distributed throughout upper South Carolina and Steele Creek community of North Carolina. Apparently, he lived on his own place on the border-line between Purity and Bullock Creek congregations.

From 1811 to the coming of the third pastor in 1822, the minutes of Concord Presbytery show almost constant occupancy of the pulpit. Rev. Messrs. R. B. Walker, J. B. Davies, Aaron Williams, and John Williamson, gave one or more services a month, but were not successive to one another. The gap in the minutes of Concord Presbytery with reference to Purity is supplied for the interval 1814-1816 by Howe and Douglas who show that Reverend Francis H. Porter came as a resident minister, but left on account of the unpleasant strife in the church. Reverend J. B. Davies' pastorate is almost unmentioned by Purity's historians yet the Presbytery's record shows that in addition to former ministrations he was present as supply from 1817 to 1821. A memorandum of John Walker, who was an Elder, shows that this minister was paid \$200 for services in 1822. We have an account from John Douglas of the great work of

#### REV JAMES BIGGERS STAFFORD

"In the fall of 1821, after being destitute upwards of two years, they were visited by Mr. James B. Stafford, a licentiate of Hanover Presbytery, Va. Being so long without a pastor, or any one to break to them the bread of life, they immediately entered into arrangements with him to supply them, which he agreed to do. He continued thus to preach to them for two years, in connexion with a congregation near Beckhamville in the southeastern part of the district,

some 24 miles distant from the court house. Occasionally he preached at Catholic and Concord churches."

"In the fall of 1823, Purity, in connexion with Concord church, united in a call to Concord Presbytery (this church at that time being under the care of that Presbytery) for the pastoral labor of Mr. Stafford. John Walker, an Elder in Purity church, was delegated by the session to carry up this call and present it to the Presbytery. Being there found in order, it was accepted." Accordingly a meeting of the Presbytery was held at Purity church, when Mr. Stafford was, on June 7, 1824, ordained and installed joint-pastor of these two churches. He lived two miles southwest of the church during the ten years of his pastorate.

Mr. Stafford was born in Rocky River congregation, N. C. His academic studies were pursued for the most part under the tuition of the Rev. James Wallis, who for years kept a flourishing school in Providence congregation, Mecklenburg Co., N. C. After completing his studies there in the year 1812, he went to Hampden Sidney College, Va., where he graduated. After graduating, he taught a few years, and prosecuted his theological studies privately and was licensed to preach in the year 1818 or '19, by the Presbytery of Hanover, Va. In the year 1821 he made his first visit to Purity congregation, when the church immediately entered into arrangements with him to supply them. He was a man of rather large frame, "slow of speech, and of a slow tongue," neither very eloquent or persuasive in his manners; slow in forming his opinions, and equally slow in yielding them when formed. His co-presbyters regarded him as a sound, orthodox theologian; but being naturally timid and unpretending, he displayed in the pulpit no extraordinary gifts or ability. Such was the opinion of one who knew him well.

In the year 1828 a subscription was begun for the purpose of erecting a new church building for Purity. We have the subscription list and other details in the account

book of Major John Walker. The great political tornado, "Nullification," sprang up and swept over the state. Both Church and State were affected by it. "About thirty church members at this time seceded, including three ruling elders. Of these elders, one (Matthew McClintock) went out in a disorderly manner, not applying for his dismissal. He remained neutral for some time, but finally connected himself with the body then known as the 'Independent Presbyterian,' and he continued in their communion till his death. The other two (James McClintock and Abraham White) went off with the seceding faction, and through the influence and counsel of certain designing men of like sympathies and the same political creed, formed themselves into a new organization called 'The Pleasant Grove Church.' This new church was located within the territorial boundaries of Purity church, and no doubt with the design of injuring it. For it must have been apparent to its founders that a church could not there prosper except at the expense of Purity, and by abductions from neighboring churches already established. Though this storm was furious, and the church was thus dismembered of at least one-third of its communicants, still the loss was felt more numerically than in any other way, for neither its benevolence nor salary was in the least affected by it." "This exodus so depressed and discouraged Mr. Stafford that he felt his usefulness with this people was at an end, and duty required him to go elsewhere. Under this conviction, at the fall meeting of his Presbytery, Nov. 5th, 1833, he made application to have his pastoral connection with Purity church dissolved, which was accordingly done. But as the Concord church had not been disturbed by this political storm, he remained and preached for them another year. In the fall of this year, Nov. 5th, 1834, he requested Presbytery to dissolve his pastoral relations with the Concord church, also." He removed to the West where he was murdered by a chance raiding party of the Federal army in 1862. He died at the

age of 70 years. He was married twice, first to Miss Hanna of York county, and in 1857 to Miss Elizabeth McCoy.

#### REV. JOHN DOUGLAS

For a short while Rev. R. B. Walker, who had been pastor of Bethesda church for forty years, was stated supply. Then Purity called one of her own sons to its pulpit. This was John Douglas. To this minister and to this man more than any other Purity is most indebted. He was courageous, foresighted, tactful, devoted and full of wisdom and energy. His own modest account of himself and of his ministry reveals a gracious and lovely soul. The testimony of his brethren who were familiar with his latter years exhibits reverence for his venerable worth. The frequent references to him in the minutes of the Synods and Presbyteries state the many responsibilities entrusted to him even as a young presbyter. His pastorate at Purity for ten years during a critical period began when he was but a fledgling from the seminary classes. His superb skill in retrieving a disorganized congregation from almost hopeless disaster shows that his native practical and spiritual gifts were large and commanded the confidence of his own community.

Rev. John Douglas was born October 10th, 1809 and died in 1879 at Steele Creek Church in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. It was his brother, Robert Douglas, who bequeathed to Purity in 1889 the sum that has kept the old church grounds in good order and yet after a half century is larger than the original amount. The devotion of the older ministerial brother doubtless inspired the younger. In other ways the impress of this pastor's hands still abides at Purity.

John Douglas was born and reared within the bounds of the congregation, and received his preparation for college under instructors in or near the village of Chester. His first teacher in the languages was John Walker, doubtless Major John Walker. He spent two years under Samuel

McAliley and John Knox whose descendants are still on the church roll. "His academic studies," he states, "were pursued mainly under the McMillans and Robert L. Edmonds who kept flourishing schools in the village and in other parts of the district." He graduated at South Carolina College in 1830. He became a member of the church during the year following. With his conversion must have come also a sense of his call to the ministry for he began attendance on Columbia Seminary soon afterwards where he finished in 1835. He was licensed by Bethel Presbytery in 1835. Where he served for a year is not mentioned. He intended to go to Florida but he says that the Seminole War broke out and desolated the community and broke up the families among whom he expected to labor. This was in the winter of 1835-36. He must have been preaching for Concord and Purity churches at the time, for in April 1836 he was ordained at an adjourned meeting of Presbytery at Purity church and at the same time installed at Purity and Concord churches. He remained as pastor till the fall of 1846, a little less than eleven years and not "upwards of eleven," as he writes from memory in his old age.

He wrote a sketch of Purity church in 1865, twenty-nine years after his installation there and gave an account of his labors and progress of the church. The Purity congregation was rent asunder by the controversy over Nullification. Some of its members were not in sympathy with the major opinion of the State over that issue as not all were later in sympathy with the Secession of the State in 1860. The disagreement resulted in reduction of the number of members but not in lessening the strength or zeal of those that remained. The minutes of Synod and Presbytery in numerous ways show how competent and trusted the pastor was in all work at home and in the church at large. The new interest in Foreign Missions, the support of the recently founded Seminary, and for Oglethorpe, a school of the church, and other enterprises had his active leadership and aid.

The most notable achievement of this decade was the skillful direction of the church in such a measure as to transfer its center to the court house town then beginning to grow rapidly. Although only a few members were resident in Chesterville, he succeeded without opposition in building "the lecture room" in town largely at his own expense. His own private outlay for the lot and structure was soon repaid to him by subscription. Services were held at the new place of worship without abating interest among those who continued to assemble at the church in the country. His courage and faith were fully vindicated after he left. He erected the modest building in the village in 1839. In 1855 a magnificent and beautiful church building was dedicated in town. He had insight as to methods of dealing with the stubborn yet gentle sentiments of his people, yet foresight as to what the outcome would be. The community of Chester has been moulded by Purity Presbyterian Church more than by any other fact or institution. The early plantation of the church and the popularity of John Douglas were decisive and have had immeasurable consequences in the life of the community.

It is possible that the fact that his wife was from Charleston had something to do with his removal. She was Miss Fannie Marchant, daughter of a Charleston merchant. He had married in 1837. In 1846 he became pastor of James Island where the church was almost in sight of the city by the sea. Here he remained fifteen years. His home was within one hundred and fifty yards of where the first gun of the Confederate War was fired, he says. At about the close of his pastorate at James Island he wrote his history of Purity church. This was written in 1865 but published in 1870.

His third and last pastorate was at Steele Creek in North Carolina. This has long been one of the largest and strongest country churches in the denomination. His service at Steele Creek in his old age was marked by the same zeal and acceptance that was exhibited in his younger and more

vigorous years. He likewise served the Synod trustedly. He was a trustee of Davidson College as he had been of Columbia Seminary. Here also his devotion to his people led him to compose a history of the congregation as he had done for Purity. When he passed away, his brethren expressed their esteem for him in words of such sincerity and warmth as to give a sense that here was a man of uncommon goodness.

Rev. John Douglas was a very great man. He was a credit to Purity as a product. He was an honor to Purity as a beloved and wise leader. He lies buried in Steele Creek church yard in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. His tombstone bears the following inscription:

To the memory of Rev. John Douglas, son of John and Elizabeth Douglas. Born Oct. 10th, 1809, in Chester County, S. Ca. Died Oct. 8, 1879 in Mecklenburg County, N. C.

*His work is done  
His record is on high.*

Above this inscription is the Bible open at Job 7:8, on which one reads: "*The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more. Thine eyes are upon me and I am not.*"

After a short term of supply by Rev. Samuel C. Pharr in 1847, who left on account of ill health, began the pastorate of

#### REV. DONALD JOHN AULD, M.D.

Donald John Auld, the son of a physician, was born on Edisto Island. After the death of his father, the family moved to Charleston where he was educated in the school of Mr. Christopher Coates. He entered the Senior Class of the College of Charleston and was graduated in only one year. He next studied medicine and graduated at the Medical College, Charleston; afterwards he attended medical lectures in Philadelphia, making a special study of

cholera. When he returned to Charleston, he united with the Second Presbyterian Church there. In 1835 he entered Columbia Theological Seminary. Because of ill health, he was compelled to leave, but continued studies privately under the guidance of Rev. Thos. Smythe, of Charleston. In 1837 he was licensed to preach and then served Wappetaw church for a few months. In 1838, he married Miss Adeline Hughes of Charleston who died in 1839. On Jan. 6, 1839, he was ordained by the Charleston Presbytery as an evangelist. Soon after the death of his wife, he went as supply pastor to Darlington Court House. He remained there a short while. In 1840 he was ordained as pastor of Harmony and Brewington Churches. In the same year, he married Miss A. P. Plowden. In April, 1848, he accepted a call to Purity church, where he remained for four years. He removed to Madison, Fla. A few years later he settled in Tallahassee, Fla. He died Oct. 29, 1857, leaving a widow and six children.

Rev. Mr. Auld was a fluent and impressive speaker. He was highly esteemed by his own congregation and highly popular with the people. His stay with Purity was during a quiet and uneventful period when the church, due to the foresight of Rev. John Douglas, had gradually become rather more with the town than with the country elements. His pastorate was a calm preceding the stormy career of

#### REV. JAMES EVANS WHITE

Several of Purity's pastors were associated with Charleston. John Douglas spent fifteen years at James Island in sight of the city and married there. Donald G. Auld, James E. White, A. Flynn Dickson and Geo. A. Trenholm in succession came from Charleston. James E. White was born in Charleston and received his early training there under the eminent Henry Burns of the high school. He spent a year at Oglethorpe University, then a flourishing school at Milledgeville, Ga., conducted under the auspices of the Presbyterian Synod. He graduated at South Caro-

lina College and took his theological training at Columbia Seminary. In 1846 he had become a member of the Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston and obtained licensure by Charleston Presbytery in 1852. When he accepted a call to Purity church in the same year he was a young man entering upon his ministerial career for a congregation that recognized and received several brilliant young men as pastors.

Rev. James E. White for more than twenty years, from 1852 to 1873, was the pastor at Purity church. The first half of his ministry was most acceptable, but in 1864 he raised some question as to the payment of his salary. At the time the community, as indeed the whole South, was feeling the pecuniary embarrassments of depressed and almost worthless Confederate currency. He wished to be paid in specie, which was impracticable, and showed an impolitic unwillingness to bear the hardships that were the common lot, so it was alleged.

This spirit did not fully appear till about 1873, when there was precipitated a quarrel between himself and Purity church that was a cause of grief and irritation to the day of his death. Until the time of the acute stage of this conflict in 1874, no man in the church was held in higher esteem than James E. White. He was moderator of the Presbytery, on the Board of Trustees of Columbia Theological Seminary and filled many appointments of responsibility and honor in Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. The difference between him and the majority of the officers and members of Purity was ostensibly over a matter of salary payment. This, however, was likely but the front and form of some deeper personal and community animosities that were shared by two Elders, Alexander Walker and Robert Wylie. At the close and finish of the long protracted contest and soon after the death of J. E. White, James Pagan in his *Random Recollections* published in "The Chester Bulletin," 1885-86, says in number 18 of the recollections: "Mr. James E. White came in as

pastor after Mr. Douglas left. (He followed Rev. Donald Auld, not Douglas). I think in 1852 it was, or not far from then, that he commenced and for a long time seemed to 'fill the bill' pretty well, but for some reason, better known to those interested, things got wrong and Mr. White got wrong in some things, if not in others, and he has disappeared." This comment by a contemporary states the spirit and the sad sense of puzzlement derived from reading the record of the ugly affair. The intimation that some change came in the mind and personality of James E. White may also be inferred from a perusal of all the accounts of events.

The White case was a celebrated ecclesiastical affair and it claimed public attention for many years. There were more than one White in Bethel Presbytery. About this same time farmers were interested in breeding a variety of porkers called Chester-White. A quip would be made around the churches and at the meetings of Presbytery when folks would say "They are going to salt and pepper the Chester White." Certainly Bethel Presbytery was patient and long suffering as the minutes carry reports, appeals and other kinds of documents relative to the case for more than a hundred pages from the year 1873 when, through processes through the Synod and the Assembly, a final determination of the case was made in 1881. The Session of Purity exhibited a judicious and firm spirit and the Sessional records in the many, many references to the matter exhibit patience, forbearance and restraint. It should be said in all justice to the two Elders in opposition, who were friends of Rev. J. E. White throughout, that they engaged in no unseemly language nor did they indulge in railing accusation. This can not be said of the minister himself. Alexander Walker and Robert Wylie were not in attendance on the meetings of Purity's sessions after 1873. They, however, were retained on the roll of communicants as well as on the list of Ruling Elders to the day of their death.

The salary of Rev. J. E. White, when he became pastor of Purity in 1852, was \$500. Sometime later the amount was increased to \$800 in a congregational meeting. The call was not amended by Presbytery, as was technically in order. The salary of \$800 was paid till 1866. In 1864 the pastor was proffered Confederate currency to which was added, by way of compensation, farm produce from the country members. The annual meeting of the congregation in 1866 "fell back to the call" as the basis of payment, that is the salary was to be at the original annual rate of \$500. At the same time an arrangement for domestic missions and sustentation was made by Bethel Presbytery through a committee of which White was chairman. Objections to this arrangement and the differences between the pastor and a majority of the Session and members of Purity came into Bethel Presbytery in the spring and fall meetings of 1873. From that time onward the case appeared in church records.

At the stated meeting of Bethel Presbytery, April 3, 1873, Alexander Walker and Robert Wylie, Elders, protested against the resignation of Rev. J. E. White. However, the Presbytery declared the pulpit vacant. In Oct. 1873, Rev. J. E. White objected to Presbytery's dissolution of the Committee of Domestic Missions and Sustentation of which he was chairman. At the stated meeting of Bethel Presbytery April 2, 1874 the call for Rev. A. F. Dickson was presented to Presbytery by Purity Church where he had been serving sometime as supply and as "a party man" said the two disagreeing Elders. An adjourned meeting was held on April 16 and another at Bethesda Church on May 9. Into this meeting at Bethesda came the papers from the objectors and the statement of its case by the Session of Purity. Presbytery again adjourned to meet in Purity church on June 12 when further hearings were held. The Presbytery found the call of Rev. A. F. Dickson in order and installed him as pastor. At the regular fall meeting Oct. 8, 1874, Rev. J. E. White apologized for

his misbehavior at the Chester meeting upon demand of Presbytery and his apology was accepted. The matter of the indebtedness of Purity church to Rev. J. E. White for eight years prior to 1873 was reviewed by a committee of which Major J. F. Hart, an Elder of the York church and a lawyer, was chairman. Upon the basis of statistics from Purity's session and calculations involving the rate of currency and specie at different times, the committee decided that Purity was due Rev. J. E. White \$387.02. From this amount was to be discounted the use of the parsonage from April 1857 until vacated.

This use of the manse and its continued occupancy by the repudiated minister afforded another kind of contest with the Session of Purity for some two years. The minister declined to vacate the parsonage until salary payment was adjusted. At the same time he and the two Elders, Alexander Walker and Robert Wylie, denied that the church owned the property. Samuel McAliley had long before donated four acres to the church as long as it should be employed in church uses. In this contradictory claim and wrestling over matters, the Session secured the promise of a quit claim deed from McAliley. The Session also threatened Rev. J. E. White with a suit of ejection. Still another aspect of the case was the alleged discontent of the county members. In Oct. 1877, Presbytery declined to turn over the old Purity property to twenty-nine persons claiming to be members of Purity church. Three reasons were given by Presbytery: First, Presbytery did not own the property; second, the property belonged to Purity congregation; third, as a matter of fact only fifteen of the twenty-nine petitioners were members of Purity.

In the meantime, March 30, 1876, Rev. A. F. Dickson gave up the pastorate and the Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relation. At the next meeting of Presbytery, Oct. 5, 1876, Rev. J. E. White was indefinitely suspended from the ministry. The Presbytery considered that he had not been honest in regard to his pecuniary claims. He was

suspended from the ministry for breaking the eighth commandment. His appeals to Synod and then to the General Assembly were dismissed.

He went over to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and Bethel Presbytery informed that body of its unwillingness to give him a certificate as a minister of the Gospel. "The Chester Reporter" of Nov. 28, 1878, carried the news item: "School Affairs. Rev. James E. White, school commissioner, entered on his duties on last Monday and will be found at his office daily."

As a sequel to this long and bitter quarrel it may be well to quote two letters that are their own best commentary on the affair. The first letter was prepared by a committee of Session and unanimously adopted on April 19, 1881. It was addressed to the two absent Elders who had not been in attendance for six or seven years and whose names do not occur among those present at any subsequent meeting of the Session.

"To Messrs. Alexander Walker and Robert Wylie Elders of Purity Church. Dear Brethren: In the name of our blessed Master and actuated by His Spirit, we earnestly request your consideration of a matter which still claims our attention and occasions us much sorrow of heart. We refer to the deeply regretted disaffection in our church.

We seek by means of this letter the healing of our unbrotherly divisions, which we are persuaded can well be effected, at this late day, by both parties agreeing to forget and bury the past. We entreat you, brethren, to consent with us in thus settling our unhappy differences, and to resume at once your places in our church and session, where a cordial welcome awaits you. In this imperfect state, it is impossible to expect that there should be nothing said or done during controversy, which good men on both sides will not afterwards see reasons to regret and recall, in view of which we desire to say, that while we would deprecate reopening the questions of disagreement betwixt us, yet if, during the controversy of the past any of us said or did

aught to offend or wound you, we are very sorry for it, and are willing, as we have before avowed, to make all proper amends.

Some of us, brethren, are admonished by increasing years that it cannot be very long ere we shall be summoned into the Master's presence. In view of this solemn consideration, and many others that we might urge, we pray you for Jesus sake, to meet us in this proposal which we now make you, and to take the hand of Christian love and fellowship, which we now offer you in all sincerity.

Praying that the Lord will accompany this letter with His blessing, and awaiting your early and, we trust, favorable reply,

We remain, your brethren in Christ.

By order of Session. Closed with prayer by Elder Stringfellow.

G. A. TRENHOLM, Moderator.  
J. L. HARRIS, Clerk."

An answer to the note above lies in the minutes of June 13, 1881. The words were fair but equivocal and were not accompanied by corresponding action. The minute runs:

The following letter in answer to the letter of the Session adopted 19th April, was read by the pastor, and on motion it was ordered to be spread on the minutes.

"To Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm and the Session of Purity Church. Dear Brethren: Your communication of the— date was received on the 5th inst. and we have given it a careful consideration. We feel sure that no one has regretted the disaffection in our church more than ourselves. Yet we felt that there was no other course left for us than the one we have pursued. But Brethren we accept your communication in the spirit in which it is written.

It is Christian to forget and forgive.

As to resuming our places in the church and session we hope the day may not be distant when we can do so. Yet we are admonished by the hand of time that our days of

usefulness have about passed away. But may the church prosper and grow more and more in the service of our Master, and may the same spirit which has manifested itself work on until all who have been wronged shall be relieved and peace and harmony prevail.

Your Brethren,  
ROBERT WYLIE.  
ALEXANDER WALKER."

REV. A. FLYNN DICKSON

Rev. A. F. Dickson was at Chester during the trying years of conflict between his predecessor, Rev. J. E. White, and the Purity Church. He conducted himself with great propriety in most difficult circumstances. The church sent to Presbytery upon his resignation a testimonial of high esteem. During his pastorate, the church showed signs of growth. Not only do reports to Presbytery reflect a liberal and growing church but even in one of the letters of protest to Presbytery by the opposing Elders a statement to this effect is made. He was a gentleman of fine background and high culture and rendered the general church excellent service.

Rev. Andrew Flynn Dickson was born in Charleston, S. C., on Nov. 9, 1825. His father was the Rev. John Dickson, and his mother was the daughter of the esteemed first pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Charleston, Rev. Andrew Flynn. His wife was Miss Reece Lee of Sumter, sister of Mrs. Adelaide Lee Gaston of Chester.

Rev. A. F. Dickson graduated from Yale University in 1845, having been an outstanding student and leader, with most enviable honors in writing and debating.

After his graduation he taught school for some time in Cincinnati, Ohio. He soon began his theological course in Lane Seminary and completed it at Yale. He was ordained in 1852 by the Charleston Union Presbytery. His first pastorate was at John's Island from 1850 to 1855. In 1855, he was made District Secretary of the American Sunday

School Union and held this office for two years when he became pastor of the Orangeburg Church. In 1868 he accepted a call to Canal Street Church, New Orleans. In 1871 he removed to Wilmington, N. C. In 1873, he accepted a call to Chester, S. C., and rendered his congregation invaluable service for three years. Mr. Dickson was the author of two volumes, "Plantation Sermons." From 1876 until his death in 1879, he was in charge of the Southern General Assembly's Colored Theological Institute at Tuscaloosa, Alabama. "He was a faithful and useful man in all the spheres he occupied."

REV. GEORGE A. TRENHOLM

For nearly six years, from May 1877 to April 1883, Purity continued its tradition of a superior ministry in the person of Rev. George A. Trenholm. The progress of the church was steady and the people both liberal and loyal. He was not gone six months when the congregation called him back from Nashville, supposing he was willing to return so soon, but he declined. This urbane, dignified, devoted gentleman, as to his character and career, is described in the following quoted sketch:

"Rev. George A. Trenholm, D.D., was born at Charleston, S. C., March 30, 1845. He was the eldest son of Chas. L. Trenholm, Esq. He grew up amid the excitements which led to the Civil War, and was reared in the very hot-bed of political contention. His state was the first to secede from the Union, and he was one of the first to take up arms in the cause which he considered right.

"When seventeen years of age he joined the Confederate army. He was picketed in the tower of St. Michael's Church, at Charleston, when General Beauregard started the war by opening fire upon Fort Sumter, which was under the command of Major Anderson. He joined the first regiment formed in Charleston.

"Dr. Trenholm was named after his uncle, Geo. A. Trenholm, who was prominent in Southern politics, and

who was Secretary of the Treasury in Jefferson Davis' cabinet. His family was one of the most prominent in South Carolina, and wielded a strong influence in social circles. During the Civil War he served under such gallant leaders as General Lee and General Johnson, and distinguished himself on numerous occasions for his bravery and valiant service.

"After the war he entered business as a cotton broker. He continued in this line for several years, when he felt the call to the ministry and discontinued his business, and entered the theological seminary. He had united with the Glebe Street Presbyterian Church, of Charleston, in May, 1866. In September, 1874, he entered the Union Theological Seminary, at Hampden Sydney, Va. Here he remained for two years, and then spent a year at Columbia Theological Seminary, at Columbia, S. C. From there he graduated in March, 1877. He was licensed to preach by the Charleston Presbytery in May, 1877.

"He entered the ministry at the age of thirty-two. His first charge was at Chester, S. C., where he occupied the pulpit of the Purity Presbyterian Church from May, 1877, until April, 1883. At the latter date he was called to the pulpit of the Woodland Street Church, at Nashville, Tenn., where he remained until his call to St. Joseph, Mo., in November, 1891.

"Dr. Trenholm was greatly beloved by everyone with whom he came in contact. He had a loving and sympathetic nature and was endowed with great talents and a brilliant intellect. He was a fearless and relentless foe to all institutions which might harm the community, but no one was more affectionate or felt deeper sympathy for the fallen, and none was more ready to assist. He had friends equally among young and old, the rich and poor. He was of a retiring disposition, but always at his post in time of need.

"He was married twice. His first marriage occurred at St. Paul's Church, Charleston, S. C., April 28, 1864, when he was united to Miss Mary C. Smith. She died at Chester,

S. C., January 5, 1882. On April 15, 1884, he was married to Miss Mary A. Brawley, at Chester, S. C.

"His widow and six children survive him. The daughters are Mrs. Leland Hume, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Drury Lacy and Misses Harriette and Mary Trenholm. John G. Trenholm, of Nashville, Tennessee, and George A. Trenholm, of St. Joseph, Missouri, are the sons.

"Surviving sisters are Miss Mary J. Trenholm, Nashville, Tenn.; Mrs. Marie Louise Bacot, Charleston, S. C.; Miss Irene Griffin Trenholm, Columbia, S. C. The brothers are C. L. Trenholm, Charleston, S. C., and Rev. T. B. Trenholm, Covington, Ga."

When the pastorate of Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm closed in April, 1883, the Session sent to the newspapers and to the Presbytery a series of resolutions paying high tribute to his worth. The statistical report to Presbytery shows that the church held to a stable condition rather than one of enlargement. The Session, in providing for preaching until another minister should be chosen, invited Rev. Thorton Whaling, a licentiate then of Columbia Seminary, to take charge during the summer months. He was unable to complete his term of service and asked to be released in August on account of ill health. The Session recognized the brilliant gifts and the attractive personality of this great man whose later services in the church at large gave confirmation of this early judgment of the Purity people. Their estimate was stated in a tribute to the young man as he left in the summer of 1883. A Committee of Session made overtures to Rev. W. J. McKay of Mayesville who became a most influential presbyter for nearly fifty years. He gave no encouragement to call him. In September a call was sent to Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm who had left in April for a new pastorate in Nashville. Why it was supposed that he would return does not appear.

#### GEORGE SUMMEY

In January 1884 a call was given Rev. George Summey

of Graham, North Carolina. He was present as moderator of Session on March 26 and a record is made of his installation June 1, 1884. With this pastorate began a new era in the history of Purity Church. A succession of capable ministers runs for more than fifty years afterwards, a group of brilliant preachers and competent clerical leaders they were, and yet the church from this time onward appears as a great church, not primarily on account of its eloquent and able ministers but rather on account of the activity and devotion of the lay membership.

It will not be possible to write down here all the important facts and accomplishments of this eminent minister. He has superlative natural endowments which have been employed in a wide range of activities and services during more than four score years of gracious spiritual power and long attendance of divine providence. Degrees, honors and places of work and preferment may receive only bare mention in order to give way for the account of his pastorate in Chester.

George Summey was born of goodly heritage in Asheville, N. C., in June 1853. He received his preparatory training under Col. Stephen Lee in his home town and pursued his studies at Davidson College. He received his A.B. from Davidson in 1870 and his M.A. there in 1872. His honorary degrees of D.D. and LL.D. came in later years. He had been engaged in three pastorates of eleven years before he came to Purity in 1884. Here he spent eight years. He was Chancellor of Southwestern University from 1892 to 1903. From 1903 to 1928 he was pastor of the Third Church, New Orleans. Since that time he has been professor of Systematic Theology in Austin Theological Seminary in Texas.

Dr. Summey has been repeatedly moderator of his Presbytery, also moderator of the General Assembly. Thirteen times he has been a commissioner to the General Assembly. Possibly, no other man has been in the church courts as often. He has been repeatedly a conspicuous and useful

member of the World Alliance of Presbyterian Churches. He taught at Union Seminary when a young man, was a teacher at Southwestern in connection with his leadership there. He has been a popular lecturer on the public platform and one of the editors of the "Presbyterian Quarterly" and also of the "Presbyterian and Reformed Review." These were excellent periodicals and are today a source for historical, ecclesiastical and theological information. In local and community affairs wherever he resided he had an honored place and was, along with the many offices in his own denomination, a member of the Executive Committee of Federal Council of Churches. Such are some of the ways and means by which Dr. Summey has been both honored and used in a long life that even to this day is vigorous in unabated energies.

During the eight years of ministrations of Dr. Summey at Chester, Purity began to take on more definite organizational life. The church building was completely repaired and made attractive and commodious. Dr. Summey himself designed the circular windows that still stand in the end of the building over the gallery and much of the work of remodeling was under his direction. Dr. Summey came back to Chester on invitation to preach on many occasions. The quality and persistence of the feeling of the people toward him is reflected in this carefully prepared item in the minutes of Session August 5, 1928: "This minute is specially recorded that there might go on record the fact that our pulpit is being filled morning and evening by one of our former beloved pastors, Dr. George Summey, who served Purity Church from 1884 to 1892. Dr. Summey is now teaching at the Theological Seminary at Austin, Texas. The beautiful memorial windows in front of our church were made possible by him, as well as the pipe organ still in use—the first in the city. These remain as a beautiful and visible memorial to his ministry among us. Session closed with prayer by Dr. Summey." Under his attentions "The Purity Church Record" was issued from time to time in

later years. It first appealed for voluntary support and was published by Dr. Summey's son but was sustained with change of name as a means of informing and stimulating work in the congregation till Dr. Summey left and afterwards.

The most notable event during Dr. Summey's tenure was the meeting of the Synod of South Carolina in October 1885. This meeting of the Synod had a full attendance on account of the flaming and excited Woodrow controversy that attracted attention in theological circles all over America. This meeting of Synod was more significant for Purity Church, however, because at the time was celebrated the centennial of the founding of South Carolina Presbytery. In connection with this also was afforded the occasion for Purity to signalize the one hundred years of existence under its present name. Dr. Summey made an address along with others as the following transcript of Purity's minutes show. In September the deacons were given directions to prepare for the meeting of Synod and the community afforded generous hospitality. Early in October the program for Synod was entrusted to James Hamilton, recently made Elder. Synod had made provision the year before for arrangements to be entrusted to Purity's Session. In keeping with this agreement the records of Session carry the report, evidently from the hand of James Hamilton:

"The Synod of South Carolina met in Purity Church Wednesday, Oct. 21st, 1885, at 8 P. M. The opening sermon was preached by Rev. J. S. White from I Timothy 3:15 latter part, after which Rev. W. W. Mills was elected Moderator. The attendance was very large both of ministers and Ruling Elders, exceeding as it was reported that of any previous meeting of the body. Besides, a number of members of the Synod of North Carolina ten or more were present as corresponding members, together with Rev. J. K. Hazen, D.D. and M. H. Houston, D.D. Rev. John W. Davis, D.D., missionary to China, and three members of the Associate Reformed Synod, three Baptist

and three Methodist ministers, fifteen students of Columbia Seminary. All the members and other guests were provided for comfortably in the homes of the people of all denominations in the town.

"The principal items of business were the consideration of the Report of the Board of Directors of Columbia Seminary involving what is known as the Woodrow case. The review of the record of the Presbyteries, the consideration of Home Missions and Evangelistic Work, and Foreign Missions, hearing memorials of deceased brethren, and the observance of the centennial of organized Presbyterianism in South Carolina. Addresses were delivered as follows, on Publication by Rev. Dr. Hazen, on Foreign Missions by Rev. Dr. Houston, on missionary work in China by Rev. Dr. Davis, on the work for seamen by Rev. C. E. Chichester, a missionary collection of one hundred dollars was taken up. The larger part of Saturday morning was occupied with the Centennial exercises which were conducted according to the following program previously prepared by the Session of this Church as Synod's local Committee and adopted by the Synod. (1) Voluntary by the choir. Micah. IV, 1, 2. (2) Prayer by Rev. John B. Adger, D.D., (3) Commemorative Ode by Rev. C. S. Vedder, D.D., followed by the singing of certain verses. (4) Historical Sketches of First Church Charleston by Rev. W. T. Thompson, D.D., pastor; Waxhaw Church by Rev. James H. Saye and of Purity Church by Rev. George Summey, Pastor. (5) Singing of the 504 hymn, "Glorious things of thee are spoken." (6) Reception of delegates from Orange Presbytery which set off the first South Carolina Presbytery in 1785. Rev. F. H. Johnson, D.D., and Ruling Elder Robert Bingham, (7) Salutations of Orange Presbytery, (8) Address by Rev. J. L. Girardeau, D.D., (9) Doxology, (10) Benediction. During the Session of Synod formal leave was taken of Rev. R. E. McAlpine of the Synod of Ala. who would leave the next week to enter upon missionary work in Japan, and the Synod was

led in special prayer in his behalf by Rev. Dr. Girardeau. On Sabbath morning the moderator preached in the Presbyterian Church, and Dr. Vedder preached at the Baptist Church and Rev. N. W. Edmunds in the Associate Reformed Church. In the afternoon Rev. W. E. McIlwaine addressed a large gathering of children and young people in the Presbyterian Church, and Major Bingham a Missionary Society in the Associate Reformed Church. In the evening Rev. F. H. Johnston, D.D., preached in the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Thos. H. Law in the Associate Reformed Church and Rev. W. G. Neville in the Baptist Church."

The addresses on this occasion were published and the small volume constitutes a part of the annals of Purity Church.

It is remarkable that after an interval of fifty-two years, on June 13, 1937, Dr. George Summey again spoke at the celebration of Purity Church. His pleasing manner and venerable personality, as well as his revered name, lent dignity and brought happy reminiscence to the event that was bright because of his presence.

The particulars of Dr. Summey's wise guidance of the church from 1884 to 1892 may be read in the minutes of Session that tell the story of growth, the choice of some fine officers, care, yet kindness in reproof and discipline, and especially apparent is the expansion of the different church societies and organizations.

#### REV. DUGALD NEIL McLAUGHLIN

So considerate was Dr. Summey and so high was the confidence of the people in him as he left to take up the direction of Southwestern Presbyterian University at Clarksville, Tenn., that his interest in securing a successor to himself was welcomed. Through this wise intervention a young man came to the people immediately. On July 10, 1892, Dr. Summey offered his resignation. On the following Sunday he moderated the congregational meeting, July

17, and Rev. D. N. McLaughlin was called as his successor, quick work that justified the confidence in Dr. Summey's judgment and diplomacy and secured an extraordinary minister who remained eleven years. The Secretary of the congregational meeting that gave the call to Rev. Mr. McLaughlin in 1892 was W. A. Barber, a young lawyer, who was Attorney General for South Carolina and who rose to eminence in later years in New York City.

The Minutes of Session for October 2, 1892, state that "The session requested Presbytery to take steps to install Rev. D. N. McLaughlin Pastor of this church and to perform the same the third Sabbath of October." This is a curious irregularity that probably lies in the Clerk's statement rather than in the Presbytery's procedure.

Dugald Neil McLaughlin was born in Vass, N. C., in 1863. He attended Davidson College where he was graduated and Union Seminary of Virginia where he finished in 1891. His ministry was spent in zealous effort in the following churches: Sanford, Jonesboro, and Buffalo, in North Carolina; Chester, in South Carolina; Macon, Ga.; Anniston, Ala.; Austin, Texas; and Norfolk, Va. Davidson honored him with a doctorate. "His reading was encyclopaedic, his thinking keen and incisive, and there were times when in eloquence, force, and passion he was the equal of any pulpit orator in America." He was admired by men of all ranks of life for his faith, his unwearied devotion, and his friendliness. His career as a minister of God was marked by success and ability. Demands were constantly made upon him, and he never failed to respond to the ultimate limit of his strength. In addition to his talents as a presbyter and preacher, he had great personal charm, social finish and a lively humorous flashing mind. He had a personal popularity that ingratiated him with all young people and an emotional sensitivity that made his presentation of the gospel persuasive and delightful.

His ministry at Purity was in the midst of the years

when the church was beginning to lay hold and call into active religious participation all the members of the church. There was a steady stream of additions to the roll of communicants and consistently large attendance upon public worship. The efforts of the officers of the church, particularly of the Deacons, were called for repeatedly in bringing the gifts of the people up to the needs. During his pastorate the strain and difficulty of money raising and adequate financing of all local as well as benevolent causes was very great. This responsibility was left to the Board of Deacons as the minister gave himself to the duties of the pastorate and pulpit with zeal and success. Consequently, the officers of the church developed a sense of responsibility and efficiency that was passed on to the succeeding pastors. Skilled financial leadership and business ability as requisites in the minister came at a later time in the life of the church. The amount of money raised was at that time no indication of ministerial qualification or measure of acceptability.

Rev. D. N. McLaughlin married in Chester, Miss Fannie McFadden, the daughter of John C. McFadden, a prominent member of the Baptist Church and for many years Clerk of Court of Chester County. The marriage ceremony was held in Purity Church with J. C. McLure and A. L. Gaston as ushers with the brother of the groom as best man. After his removal to other fields this minister returned on visits to his wife's home. He was always welcomed to the pulpit of Purity. His popularity and the good will of the Chester people towards him continued unabated till his sudden death in Norfolk, Va., Nov. 3, 1932. Rev. D. N. McLaughlin was the minister at Purity from Sept. 1892 to Sept. 1903. He was followed by

REV. CHARLES R. HYDE

The Minutes of Session show that Rev. Robert Adams and Dr. S. L. Morris moderated meetings in the interval before the congregational call was made for a new pastor

on Dec. 27, 1903. Rev. Melton Clark and Rev. Chas. R. Hyde were nominated for the pastorate. The attendance was small. The vote of 89 for the latter was increased by the other 39 present, a total of 128 and the call was made unanimous. Rev. Charles R. Hyde was called at a salary of \$1,500 but the amount was increased to \$1,800 by congregational agreement in January 1904, although J. J. Stringfellow objected to the irregularity of the meeting.

The biographical materials of Rev. C. R. Hyde that have been furnished us are somewhat meager. These say that Rev. Charles Robert Hyde was born at Jasper, Tenn. He first intended to enter the legal profession and to that end obtained an academic degree of LL.B. at Columbia University, a law school in Washington, D. C. He determined to enter the ministry and studied for that purpose at Union Theological Seminary, New York. In 1884 he was ordained in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church by the Presbytery of Ocoee. He had three or four pastorates before being called from the church at Fort Worth, Texas, connected with the Southern Presbyterian Church, to Purity Church at Chester. He was in Chester only a short period, from February 1904 to his resignation April 16, 1905. Rev. Mr. Hyde was a competent man mentally, intense in his personality, outspoken and sincere in his manner, deeply concerned for piety and righteousness among his people and truly zealous for the kingdom of God. His wife was a woman of superior gifts. She was the daughter of the Rev. J. W. Bachman, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Chattanooga, Tenn. A full year after the resignation of Rev. C. R. Hyde passed before Purity secured another minister. He was

#### REV. S. J. CARTLEDGE

The interval was one of unrest. Altogether some six or eight men were considered and three were called before a final determination was made. Overtures were made through a Committee to Rev. C. M. Richards of Statesville,

N. C., in May 1905. On October 1, the pastorate was offered to Rev. S. J. Cartledge of Anderson, but he declined. On October 22, the Session agreed to meet each evening during the week for special prayer concerning the choice of a new minister. The anxiety of the leadership of the church was manifest but the steady wisdom and truly spiritual character of the Session was exhibited as has been so often in the history of the church. After consideration of several ministers by the officers of the church, Rev. George A. Blackburn of Columbia, S. C., who had preached most acceptably appeared to be the choice of the congregation but he declined the proffer made by the committee sent to him. This was in November. In January 1906, after two or three ministers had been considered following Dr. Blackburn's declination, Rev. George H. Cornelson of Concord, N. C., was elected. He declined.

On February 4, a congregational meeting decided to defer decision for two weeks. At that meeting the name of Rev. S. J. Cartledge was again mentioned. There were fifty-five votes cast, 32 to go into an election, 23 against a decision at the time. Two weeks later the name of Rev. S. J. Cartledge was put in nomination and he was unanimously chosen by a rising vote. At many meetings of the Session Rev. James Russell presided and sometimes conducted services for Purity. He was at that time pastor of the East Side Mission where he had been serving most acceptably for a number of years. The call of the congregation was accepted by Rev. Mr. Cartledge, who served as pastor from April 26, 1906 to Oct. 10, 1910.

The church at this time assumed the full support of the East Side Presbyterian Church and encouraged the formation of an organization which was accomplished during the pastorate of Rev. Jabez Galloway there. Twenty-one persons were given letters by Purity for that purpose. The intention to remodel the manse according to plans furnished by James Hamilton, city engineer and a member of the congregation, was expressed in a joint meeting of officers

soon after the arrival of the minister. This was in July 1906 but five years later, soon after Dr. Gilmour came, it is noted that the "Ladies of the Church requested that the church and manse property be fully repaired and the Session directed that any claims against the same be liquidated."

The Laymen's Missionary Movement, a wide-spread activity that quickened multitudes of men in religious and missionary life, was reflected in the affairs of the congregation during Dr. Cartledge's tenure. The church began the full time support of Rev. F. H. Wardlaw, Missionary to Cuba. There was a uniform, steady development during this period.

Concerning Rev. Samuel J. Cartledge's life and career a brief statement is sufficient. He and all the other ministers of Chester since Rev. C. R. Hyde are still living. No personal estimate of them at this writing seems to be prudent. The biographical materials for Dr. Cartledge are very modest in compass, as is true of all those who followed him. A brief summary will satisfy both judgment and taste. What has been told us is that:

Rev. Samuel J. Cartledge was born in Franklin County, Georgia, May 9, 1864, the son of a minister. He was educated at the University of Georgia and Princeton and Columbia Theological Seminaries. He graduated at Columbia in 1889. He received the Doctorate of Divinity from the Presbyterian College, Clinton, S. C., in 1932. Dr. Cartledge was twice married: First, to Laura Burns of Apple Valley, Georgia, and then to Reta Poullain of Madison, Georgia.

He was ordained by the Presbytery of Athens on May 31, 1889. His first pastorate was in Gainesville, Georgia, where he served for five years, 1889-1894. He removed to Washington, Georgia. Seven years later, he accepted a call to the First Church in Anderson and remained there for five years, 1901-1906. From March, 1906, to October 10, 1910, he was the devoted leader of Purity Church. He

has been pastor of the Central Presbyterian Church, Athens, Georgia, for the past 26 years. He is a true and completely consistent servant of God. He always has been held in high esteem by those with whom he has labored.

REV. A. D. P. GILMOUR

It was six months after the departure of Dr. Cartledge before Rev. Andrew D. Pollock Gilmour was called. Soon after he came, the Hon. William Jennings Bryan addressed a congregation at the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting, June 21, 1911. The only comment made by the Clerk of Session was—"A very full house."

The General Assembly, U. S. inaugurated at this time a Plan of Systematic Beneficence that has been maintained with modifications since. The Session recommended its adoption by the Deacons with an every member canvass that has since been maintained. Dr. Gilmour's leadership and personal generosity aided greatly. The pastor's salary was increased to \$2,100, the Men's Brotherhood organized, the Sunday School was graded, and a Missionary to Korea was supported in addition to the one already maintained in Cuba. The plan to erect an adequate church school building originated in 1912 and was consummated after Dr. Gilmour left. He came back for its dedication in 1917. In the winter of 1912, the pastor expressed a wish to visit the Holy Land. Dr. George Summey had done so while he lived in Chester. There was a committee on pulpit supply during Dr. Gilmour's absence in the summer of 1913. Rev. J. R. Hay had the thanks of the Session formally expressed for his summer's stay and was presented with a watch. On August 21, 1913, the Session and congregation were informed by Dr. Gilmour that he had declined the offer of the Chair of Church History at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond. Rev. F. V. Robertson, who had been called pastor's assistant but had served as pastor of the East Side Church for three and a half years, resigned in October, 1913. In the spring of 1914 the pastor was

seriously ill at a hospital in Richmond, Va. The Session sent him a most affectionate letter expressing their unwillingness to consider his resignation. Again in June, when he was at Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, a most gracious and comforting letter was sent by a committee representing the congregation, Deacons and Elders. He is assured of their own watchful care over the affairs of the church and asked to remain away all summer in order to recuperate. "You know that each and all of us miss you daily, but in our high esteem for you and sincere love for you, we want you to be careful of yourself, banishing from your mind any worry about the work here, or solicitude for the church." The people of Purity had shown similar solicitude for Dr. Trenholm, Dr. Summey and other ministers since. This regard for Dr. Gilmour was maintained to the end of his stay. He resigned Nov. 19, 1916. Gordon, the author of "Quiet Talks" held a meeting during Dr. Gilmour's stay in Chester.

Rev. A. D. P. Gilmour, D.D., was born in Helensburgh, Scotland, on Oct. 5th, 1876 and was brought by his parents to this country before he was a year old. They settled in Richmond, Va., where he grew up and attended Norwood and Nolleys Preparatory Schools. He was a student in Hampden-Sydney College, Hampden Sydney, Va., for five years, taking his A.B. degree in 1896 and his A.M. in 1897, during the last year acting also as sub-professor.

After teaching a year in Pantops Academy in Charlottesville, Va., he entered the Union Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va., where he graduated with the degree of B. D. in 1901. The summer before graduation and the summer afterwards he assisted Miss Martha Berry in her Home Mission work in North Georgia, being the first one to help in the beginning of a work which has eventuated in the Berry Schools. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by East Hanover Presbytery in April 1901 and ordained by Cherokee Presbytery in June of the same year.

He was Pastor of the Windsor Avenue Presbyterian

Church, Bristol, Tenn., from 1901 to 1905, during which time, upon a leave of absence, he took post graduate work at Princeton University and in Princeton Theological Seminary. In the fall of 1905 he became associated with Union Theological Seminary, where, as financial agent and field secretary and Assistant-Professor of Hebrew and then Associate-Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament, he remained until the spring of 1911.

In May 1911 he became Pastor of Purity Presbyterian Church in Chester, S. C., where he remained until November 1916. During these years the Sunday School building of Purity Church was erected, and Dr. Gilmour will always retain the most pleasant memories of the charm and co-operation and loyalty of the members of Purity Church and of the people of Chester in general. It was here that his daughter, Elizabeth, was born.

In November, 1916, he became Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Spartanburg, S. C., remaining there until 1922, when he became Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, N. C., where he still remains.

In 1909 Washington and Lee University conferred on Dr. Gilmour the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

#### REV. J. E. PURCELL

When Rev. A. D. P. Gilmour resigned J. J. Stringfellow stated that he had been called upon to witness the resignation of eight of his pastors. The register shows that he had been officer in the church forty-four years. "A Look-Out Committee" was appointed to recommend a pastor. In January Rev. J. O. Reavis was elected. In March Rev. Neil Anderson was elected. In August Rev. D. P. McGeachy was elected. In February, 1918, Rev. J. E. Purcell was elected. He accepted.

The Woman's Auxiliary of the Southern Presbyterian Church developed and displaced the women's organization of the church, unified and embraced the activities of all the women of the congregation. The Men's Brotherhood was

an enthusiastic group. This was significant for Rev. J. E. Purcell who afterwards was the General Assembly's Secretary of the Men's Work.

Rev. J. E. Purcell was installed on November 19, 1918, exactly two years after the resignation of Dr. Gilmour. While Dr. Purcell was at Chester, Gypsy Smith conducted one of his notable meetings in the community. No details of the meeting are described in the church records. Miss Orene McIlwaine was suggested as Pastor's Assistant in October 1919. She remained until May 9, 1920 in this position when she began to be supported by the church in her missionary work in China. Dr. Purcell remained till November 1, 1920. His stay was not quite two years.

Rev. John Edwin Purcell, D.D., was born in Robeson County, N. C., in 1884. After graduating from Davidson College in 1907, he taught school in North Carolina for two years and then entered Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va., where he received his divinity degree in 1912. He spent the next year at the Biblical Seminary, New York. He was pastor at Mt. Carmel, Lexington Presbytery, from 1913 to 1918. Following his two years at Purity, he went to Wilmington, N. C., as pastor of St. Andrews Church. In 1924, he became Executive Secretary of Men's Work under the Religious Education Committee at Richmond. He is well known for his skill in the field of adult religious training. He has been the source and agent of promoting this type of religious instruction throughout the country. With Dr. Lewis J. Sherrill, he is co-author of "Adult Education in the Church."

#### REV. FLOURNOY SHEPPERSON

Purity lost no time in securing another minister. Rev. Flournoy Shepperson of Monticello, Arkansas, was called on November 7, 1920, a week after the resignation of J. E. Purcell. His pastorate lasted till November 1925.

These were most favorable and prosperous years in the

history of the congregation. The total gifts of the church ran well nigh thirty thousand dollars in 1924, though Dr. Shepperson was not primarily a financier but rather a leader in things of the Spirit. Twice in his pastorate revival services were held. His devoted and successful dealing with the personal religious life of his people appears in a pamphlet written by him and found in the book of church records. The organizations of the church grew into full and complete services and gifts. The manse on York Street planned before his arrival was occupied first by Dr. Shepperson and his family. Altogether this pastorate was prosperous both in material gifts and spiritual accomplishments.

Our sketch does not sufficiently suggest the qualities and fruitful services of this minister of Jesus Christ but is here set down as an appreciative record for the ministrations and leadership of a man of God who has been a devoted follower of the Lord Jesus and a most successful minister of the church.

Dr. Shepperson is of Virginia ancestry on his paternal side. His maternal line is of Arkansas in which state he was born in the town of Columbus January 10, 1883. His collegiate training was received in a Presbyterian institution, Arkansas College at Batesville, where he was given his academic degree of A. B. and the honorary degree of D.D. He was later offered the presidency of this school but declined it. He finished with the B.D. degree at Union Theological Seminary at Richmond, Virginia. He was pastor of the Magnolia and Mt. Holly Presbyterian Churches in Arkansas from 1908 to 1911 and at Monticello, Arkansas from 1911 to 1920. He was moderator of the Synod of Arkansas before removing to Chester. He was the minister at Purity for more than four years, 1921-1925. Since leaving Chester he has been pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church at Greenville, S. C.

## REV. J. O. MANN

On November 9, 1925 the Session was informed that Dr. Shepperson intended to resign and a "Lookout" Committee was appointed to recommend his successor. During the month following "The Men of the Church" were asked to provide preaching services until the coming of a minister. In January Elder A. M. Aiken made "a long and strong address," according to the clerk. "The Look Out" Committee favored the election of Rev. Francis Campbell Symonds of Thomasville, Georgia. He was chosen unanimously. Rev. C. W. Sommersville, Ph.D., professor in Queens-Chicora College, Charlotte, N. C., presided over the congregational meeting on this occasion. He was temporary supply during this interval between pastorates and at other times. Rev. F. C. Symonds visited the church during February. In spite of a previous interview of the "Look-Out" Committee, who had visited him in his home, and in spite of his visit to Chester, he was not persuaded to accept. The annual reports were sent up to Presbytery with the Sessional Records. The moderator of Bethel Presbytery, whose signature of approval was attached to the book, was Hon. John G. Richards, who was the next Governor of South Carolina.

On April 25, 1926 the congregation of Purity called Rev. J. O. Mann. He accepted, but the Minutes do not carry an account of his installation. Rev. Mr. Mann came to Chester after a singularly successful pastorate at the Church of the Covenant, Wilmington, N. C., where during eight years his congregation grew from 90 communicants to 490.

This auspicious recommendation was confirmed during his eight years of ministry of Purity where, under the leadership of able evangelists, several great meetings were held. These enriched Purity and blessed the Chester community. Rev. Dr. J. H. Henderlite, Pastor of the Gastonia Presbyterian Church, held such a meeting for two weeks

in 1926. In 1928, March 25, the Session made a record of "Thanks" to Rev. S. M. Glasgow of Savannah, for his two weeks meeting. Gypsy Smith, the notable Evangelist, was invited for a meeting by the Session on November 30, 1929. The able and spiritually minded young pastor of the First Church in Dallas, Texas, William Anderson, Jr., came for a protracted meeting in June 1932 and greatly revived the church.

During part of this pastorate, beginning January 1927, Miss Catherine Park was assistant to the pastor. Mr. A. B. Link was a worker for the young people during the summer months of 1933, also in 1934. Rev. J. O. Mann was called to the Central Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, Mo., but declined. The statement of this fact was made in the record of September 17, 1929. Miss Orene McIlwaine's salary ceased in February 1930. This was due to her return from China where she had been a missionary for some years following her term of most acceptable service as pastor's assistant at Purity at an earlier time. The reduction of expenses was made necessary by the economic crisis and business panic that began in October 1929.

Two items of a personal nature are worth mentioning. One was the warm friendship between Rev. Mr. Mann and Elder S. M. Jones. This pastor, in commenting on the appreciation he felt for kindness as received during his stay in Chester, remarks on the friendship of S. M. Jones. The sessional account mentions the baptism and reception into membership of Purity of an esteemed and well-known citizen, Hon. T. J. Cunningham who joined the church in his eightieth year. This impressed the community and congregation very decidedly. A brief line in the Minutes of September 1931 tells that a "Young African Convert" was to speak to the congregation at a later service.

The spiritual and practical condition of Purity Church during the withering years of business prostration following 1929 is discernible in the records of Session. The largest total contributions, the all time high for Purity

Church, was in 1928 when the sum of \$47,324 was disbursed. This probably included the payment through matured building and loan stock applied to the final indebtedness on the manse and the addition to the Sunday School building. The declining gifts can not be measured by this sum as a basis. A total of \$27,328 was given in 1929. In 1932 the amount disbursed was \$18,285; in 1933, \$15,684; in 1934, \$12,488. These amounts show a very creditable liberality in the midst of a period of crippled finances. The Sunday School showed fifty-three fewer in enrollment from 1928 to 1934 and a decline of nineteen communicants in the same period. Considering all the conditions of Purity church during this period, this makes a good showing. There was much less retrenchment than might have been expected. The activities of the congregation were more constant and fruitful than were realized at the time when discouragements and anxieties were hovering like a cloud.

Such is the current of events and major interests of the eight years during which the congregation was presided over by Rev. J. O. Mann. A biographical summary may be embraced within the following modest compass that does not fully reveal his merits and accomplishments as a Christian minister.

Rev. James Oscar Mann is a product of one of the institutions of the Presbyterian Church. His childhood training was in the Barium Springs Orphanage, North Carolina, his home from his eighth year till he went to college. He was born June 26, 1886 in Union County, N. C. After finishing at Barium Springs he spent four years in Davidson College where he received the A. B. degree in 1906. After spending one year as physical director in the Young Men's Christian Association at Mexico City, he went to Union Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, where he graduated in 1910. He married Miss Mary Miller of Statesville in the summer of that year and went to the Tinkling Spring Church, Virginia, where he spent eight years. Two of his predecessors at Tinkling Spring long ago were Dr. R. L.

Dabney and Dr. G. B. Strickler. He spent eight more years in Wilmington, N. C. He spent eight more years with Purity Church as described above. He resigned from the pastorate at Purity, October 16, 1934. Since that time he has been Director of Religious Education for the Synod of North Carolina.

#### REV. JOHN MCSWEEN

From the resignation of Rev. J. O. Mann to the acceptance by Rev. John McSween was six months, October 16, 1934 to May 5, 1935. The Clerk of Session tabulated the preaching services for this time, giving the dates and the occupants of the pulpit from December to May. There were eighteen different Presbyterian ministers who preached at Purity on the twenty-four consecutive Sundays. The officers of the Church were wonderfully attentive not only to congregational matters but to such affairs as involved the church at large. The orderly, regular attentiveness to details of ecclesiastical business, the preparation of the annual budget and the presentation of reports once again exhibited the intelligence and devotion of a large group of officers and of women who have made Purity a well organized and coherently active church. Perhaps, a sense of responsibility, quickened by the pastoral vacancy, led to a study of the constitution and rules of the Presbyterian Church, as a "Book of Church Order" was given to each Elder for study. In many ways the congregation was prepared to give a hearty welcome to the popular and matured minister who, still in his younger years, came to them in June after having served as President of Presbyterian College at Clinton. His ministry opened auspiciously and has continued with great happiness and satisfaction. We may enter here a sketch of his life. It is given in bare outline against the day when his services will receive such estimate and encomium as a later historian may give, when time and providence shall have given proper perspective.

Dr. McSween well deserves the good will and support that is being so generously accorded him from a church and community that recognize themselves as greatly blessed in having such a good and great man as a friend and spiritual guide.

From "Who's Who in America," edition of 1934-1935, we get some facts for this sketch. Rev. John McSween was born in Timmons ville, S. C., November 15, 1888, the son of John and Kate Sykes McSween. His father came to America from Scotland as a youth. By his energy and great competence he built up a large fortune as a merchant and banker. This elder John McSween was a fine Christian man and active Elder in the Presbyterian Church and a generous giver to many philanthropies. He left a good name, a large fortune and a worthy family. His only son and namesake exhibits some of the high qualities of his noble father and is a living continuation of godliness through nature as well as nurture.

Rev. John McSween graduated at Davidson College with B.S., 1908 and at Columbia Seminary with B.D., 1913. His academic studies were extended in courses at the University of South Carolina and the Biblical Seminary, New York. His personal gifts and popularity and his zealous concern for the good of the church led to his being called to the presidency of Presbyterian College in 1928 where he gave himself to sustaining that institution during its critical needs which were formidably increased by the years of financial distress. His seven years of service gave the college a permanent hold upon the Synods of South Carolina and Georgia. His leadership in academic matters was worthy and in educational administration admirable and enduring.

He has held several pastorates, besides serving as a young missionary in the mountainous section of North Carolina. He was pastor at Dillon, S. C.; Rowland, N. C.; Clemson College, S. C.; Central Church, Anderson, S. C. These were successive from 1913 to 1928. After seven years as

President of the Presbyterian College, he entered upon the pastorate at Purity in June 1935.

Rev. John McSween has been Moderator of the Synod of South Carolina. He has been a member of the board of trustees of Thornwell Orphanage and of Columbia Theological Seminary. He married Miss Lina Washington Crews of Durham, N. C., in 1911. He was with the American Expeditionary Forces in France in 1917-1918, as chaplain and first lieutenant, as he had been when a portion of the American Army was encamped on the Mexican border in 1916. He has filled the post as chaplain of the American Legion for the state.

This last and present minister of Purity has a difficult yet worthy rank and role to sustain in the pastoral succession at Purity that has continued for one hundred and fifty years.

In connection with Dr. McSween's pastorate occurred the Sesqui-Centennial celebration of the church. On June 13, 1937, the Pastor, congregation and officers with many friends and visitors assembled morning, afternoon and evening to call to remembrance the course of one hundred and fifty years of the memorable history of Purity.

The Pastor presided at the three services in which was assembled a large number of people. The spirit of the occasion can in no wise be reflected in nor suggested by the bare program of services which is reproduced below. The geniality and taste and religious devotedness of the Pastor, the warm-hearted welcome to the visitors at worship and at the luncheon served in the Sunday School building, the gladness of former ministers who had returned for the occasion as well as sons of the church in the ministry, the reunion of friends and kinsfolk at the quiet and solemn communion service, the intense listening of the audience to the sermons and the historical address, the beauty of the lovely June day—all united to give great impressiveness, beauty and spiritual upliftedness of heart to those who were present. The committee and their helpers who planned the

celebration and carried it to such a happy conclusion deserve to have recognition and appreciation.

## P R O G R A M

June 13, 1937

Morning Worship Begins at 11:15 o'Clock

Rev. John McSween, D.D., *Presiding*

Sermon — Rev. George Summey, D.D., LL.D.

*Communion of the Lord's Supper*

Rev. S. J. Cartledge, D.D.

Rev. W. C. Alexander, D.D.

AFTERNOON SERVICE BEGINS AT 4:00 o'CLOCK  
HISTORICAL ADDRESS

Rev. F. Dudley Jones, D.D.

*Of Presbyterian College, Clinton, S. C.*

EVENING WORSHIP BEGINS AT 8:00 o'CLOCK

Sermon—Rev. Flournoy Shepperson, D.D.

GENERAL COMMITTEE ON  
SESQUI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

R. B. Caldwell, Chairman, A. L. Gaston, J. H. McLure

## PURITY'S SESSION

IF ANY aspect of Purity may be singled out as pre-eminent above all others in its long history, that honor must go to the Ruling Elders. In every period there has been a group of these who stood staunch and unfaltering when even their brethren were going off in defection. When political strife arose; when theological or personal differences issued; when the unwisdom of some minister brought sorrow and shame; when misconduct of members required reproof; when the pastor was in trouble or need; when the Presbytery or the general church sought cooperation and support; when the congregation was weak and poor in the early days, and since the organization has grown complex and strong in recent times — always, it has been the Elders of Purity that protected and supported with zealous care the interest of God's kingdom committed to them. Purity has had a Session remarkable for its intelligence and devotion, for its numerous positions in the church and for a steady patience that has been loyal and triumphant. Before we make the roster of Ruling Elders and write down the biographies of some of them, we may give a brief delineation and background of the Session in general.

The so-called Southern Presbyterian Church (i.e. The Presbyterian Church in the United States) in its constitution and rules recognizes the parity of the eldership. That is, Ruling Elders are considered equal in function and are in every way on parity with the ministers or Teaching Elders, except as to preaching and the administration of the Sacraments. This is the outcome and result of the discussions in the thirties and forties in the General Assembly concerning the rights and functions of Elders in the church courts and concerning the policy of formulating Boards or Committees to administer missionary and other work of

the church. Purity's Elders always took seriously and joyously their office as Bishop. The history of the thirties shows that the congregation was divided up into sections, sometimes called "quarters" following the ancient Scottish practice. Reports of supervision were made and sometimes a dilatory brother was exhorted to be more dutiful in his attentions to members of the flock. After 1843, when the General Assembly under the leadership of Dr. James H. Thornwell and others, brought the apostolic view of the Eldership into sharp focus, Purity's Session became even more efficient and significant. Since 1930 committees on visitation have proved helpful.

The impression that conventions of Presbyterian officers are of recent origin is an error. As late as 1922 Elder A. M. Aiken headed such a meeting at Clinton. Other such meetings of presbyterial or synodical extent were held at other times but the convention of Elders and Deacons Aug. 2 and 3, 1860, was most notable. A bundle of sermons and pamphlets, preserved and bound by Miss Janie Knox of Pleasant Grove Church in 1888, now in the hands of Elder J. H. McLure, embraces the published account of this meeting. Rev. William Banks on the second day preached a sermon on the office of Deacon. On the opening day Rev. John Stitt Harris of Bethesda Church, in a discourse that is also preserved, spoke on "Diligence Enjoined Upon the Eldership." This is a remarkable sermon from any point of view. It is tasteful, scholarly, carefully documented, full of grace and truth. With all the advantages and facilities of the modern university and seminary training, a minister of modern times is not likely to show such learnedness united with spiritual power.

The committee appointed to suggest a program for another meeting the following year named ten topics for consideration. It arouses admiration and quickens respect for the piety and ability of these church officials to read these topics, the comments made and the fervid earnestness exhibited in the resolutions that were adopted.

It is not quite possible to segregate from the representatives at this memorable meeting the names of those who belonged to Purity's Session or Diaconate. As far as we can make out, the following officers from Purity were in attendance: Elders, Maj. John Walker, Adam Walker, Alexander Walker, Robert Wylie, John W. Walker, H. C. Brawley; Deacons: I. McD. Hood, John Hood, J. L. Harris. From a single notation the names of the two Hoods appear on Purity's roll at a later time and it is doubtful if they were the ones attending from Purity in 1860.

#### RECORDS OF SESSION

Some outstanding facts from the minutes of Session and from the Minutes of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly may be recorded here. Obviously, relatively few items may be included. These are selected to show the services and spirit of the Elders during a very long period.

The contents of the Records of Session are reproduced in connection with the appropriate subjects in the chapters of this book. The items relative to the Sunday School have been collected from the minutes and, with other data from other sources, appropriately unified and interpreted under that head. Such references as were written down by the Clerks about the Women's Work were gathered under that chapter heading. It is believed that altogether the significant facts indited in the minutes are employed in the composition of this historical sketch and are stated somewhere in this narrative.

It is a pity that so much has been omitted. A dozen or more sources have been used in this compilation. One of the most important and what should have been one of the most interesting eras has been almost unrecorded, the twenty-five years from 1850 to 1874. Until 1850 we have fairly full information. Purity's own historian and pastor, John Douglas, gave a good account of the middle years, that is from 1830 to 1850. It is an unfortunate mischance that the Records of Session covering the Confederate War

and the early Reconstruction period have been irrevocably lost. This is doubly unfortunate as we have only a few chance fragments besides. Leonard Harris, Clerk of Session, brought over from an earlier lost minute book a few items in his first records and a few items occur in "The Chester Standard," a local weekly paper. Very slight intimations and references concerning Purity during the Confederacy have come to us and these are stated in their proper connection.

In spite of mighty moving events in the secular world, the church records say very little concerning them. If we should have had access to the minutes of the Confederate War period, it is likely that the events external to the church would have been meagerly revealed. Purity's people were engaged in furnishing supplies to ill soldiers and to hospitals so Synod's Minutes indicate, but nothing more. During the entire Reconstruction Era only one item is written down that even suggests a dim awareness of it. We have this:

"Chester, S. C. 3 Nov. 1874. This being the day for the regular monthly meeting of the Session of Purity Church some of the members met and agreed to adjourn over until Thursday afternoon in an informal manner in consequence of it being election day. In accordance with that informal adjournment, the Session met at the Bank Hall on Thursday afternoon the 5th Nov." Momentous events in the life of South Carolina were involved in that election. Those who had been negro slaves less than ten years before were at that time in control of the local and state government.

During the great World War, 1917-1918, only two or three references remotely intimate its eventuation. On July 2, 1917, the following occurs in the Minutes: "A young man a member of Company "G" 1st. Reg. N.G.S.C. viz Mr. Green Napoleon Price was received into the membership of the church and the sacrament of Baptism was administered to him." And this also on July 8, 1917: "Sam Hutchins of Walhalla, S. C. Co. "G" 1st. Reg. S.C.N.G.

received on Prof. faith." There is no other reference to the war besides the gold star symbols in the church and the roster on the wall.

At a joint meeting of officers on January 30, 1918, the congregation was called for the purpose of raising \$305, the quota assigned to Purity to secure pastoral work among soldiers in camp. Rev. R. K. Timmons, pastor of Unity Church, Ft. Mill, Bethel Presbytery's chairman of the so-called War Work Council, presented the claim. Presumably the amount was raised as no later statement was made after presentation to the people.

Almost nothing concerning the negroes occurs in all the statements from and about Purity. Many churches appear in the statistical tables after 1830 in the Minutes of Synod and General Assembly as having colored members. Many of the Presbyterian Churches in South Carolina had colored members on their rolls until recent years as revealed in the Minutes of those churches. No colored people were ever on Purity's roll so far as records or Minutes of Session show. In a few statements in the Minutes after 1890 it appears that Purity's Session appropriated small sums to help the local colored Presbyterian pastor and gave some aid to such in the country. The Northern Presbyterian Church has maintained a negro school in Chester since 1869, Brainerd Institute.

"The Bank Hall" often was the meeting place of Session, not only when J. Leonard Harris was a cashier but in very recent years. Purity has always been in close touch with the bankers. Many reports of officers and committees as well as the Minutes of Session were written up in a counting room. The financial and business affairs and the unusual readiness and facility in the conduct of these may be attributed to the fact that the church's officers were expert business men and leaders at the bench and bar.

Frequently during the declining years of J. J. Stringfellow the Session convened in his home. There was a firm hand yet a kindly spirit, exhibited in the numerous cases

of discipline that are exhibited in the records. The kinds of misbehavior were restricted and reappear during the years in gambling, intemperance and worldly amusements.

In 1886 a brief, pointed yet gentle letter of admonition, signed by the pastor and all the Elders, was addressed to the congregation. It was a pastoral letter admonishing the members to refrain from dancing and other worldly amusements. The plea was that in such matters a spirit of self-denial in the name of Christ be exercised in order not to "offend" any other brother. The annual narrative of Session to the Presbytery gave unfailingly the estimate and attitude of the Elders. It appears that disapproval of dancing was felt till some twenty years ago when such opposition was lessened. No such disapproval or even comment appears in the Minutes of recent years, thus reflecting the current change in attitude toward this social practice. It was not a slip of the pen, when the Session in 1900, said that amusements and "other forms of sin" prevailed to some extent among members.

Sometimes profanity was noted as a matter to be reprimanded, but drunkenness was fearfully common. The Session again and again cited some member to appear and in every case except two there was confession and a reproof by the Session. In some cases a period of suspension was imposed. If intoxication was charged against some brother, it was adultery that was charged against some erring sister. A number of women were visited by a committee through the years to carry the inquiry or rebuke of the Session. A woman confessed to adultery eight years after the commission of the sin. There were a number of such cases, but the men were far more frequently visited by a committee of Session to secure acknowledgment of intemperance. It is a sad fact that some of the most brilliant and lovable young men of the community were ruined by strong drink. They might confess and promise reformation before the church court but, in spite of this, a melancholy end and even suicide marked quite a number of young men

whom the Elders tried to help. Many, however, were restored and almost without exception made confession when the Session called upon them. One of the Deacons in the older days was asked to appear. He did so but gave an equivocal and half-hearted sort of reply. After several meetings he finally came clean with a full-hearted repentance at the firm and yet gracious insistence of the Session. This and other cases of discipline showed that church authority was recognized, and showed also the influence of the opinion and character of the Session itself.

A. G. Campbell was not willing to forgive Giles J. Patterson but said that "he had prayed earnestly for more of the spirit and had not attained." The Session did not take final action at the time but "councilled (sic) him to take no other standard of forgiveness than that given us by our Master which was to forgive those who put him to death." That was in 1874. It was in 1920 that the Session cited one of the officers on the charge of gambling. The gentleman appeared before the Session and made certain statements. Among these, as written down by the Clerk, was that "he acknowledged he was present while a game of Polka (sic) was being played." His resignation was accepted. A great defalcation by a prominent and long-trusted official, a Deacon of Purity, was a sore and disconcerting embarrassment to the church. His confession as a sinner was made to members of Session in the jail. After some years the erring brother was restored to membership, following his incarceration and period of punishment. The Session gave a letter of dismissal to an Atlanta Church and accompanied it with a note of charity and sympathy.

There is scarcely a case of discipline noted in the church records for the past dozen years but until that time the custom of exercise and power of its effects were notable. While under the necessity of laying a reproving hand on some brother or sister from time to time, the Session in all its long history had no occasion to discipline one of its own

members. No Elder in Purity in the one hundred and fifty years ever dishonored the office or disgraced himself in the eyes of the church, so far as our testimony reveals.

In recent years neither the congregation nor the Session has been troubled by unbrotherly strife as in former times. Occasionally the Minutes show that the insistent disagreement or objection to some decision of the majority of the Session was made a matter of record. More than once in the last twenty years some Elder has his lone dissent written down as a vote in the negative. This parliamentary privilege of having his petulance made a matter of record is quite mild in comparison with some of the heated disagreements among the Elders in times of political or theological controversy. Occasionally, very rarely indeed, does conflict with the pastor appear. When such occurs, the Minutes tend to cover up and gloss over any such alienation since the era of the great discord surrounding Rev. J. E. White. Once in recent years the records carry a few curt lines concerning the resignation of a minister. Nowhere, however, is the story marred by any serious disagreement or permanent alienation. The Session has been wonderfully wise and patient and judicious.

Since 1865 Bethel Presbytery on twenty or more occasions has chosen an Elder from Purity as principal or alternate commissioner to the General Assembly. Four times James Hemphill was selected. He was also chairman of the Assembly's trustees and a director of Columbia Seminary. R. B. Caldwell and John Hafner have been Moderators of Bethel Presbytery. In the Presbytery, the Synod and in the General Assembly scarcely a year has passed since 1860 that some Elder of Purity has not received some honor or borne some large responsibility of the Presbyterian Church. It would require a sketch of these bodies in their mission and benevolent work and an account of the Presbyterian institutions and organizations within South Carolina to embrace every activity in which the officers, particularly the Ruling Elders, of Purity have shared. Their names

occur so frequently and their services are so numerous and various as to make special mention somewhat invidious.

In December 1932, after the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S., adopted such a provision, the Session of the church asked that the congregation consider the advisability of adopting the Rotation method of Elders by which each should serve a limited term. When the matter was submitted to the congregation on Jan. 1, 1933, the congregation voted "that present system be continued."

#### CLERKS OF SESSION

From the opening of the first volume of Minutes in 1874 to the present, four Elders have filled the secretarial office called by the ancient Scottish title of Clerk of Session.

It is not known who the earlier clerks were. We may certainly infer that Major John Walker was one of them. His notes and memoranda show that he was familiar with the affairs of the church and that he conducted many of its transactions.

He administered on behalf of the church the bequest of his Uncle James Kennedy from 1820 to his own death in 1866. He was well educated. It is written concerning the early schooling of Rev. John Douglas: "He commenced the study of the languages with John Walker who taught only a year." Of this we are uncertain as there were two by the name of John Walker, Elders in Purity in 1844. As there were only two Ruling Elders left in Purity, as a result of the differences in the early 1830's, John Walker, i.e. Major John Walker was one of these and probably the Clerk of Session. It was he that was sent to Presbytery in 1823 to place before that body the call for Rev. J. B. Stafford. So, it is likely he of the two, was Clerk in 1836 when Rev. John Douglas came.

The names of the clerks with terms of services after 1874 are as follows:

J. L. Harris was chosen Clerk of Session April 9, 1873 and served till his death July 4, 1892, nineteen years. He

wrote his last record June 26, 1892 but curiously enough signed the Minutes "George Summey, Moderator" but did not attach his own signature. From his hand we have the records from January 6, 1874 to June 26, 1892, covering 313 pages of the first existing volume. He went back to some prior volume of Minutes and apparently listed all members from that source, though he does not say so. Fortunately, he inscribed at the same time the roster of Elders from the beginning with dates of ordination, death, etc. Some, but probably not all, prior Deacons were listed. This register of members and officers was continued almost to the present time. The current Minutes of Session omit such a register entirely.

James Hamilton was Sessional Clerk from July 1892 to his death in 1900. His signature is attached to pages 314-377 in the first volume of Minutes and to pages 1-44 of the second volume. He was clerk for eight years.

W. D. Knox was Clerk of Session from Dec. 1900 to his death in 1928—twenty-eight years. His records cover the second volume of Minutes pages 45 through the register of communicants, baptisms, etc. For some reason the register of this volume has been partially mutilated. One sheet has been cut out and the list of members is partly lost and partly confused in the way they are set down. This is not attributed to the Clerk of Session, and can not now be explained. The third volume of records from page one to page 237 is from the hand of W. D. Knox.

The fourth and present Clerk of Session is William McKinnell. He has served since 1928, a period of nine years. A few pages, 238 to 251, of the third volume of Minutes are written by him in long hand. The affairs of the congregation have grown so complex, cover so many matters, embrace so many organizations, call for so many meetings and require such long, detailed reports that a new method of entering Minutes was adopted. Since 1928, the sessional records have been typewritten in three volumes, beautifully kept and made exquisitely neat and clear. Volume four

of Purity's Minutes from April 1, 1928 to April 7, 1932 and volume five from April 10, 1932 to April 13, 1936 are thus compiled and preserved. The sixth volume, beginning April 1936, is in process.

### RULING ELDERS

NAME	ORDAINED	INSTALLED
1. A. M. Aiken	March 23, 1919	March 23, 1919
2. Sample Alexander	April 30, 1864	April 30, 1864
3. J. McD. Bankhead	Dec. 18, 1921	Dec. 18, 1921
4. John Bell	Before 1860	
5. Robert Boyd	Before 1800	Before 1800
6. William Bradford	In 1805	In 1805
7. Hiram Brawley	May 26, 1855	May 26, 1855
8. Robert B. Caldwell	Nov. 10, 1912	Nov. 1912
9. J. E. Craig	March 23, 1919	March 23, 1919
10. E. A. Crawford	March 19, 1893	March 19, 1893
11. Wm. Lee Davidson	May 28, 1899	May 28, 1899
12. R. L. Douglas	March, 1919	March 23, 1919
13. A. L. Gaston	April 15, 1923	April 15, 1923
14. Hugh Gaston	Before 1800	
15. John A. Hafner	Nov. 10, 1912	Nov. 1912
16. James Hamilton	Oct. 11, 1885	Oct. 11, 1885
17. John Harden	In 1805	In 1805
18. John L. Harris	April 30, 1864	April 30, 1864
19. James Hemphill	April 30, 1864	April 30, 1864
20. Wm. Dixon Henry	May 26, 1855	May 26, 1855
21. L. C. Horner	May 24, 1931	May 24, 1931
22. S. M. Jones	April 15, 1923	April 15, 1923
24. James Kennedy	Before 1787	Before 1787
25. William D. Knox	March 19, 1893	March 19, 1893
26. M. S. Lewis	June 22, 1902	June 22, 1902
27. William Lewis	Before 1800	Before 1800
28. James K. Marshall		Oct. 11, 1885
29. Chas. C. McAliley	Nov. 10, 1912	Nov. 1912
30. James McAliley	In 1835	In 1835
31. James McClintock	In 1828	In 1828
32. Matthew McClintock	In 1818	In 1818
33. Edward McDaniel	Before 1800	Before 1800
34. William McKinnell		June 22, 1902
35. J. Hal McLure		March 23, 1919
36. F. D. Miller	May 24, 1931	May 24, 1931

	NAME	ORDAINED	INSTALLED
37.	S. G. Miller, M.D.	June 22, 1902	June 22, 1902
38.	Julius Mills		Oct. 11, 1885
39.	E. P. Moore		Oct. 11, 1885
40.	Andrew Morrison	Before 1800	Before 1800
41.	John Reedy	In 1835	In 1835
42.	John A. Reedy, M.D.	April 30, 1864	April 30, 1864
43.	B. M. Robbins	Dec. 18, 1921	Dec. 18, 1921
44.	R. E. Sims	May 24, 1931	May 24, 1931
45.	Riley M. Strange	Nov. 10, 1912	Nov. 10, 1912
46.	Jno. J. Stringfellow	March 21, 1875	March 21, 1875
47.	Wm. M. Thomassen		In 1866
48.	Adam Walker	April 7, 1844	April 7, 1844
49.	Alexander Walker	Before 1787	Before 1787
50.	Alexander Walker	May 26, 1855	May 26, 1855
51.	Charles Walker	In 1818	In 1818
52.	Charles Walker, Jr.	April 30, 1848	April 30, 1848
53.	John Walker	In 1818	In 1818
54.	John Walker, Jr.	In 1835	In 1835
55.	John W. Walker	May 26, 1855	May 26, 1855
56.	Robert Walker	In 1805	In 1805
57.	W. R. Wallace, M.D.	March 25, 1923	March 25, 1923
58.	Abraham White	In 1828	In 1828
59.	James Williamson	Before 1787	Before 1787
60.	John Wilson	Before 1787	Before 1787
61.	W. H. Witherow		Dec. 26, 1875
62.	Harper R. Woods	April 15, 1923	April 15, 1923
63.	Robert Wylie	April 30, 1848	April 30, 1848

Where the date of ordination is omitted, the Elder had been ordained before he became a member of Purity. Such were elected and installed without being ordained again. On Oct. 11, 1885, five Elders were installed who had been previously ordained in other churches.

#### SKETCHES OF RULING ELDERS

It has been difficult to procure materials for the succeeding sketches. The limitations in giving a proper estimate have been considerable. Other sketches may have been entered if information were available, but nearly every Ruling Elder for seventy years who has passed away is here

included. Fortunately the custom of inserting a memorial sketch, although it was begun in recent times, has enabled us to gather here some expressions by contemporaries which we have used. These memorials first appear in 1892. The later ones have been accompanied by photographs inserted by the Clerk. The following biographies are placed in order of deaths. The first of these is that of

### J. L. HARRIS

It is likely that the following tribute was written by James Hemphill who was ordained to the eldership at the same time that J. L. Harris entered upon the duties of that office. As the sketch is full and accurate, nothing need be added:

#### *"To the Memory of Elder J. L. Harris*

"John Leonard Harris was born in Mecklenburg Co. No. Ca. on the 29th day of May 1817. He was descended from a pious ancestry of several generations. His father was an Elder in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church with which our deceased brother connected himself in early youth. Subsequently he transferred his membership to Purity Presbyterian Church. In May 1859 he was ordained and installed a Deacon in said church and on April 30th, 1864 he was made an elder in the same. After an absence of several years in Atlanta, Ga., where he was in connection with one of the Presbyterian Churches, he returned to Chester, and was again installed as an elder on August 4th, 1872, which office he continued to exercise till his death. On April 9th 1873 he was appointed Clerk of Session, the duties of which he discharged nearly twenty years. He departed this life on July 4th, 1892. During all his connection with this church he was a Sabbath School Teacher. In all his relation to the church he was faithful and devoted. He was punctual on all the services of the sanctuary, Prayer Meeting, Sabbath School and Meetings of Session and

Higher Courts of the Church. He was conscientious in looking after the sick, the poor and the erring and did not flinch from performing disagreeable duties. He was liberal to all religious objects, as well as to the needy of all conditions of society. In his last moments on earth, his faith in our divine Redeemer was firm and unshaken. We feel that the death of our brother is a sad bereavement to our church but we have a well founded assurance that he is now in the enjoyment of that rest which remains to the people of God."

#### JOHN W. WALKER

There have been several families by the name of Walker in Chester County and not originally related. Two of these families were pioneers. It would take a well informed genealogist to separate the Pennsylvania Walkers, who came first, from the "Irish Walkers," who came directly from Ireland later, probably in the notable immigration of 1768. Of the Walkers there was one or more of this name as Ruling Elder for more than a century. Three Walkers were Ruling Elders in 1845; two bore the name of "John." The subject of this sketch came much later. Such biography and tribute as survives is incorporated in the Minutes of Session, June 4, 1893.

"John W. Walker was born in the County of Chester, S. C. March 5 1813 and died at his home in the Town of Chester Jan. 21st 1893 in the eightieth year of his age.

His entire life was spent in his native community and he passed from earth among the scenes of his childhood. In the year 1850 he was received into membership of this church, it being his by choice as well as by inheritance. For his ancestry as far back as traced was of the Presbyterian faith. He was ordained and installed a Ruling Elder of this church in the year 1855 and at his death was senior member having served the church and her Great Head in this capacity nearly forty years. In all his relations as a

citizen, a Christian man and ecclesiastical officer he was diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. While not a man of many words and undemonstrative in opinion, his heart and life were ever fixed in favor of those things which make for peace and righteousness. With loyalty to truth and fidelity to duty, he carried in his heart perpetually the interests of his Master's Kingdom and the welfare of the church. Especially was this manifested and exemplified in his great concern for the young. He was always a constant attendant of the Sabbath School and until failing health compelled him to relinquish it, he taught regularly a class. Even after he was unable to teach, he honored and encouraged the work by his habitual presence up to the time of his death.

When called upon to serve his fellow-citizens for several years as sheriff of his county, he evinced the same qualities of head and heart as characterized him in his ecclesiastical relations. Deeply sensible of our great loss, and treasuring his memory, the heritage of his life, and the triumph of his death, the Session, decrees that this paper be spread on its Minutes and a copy of the same be conveyed to the family of the deceased.

D. N. McLaughlin  
J. J. Stringfellow."  
Committee.

#### W. L. DAVIDSON

W. L. Davidson had served as an Elder in the church at Lincolnton, North Carolina. He was installed as Ruling Elder in Purity Church May 28, 1899 and passed away August 13 following, thus serving less than four months. The Session entered the following item on Nov. 19, 1899:

"Whereas God in all-wise Providence has removed from his earthly labors to his heavenly reward Col. William Lee Davidson our brother in Christ and fellow-Elder in Purity Church: and whereas, having known him intimately as a man and as an officer in the Lord's house, we feel it a duty

to ourselves and to posterity to preserve some record of the esteem in which we held him in life and the imperishable and precious memory we have of him in death, be it Resolved, by the Session in full meeting & unanimously

*First*, that we bear testimony to his lofty Christian character in which were developed in an unusual degree and perfect symmetry all the graces of the Kingdom of righteousness and love.

*Secondly*, that we make mention of his joyous and untiring service in the Master's kingdom in which he approved himself to men always as a good soldier of Christ.

*Thirdly*, that we give expression to our faith in the statement that what is our loss is his eternal gain. We believe that he lives and serves in the presence of his Saviour in the Great Father's house above and that while he cannot return to us we can go to him and,

*Lastly*, be it resolved that these resolutions be spread upon the Sessional Minutes and a copy of the same be furnished to our brother's bereaved family."

#### JAMES HAMILTON

Men of all types, occupations, and professions have made their impress upon Purity's history. Here is a man whose intelligence and leadership in the community and county have brought honor to his church. James Hamilton was a learned, upright Christian gentleman, who served for years as an Elder in Purity Church.

James Hamilton, a descendant of the Hamilton family who came from Scotland to America before the Revolutionary War, was born in Chester County, May 23, 1839. His parents were John Hamilton and Nancy Boyd Hamilton.

In September 1859 he matriculated at Erskine College. When the Confederate War began, he joined the Southern forces. He was captured by Sheridan's cavalry, Cumberland County, Virginia, April 6, 1865 and remained a prisoner at Newport News, Virginia until July 4, 1865, when he returned home.

In 1867 James Hamilton and Mary Hindman were united in marriage. From this union four sons and five daughters were born.

James Hamilton was distinguished as an educational leader. We have from a Chester County school history this statement about him: "In 1880 one of Chester County's best citizens was elected to the office of School Commissioner in the person of Mr. James Hamilton and he served with honor to himself and to the satisfaction of his friends. Under his leadership the School System of the County began to take a new life." For many years he was also a member of the Board of Examiners of Chester County. Under the wise leadership of such a stalwart and efficient citizen education was in the ascendancy.

He moved to Chester in 1881. After teaching a private school for some time, he and a Mr. Berry opened a book store. Later, his son, John Hamilton, became a partner when Mr. Berry withdrew. Then another son, Ernest Hamilton, joined his father and brother. Thus the Hamilton Book Store was established and still continues in the family name. During his years as a teacher and business man, James Hamilton gave unselfishly of his time and energy to the growth and development of his church.

On Nov. 22, 1900 the spirit of this devoted husband, kind father, loyal and influential citizen, and faithful follower of his Master went back to God. He lies in Evergreen Cemetery with many loved ones.

The formal statements inscribed in the Minute book are indeed formal and state with far less feeling the warm regard that was felt by the community and his own brethren. His quiet, serene and dignified manner and his completely consecrated Christian faith brought to him respect and to the church a high degree of confidence. The Session said:

"Inasmuch as God in His providence has removed from our midst to his reward in heaven, James Hamilton, our brother in Christ, a fellow elder in Purity Church, and esteemed clerk of this Session, therefore, be it resolved:

1. That while we do not question the wisdom of Him who doeth all things well, yet we wish to give expression, humanly speaking, to the conviction of loss which the session, of which he was a part, and the Church, which he loved, have sustained in his death.

2. That we bear testimony to his inflexible uprightness, his Christ-like character, his commendable zeal for the Master's kingdom, and his great usefulness in every part of the Lord's work, praying that the character he bore and the life he lived as an example to the flock may be a rich heritage of encouragement and strength to all who knew him, and expressing the belief that the change, which to us has been one of great sorrow, is to him one of immortal life and blessedness.

3. That a copy of these resolutions be spread on the session's minutes and another copy be sent to the family of the deceased."

### JAMES HEMPHILL

No citizen of Chester was ever held in greater esteem nor any member of Purity Church ever more beloved than James Hemphill. He was a communicant of Purity for sixty-five years, having joined by profession of faith in 1836. He was ordained Ruling Elder in April 30, 1864, and served for a term of thirty-eight years.

James Hemphill and his kinsfolk were a credit to the Associate Reformed Church as well as to his own denomination. John Hemphill, his father, was the pastor of Hopewell Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Chester County for thirty-six years. James Hemphill's older brother, William Ramsay Hemphill, was an A. R. P. minister, was professor of Latin for some years at Erskine College and was the father of Rev. John Hemphill also of the A. R. P. church. James Hemphill's brother under whom he studied law at Sumter, S. C., became a supreme court judge in Texas. J. C. Hemphill, the great newspaper editor, was a nephew.

This high and worthy connection was also seen in his own family. Of his marriage with Rachael Brawley in 1843 there issued seven children to reach maturity. David and Paul Hemphill, his sons were respected lawyers of Chester. Of his daughters Susan was Mrs. Jackson Guy of Richmond, Va., and Eunice was Mrs. Arnold Borden of Goldsboro, N. C. Two of his sons rose to eminence. John J. Hemphill was a member of Congress from South Carolina and served also as a Commissioner of the District of Columbia. Rev. Charles R. Hemphill was a greatly beloved and honored minister of the Southern Presbyterian Church. He served as a teacher at Columbia Seminary, a Pastor of Louisville, Ky., and died as Professor of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Louisville, Ky.

James Hemphill was born in the manse of Hopewell in 1813 and died in Chester Sunday, January 1902. He was thus in his ninetieth year when he passed away. He received his college training at Jefferson College, Penn. His legal instruction was from his brother John who then resided at Sumter, S. C. Soon after coming to Chester, S. C., to practice his profession he joined the church of which he was a devoted and helpful member all his life. From the pen of A. M. Aiken this eulogy, written in 1902, is extracted:

"His was a life full worth the emulation of young men of today. He was of the old South Carolina type and was a distinguished statesman. Distinguished not in the sense the word is used today, but in the strength of his character and purity of his life. In all his dealings with his fellow men a high degree of honor prevailed and in all business transactions his integrity and keen sense of equity were specially observed. He was a man of great dignity, a learned lawyer, a wise counsellor and an exceptionally devoted and patriotic citizen. He was strongly opposed to Secession and in latter years has been heard to express decided views on that subject. He was never a politician, although for many years before the war he represented

Chester in the State senate. One striking feature of this lofty character was his devotion to his church, a more consistent helper and regular attendant was not to be found in the Presbyterian congregation of the city. It was always his pleasure to attend the Session of the church of which board he was the leading member for a long term of years. In his death, the family loses a loving husband, a kind father, and all who were so fortunate as to enjoy his acquaintance, a true hearted, genial and sympathetic friend."

The Minutes of Session from 1874 to 1902 show that he was present at nearly every meeting for twenty-eight years. Doubtless the record is true during the many years before that. James Hemphill was a trusted helper of many Presbyterian enterprises in which he rendered great service in a most modest and unobtrusive fashion. He was for many years one of the Trustees of the General Assembly, on the Board of Columbia Theological Seminary a long while and was four times chosen as Commissioner to the General Assembly by Bethel Presbytery. During the long, troublesome years of strife in Purity Church his piety, gentleness and patience of spirit softened and enlightened the counsel that finally made the church safe and triumphant. Perhaps, as eminent as were his earthly achievements was the modest yet widely known impress of his spiritual mindedness. His genuine Christianity made him great. His memory is still fresh and still alive even after a generation has gone since he passed. In addition to the tribute and appraisal of him as a servant of God, we may set here the inscription on a tablet placed by his friends in the Chester Court House.

*"In Memory of*

JAMES HEMPHILL

Born July 3, 1813,

Admitted to the Bar July, 1836,

And continued the practice thereof until his death on

January 12, 1902.

*A Learned Lawyer,*

*A Just Man,*

*A Patriotic Citizen*

---

Erected by his friends

July 1902."

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E. P. MOORE

It was an oversight that the Elders did not enter a memorial page for this Elder. However, from a news item pasted in the record book, we have the material for this brief sketch.

He was known as Capt. E. P. Moore. Before his death he had long been a familiar figure in Chester. Captain Moore was a dignified, cultured, old fashioned aristocratic gentleman. His interment was in Evergreen Cemetery when Rev. A. D. P. Gilmour, who had just come to Purity's pastorate officiated.

E. P. Moore was born in Rock Hill, S. C., May 4, 1837 and died July 13, 1911, a life time of four beyond three-score and ten. He served in the Confederate War, as a

brave and fearless soldier in the seventeenth South Carolina Regiment. He served many years as agent for the Seaboard Railway. He was twice married. First, to Elizabeth Neely, October 1858, of which marriage three well-known sons issued, Thos. Peyton Moore, Walter B. Moore and E. Neely Moore. His second marriage was with Annie Wylie of Chester, a member of a prominent family. Of this marriage two sons were born, Dr. Baxter S. Moore and Dr. A. Wylie Moore.

E. P. Moore was made Ruling Elder in Purity October 1885. He filled the duties and ornamented that office for more than a quarter of a century.

#### S. M. JONES

Among the Ruling Elders that have been worthy in life and generous with gifts Samuel Morgan Jones had a distinct place. He came to Chester as a young man in 1881 when he was twenty-six years of age. From that time to his death, he identified himself with the affairs of the county and of the town.

His wide connection with the financial and agricultural interests as well as his large career as a merchant revealed his intelligence, integrity and reflected the confidence of many of his fellow citizens.

It is of his relation to the church and his experience as a Christian man as well as of his great liberality that this tribute is concerned. He joined in later life the church with which his wife had united in 1889. His pastor, Rev. J. O. Mann, truly summarized and interpreted this servant of God, "He was a man to whom the Christian life had been an expanding experience and as years hurried by, he had mellowed with the passage of time, his faith had been magnified, and he had exercised a widening influence."

Respect for him was shown by his election as Ruling Elder of Purity in 1923. He gradually turned his attention to the needs of the congregation and to the denomina-

tion that he had joined. The years of money making were followed by years of Christian liberality and benevolence.

The Sunday School building and the manse were erected largely through his generosity. He endowed a scholarship at the Presbyterian College to the amount of five thousand dollars. Other benevolences and charities unostentatiously flowed through his hands. He was as wise in his counsels as he was liberal with his gifts. In the meetings of Session, his demeanor was modest. His good will and smiling patience in presenting his opinions greatly contributed reasonable conduct of the church's affairs in times of difficulty. His love for his fellow man and his reverence for God grew apace with his years.

When he passed away he was mourned not only by the people of his own church but by the entire community. The business of the town ceased on the day of his burial, and there was a wistful sorrow as his friends came to realize that a good man had departed. It was recognized that not only was there the loss of one who had been important in the secular matters of the town and the business affairs of the world, but there had departed a valuable and wise Christian. He had slowly gathered to himself the good will of a large number of people who had come to realize the matured example of what is meant to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The bare biographical facts of S. M. Jones may be briefly stated, though they do not reveal the abundance of his life. He was born in Davidsonville, Md., in 1855, and died in Chester, S. C., in his 77th year. He and Meyer Wachtel purchased the firm which was later conducted by Mr. Jones himself under the title S. M. Jones & Co. He closed this business connection 1924, and devoted himself to his duties as President of the National Exchange Bank. He had many other business connections besides these. He was a member of the Rotary Service Club and Director of the Chamber of Commerce. His wife, Dora Jones, was from Tirzah, S. C. For her was named the Dora Jones public school

building on Reedy Street erected on land donated by Mr. Jones.

S. M. Jones came to Chester a stranger. He lived a half a century in the place where he became respected as a man and beloved as a Christian brother. He entered the community as an outsider, without the traditions or ties or social and racial kinship that so strikingly characterize the people of the Chester Church. When he was translated on high, he left behind a reputation as a result of his complete identification of himself with those around him. He arrived as a stranger. He departed as a friend. His sympathy, breadth and long continued faith and patience in well-doing will survive as a testimony and encouragement for all who may join in the fellowship of Christian people. His was the honored and happy exemplification that with the Lord Jesus there is no alien exclusiveness nor inner circle of the favored, no Jew or Gentile, but only the welcome for and salvation of all who believe.

#### W. D. KNOX

Purity church shared with other churches the support and faithfulness of William Dunlap Knox as a member and officer. Pleasant Grove in Chester County, Indiantown in Williamsburg County and East Side in Chester had claim upon his most loyal and untiring devotion. At Pleasant Grove he was Ruling Elder, Superintendent and also Clerk of Session in his younger years, after a few years of residence in Williamsburg where he had begun his career of activity for the Church at Indiantown. After he came to Chester, he was made Ruling Elder, in 1893, was assistant superintendent of the Sunday School for many years, resigning only to be of greater help at the East Side Mission where he gave unselfishly of his intelligent consecration to the less favored in the Springstein cotton mill village. His attendance frequent over many years made him one of the best known and one of the most useful Elders of the Presbytery and Synod. He had a sense of spiritual

significance in his allegiance to the church and was a wise counsellor as felt by ministers and the people of Purity. His intimate familiarity with the law and practice of the church was reflected in his sessional minutes of Purity which he wrote as Clerk of Session for nearly thirty years, from 1900 to 1928. He had a sense of historical values and preserved many papers and clippings that bore on church affairs. He was by profession a teacher but was a superlative religious instructor. He was primarily a Christian yet the feeling of human brotherhood made him a lover of lodges and fraternal orders. He was a life member of Chester Lodge A.F.M. His free masonry carried him into places of trust and helpfulness. But his utter devotion to the Kingdom of God marked his entire lifetime. His simplicity and humility of character and his unquestioning faith made his a life of singular purity and power in influence.

The bare facts of his biography may be set down thus.

William Dunlap Knox was born southeast of the County seat in Chester County, March 8, 1847. His was Scotch-Irish ancestry. His parents were James Nesbit Knox and Nancy Dunlap. His grandparents came from County Antrim, Ireland, in the ship "Duke of Argyle" and landed in Charleston 1763 and were thus pioneer Carolinians.

His early training was in such schools as were found in his community which were well-known for the interest of the people in the fundamentals of education. He entered the Confederate War as a private, Company E, Third Battalion, South Carolina Reserves, Captain John Hardin. After the war he entered Davidson College as a sophomore and finished with the A.B. degree in 1871. He entered the teaching profession and remained in that calling his entire lifetime. He went to Williamsburg County where he not only taught but took an active part in the political action of the Reconstruction period during his eight years residence in the lower part of the state. He came back to Chester County in 1880 and taught for four years. He

was a trustee of Davidson College from Bethel Presbytery for six years, 1886 to 1892. For forty-two years he was Superintendent of Education of Chester County, having taught at Lowryville in an interval.

On December 22, 1873 he married Mary Camilla Rogers of Indiantown. Two children were born of this union, James Wilson Knox and Emmie Rogers Knox. From 1847 to 1928 was a period of one more than four score and eight, the life-time, the immensely fruitful life time, of this good, Christian man.

### J. J. STRINGFELLOW

John James Stringfellow was born on the Stringfellow plantation six miles east of Chester, June 16, 1837, and died in Chester, March 5, 1931. He lived nearly ninety-four years. He was a communicant of Purity from boyhood. He was a Deacon in Purity Church from 1872 to 1875 and was Ruling Elder for fifty-six years, from 1875 to 1931. He was Superintendent of the Sunday School from January 10, 1887 to March 22, 1904, seventeen years.

The compass of these long years and the tenure of these positions in the church did not measure the full meaning of J. J. Stringfellow's intelligent, efficient and gladsome delight in his work for his church and town. His personality was distinctive and ran beyond the effect of his deeds.

J. J. Stringfellow was a graduate of Davidson College of the class of 1860 and was a member of the first social fraternity organized in that school. He was a member of Company F. Sixth South Carolina Regiment of the Confederate Army. He was wounded at Seven Pines in 1862, again wounded in the Battle of the Wilderness and still again at Farmville, Va., two days before Appomattox. Subsequent to the War he studied pharmacy at South Carolina College. He came home, entered the drug business and was proprietor of Stringfellow Drug Store for more than forty years.

He was Davidson College's oldest alumnus at the time

of his death, one of the most picturesque figures among more than four thousand alumni. He did not die when he passed from earth, for his memory still lasts as a sort of benignant smile in the memory of those who still like to recall his genial personality and the lively interest he maintained in people as well as in public affairs to the day of his death.

For some seventeen years before his death his eyesight was greatly impaired. The Session often convened in his home not only as a compliment to him but on account of his wisdom and his lively good fellowship. He continued to gather about him good books which he gave to Presbyterian College. He manifested attention to the church at the end as he had done all his life. As an Elder, he was extraordinary. He held to a singularly prudent and just course during the trying years, guiding the decisions of his church well and enabling it to weather the storms of the difficult years when bitterness and misunderstanding did great damage. His counsels were sane and temperate, his spirit in discipline was firm and his unpretending piety was straightforward and stabilizing. He was a fine member of the church and an excellent Ruling Elder.

DR. S. G. MILLER

The following page from the Sessional Record of April 14, 1935 is both a eulogy and a biography. It can not be improved on for the purposes of this historical account. We let it stand entire:

"WHEREAS our Heavenly Father in His infinite wisdom, did, on the 21st day of January 1935, call to his reward our esteemed brother in the Lord, Dr. Samuel George Miller; and

WHEREAS we desire to write into the records of our activities an expression of the keen personal loss felt by each one of us in his passing and of our high regard for him as a man, as a Christian and as a laborer together with

us in the Master's vineyard, as well as a brief sketch of his useful life:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that in the death of Dr. Miller each member of this Session has lost a sympathetic friend and a most considerate and wise counsellor, this body a devoted and efficient member, our church a strong and faithful supporter, and our community a beloved and most capable physician.

Dr. Miller was born in the adjoining county of Fairfield in this State, near the village of Woodward on July 31, 1858. He was the son of George Miller and Mary Brice Miller. After a preliminary education he attended the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Baltimore, now the University of Maryland, and from this institution was graduated in due course. He also studied at the Medical College of Charleston and at Bellevue Hospital in New York City.

He first practiced his profession in the vicinity of his birth-place, and while living there married Miss Hattie Hafner, who survives him. To them were born two children; a son, who died in infancy, and a daughter, Mary Moore Miller, who passed away in 1934.

Early in the year 1896, Dr. Miller moved to this City, and continued here the practice of his profession with marked success until ill health forced his retirement a few years ago. Dr. Miller had a particularly attractive and winning manner in the sick room, and his patients loved him for his tenderness, gentleness and sympathy, as well as for the aid he was able to give them out of his profound knowledge of medicine and his ability as a diagnostician.

In early life Dr. Miller became a member of the Concord Presbyterian Church at Woodward, S. C., and was an Elder in that congregation when he moved to Chester. Our records show that he and his family were received into membership of this church by certificate from Concord on April 5, 1896. He was installed an Elder here on

June 22, 1902. He therefore served as an Elder in Concord and in this church for more than a third of a century.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a page in our Minute Book be set apart and suitably inscribed to the memory of this good man, and that a copy of these resolutions be sent by our Clerk to the bereaved widow with assurance that we share with her the great loss she has sustained and that we are remembering her in our prayers."

## VI.

### THE DEACONS

WE DO NOT know who were the first Deacons of Purity Presbyterian Church nor do we know when they were ordained. American Presbyterianism did not generally make use of the functions of the diaconate nor was that office recognized until late in its history. The employment of this office came as a result of the discussion and the warm debates over the place of the eldership in the ordination by Presbytery and the controversy about Boards and Committees. Dr. James H. Thornwell took a distinctive stand relative to the limitations that should be placed upon the administrative groups that should have in charge the direction of Foreign Missions, Publications, etc. The Southern Presbyterian Church after the discussions of the thirties and forties followed Dr. Thornwell's leadership in the matter and erected committees for administration of fiscal affairs when the church divided in 1861. This ecclesiastical discussion called out into accepted doctrine and practice the significance of the Ruling Elder. Incidentally, the debate evoked an expression of the General Assembly concerning the Deacon. The Presbytery of Miami in Ohio overtured the Assembly "to take such order on this subject as shall secure the appointment of Deacons in all the churches in which it has been neglected." The General Assembly of 1840 answered this overture affirmatively and recommended such appointment in all the churches with the exception of those "in which it is impracticable from the paucity of male members." This injunction was repeated in 1842 or 1843. By 1850 the Presbyterian Churches had Deacons as well as Elders. The register of J. L. Harris taken over from some previous record shows that William D. Henry and Hiram C. Brawley were ordained to this position in Purity May 4, 1850.

We learn from the printed proceedings of the Convention of Elders and Deacons of Bethel Presbytery meeting at Purity August 2, 1868 that twenty-five Deacons were in attendance. This pamphlet is referred to in our chapter on the Session. The office of Deacon was thus in full use and recognition within a short while after the General Assembly called for it in the congregations.

Before Israel McD. Hood and William H. McConnell appear in the Minutes of March 21, 1875 as having been inducted into this office there were seven whose names have been by chance preserved on the church register. These were William D. Henry, Hiram C. Brawley, John C. Curry, John L. Harris, John B. McFadden, James K. Marshall. Altogether forty-three have been installed to carry on the difficult and important duties of this office.

Difficult have been the duties but not always honored and appreciated. It is clear from the Minutes of the Session that the Deacons were looked upon as servitors in money matters and care-takers of physical property of the church till recent times. The Deacons were repeatedly "directed" by Session and rarely "requested" to perform some specific task. The Deacons had the often unwelcome responsibility of providing the wherewithal to pay the minister and to keep in repair the church building. Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm was a most beloved and popular man, yet it was not easy to keep his salary paid. It may have been this or his request that his stipend be increased that had something to do with his resignation. Repeated directions given by Session indicate the trials of the Deacons in raising funds. No minister was ever more popular than Rev. D. N. McLaughlin yet the Deacons were frequently called upon to secure payment for him.

We should suppose that the word "directed" might have been unwittingly misused by the Clerk if we did not know from the facts that such was the intention of Session and such really represented all unconsciously their view of the office of Deacon. On April 4, 1887, the following paper

was adopted. It is an astonishing statement. "To the Board of Deacons of Purity Church. That the two Deacons in charge of the church for each month both count the collections taken up as soon as the public worship is ended on each Sabbath. That the same be given to one of them who will deposit the same in bank on Monday morning, take the duplicate credit ticket of the teller for the same, enter each day's collections in a blank pass book the debit side. After the last Sabbath in each month to hand all these credit tickets to the Treasurer and take his receipt for the number and amount of the same on the credit side of the book. That the treasurer be required to report to the Session at each one of its regular monthly meetings the specific amount of each of these collections so turned over to himself by the two acting Deacons of the last calendar month, also all paid out by him during the said month with the purpose for which the same was paid. This plan, we think, will keep the Session always advised of the actual condition of the finances of the church and if at any time the same is running low can get the Pastor to announce the same to the congregation." Naturally the Deacons were offended.

One week later the Elders and Deacons met jointly. Dr. Summey called Mr. James Hemphill to the chair and read an apology on behalf of the Session in which it was stated that the Session did not intend "to impugn their honesty, Christian character" and that the note to the Deacons "is hereby cheerfully withdrawn."

The Session uniformly nominated persons to be elected to the diaconate till recent years. During the ministry of Rev. Flourney Shepperson the Session directed the Deacons to nominate ten male members of the congregation from which four were to be elected. This brought on some question, we may infer, as the custom of electing officers without advance nomination by the Session was begun.

In the earliest time the church undertook to raise money for certain objects as suggested by the Presbytery or

Synod. About 1880, the practice of presbyterial apportionments began and continued to 1911 when the General Assembly's plan of Systematic Beneficence was adopted. Under the apportionment method of financing benevolences, the Deacons raised the funds by collections and private subscription, placed these in the hands of their treasurer and informed the Session of the amount on hand. The Session at stated intervals "appropriated" so much to this or to that "cause" or object. Sometimes the Session directed the Deacons to secure money for a particular purpose. The envelope system began to supplement such methods of financing and was adopted first in 1889. Weekly, instead of occasional, collections for the special objects were inaugurated in 1898.

The title holders of Purity's property have been the Deacons since 1889. Before that Elders were the holders of property on behalf of the church. This was due, of course, to the hang-over of the practice antedating the office of Deacons.

Dr. A. D. P. Gilmour came to the pastorate of Purity just at the time when the entire church was entering on a new era. The Laymen's Missionary movement had vastly quickened the spirit of missions and stewardship in the Southern Presbyterian Church. The Systematic Beneficence plan was adopted in 1911. A canvass of every member of the church grew in favor as all members were to be simultaneously solicited for aid to the local support and general benevolence. This progressive enlargement of the scope of giving with spiritualization and consecration of means, greatly elevated the office of the Deacon. As a consequence of this spiritual and financial enlargement the Deacons grew in significance and their duties were vastly multiplied. The last quarter of a century has witnessed a relative increase in their numbers, to match the multiplied organizations and activities within the congregation.

Under this elaborated system and large outlay of funds the church has chosen two treasurers, one for benevolences

and one for local support and the two kinds of funds have been kept separate. Treasurer J. L. Williams has been commended more than once for his efficiency. The example of the Deacons in liberality is notable as is clearly reflected in the Minutes of the Session and their annual reports to Presbytery. A regular system of budgeting has grown up.

For more than fifty years the treasurer of Bethel Presbytery has been almost without a break, perhaps without exception, a Deacon in Purity church. J. B. McFadden served for twenty-eight years after 1884. Another officer of Purity, Deacon J. C. McLure, was treasurer of Bethel Presbytery. The Presbytery itself gave especial commendation and praise for M. S. Lewis and R. L. Douglas for their interest, excellence and fine spirit as treasurers of Bethel Presbytery.

The Deacons of Purity have grown in honor, usefulness, leadership as they have also grown in spiritual influence as well as in their own exemplary liberality. The records of Session of the earlier years reflect the accomplishments of the Elders. The records of recent years reveal the multitudinous activities and many facts that grow out of the efficient discharge of the office of Deacon.

DEACONS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Elected</i>
1. Robert Erwin Abell, M.D.-----	March 23, 1919
2. A. M. Aiken-----	Nov. 10, 1912
3. Chester Alexander-----	Dec. 18, 1921
4. John R. Alexander-----	June 22, 1902
5. Newton Palmer Alexander-----	May 10, 1885
6. N. Palmer Alexander-----	Oct. 3, 1896
7. J. Boyce Bankhead-----	Oct. 24, 1926
8. M. M. Barber-----	May 24, 1931
9. William A. Barber-----	Oct. 25, 1891
10. L. E. Beard-----	Dec. 18, 1921
11. Hiram C. Brawley-----	May 4, 1850
12. Robert Brice Caldwell-----	Oct. 30, 1904
13. Arthur E. Cornwell-----	July 30, 1899
14. W. L. Craig-----	May 24, 1931
15. Edward A. Crawford-----	May 10, 1885
16. G. L. Cunningham-----	March 29, 1936
17. John C. Curry-----	May, 1859
18. Z. Vance Davidson-----	Oct. 30, 1904
19. George R. Dawson-----	March 23, 1919
20. Robert L. Douglas-----	Oct. 30, 1904
22. J. Ervin Dunbar-----	March 23, 1919
23. Amos C. Fischel-----	May 10, 1885
24. Arthur L. Gaston-----	June 22, 1902
24. D. A. Gaston-----	March 29, 1936
25. Hugh W. Hafner-----	May 10, 1885
26. John A. Hafner-----	July 30, 1899
27. Robert Russell Hafner-----	March 23, 1919
28. R. R. Hafner, Jr.-----	March 29, 1936
29. E. A. Hall-----	Oct. 24, 1926
30. J. E. Hamilton-----	May 24, 1931
31. Samuel W. Haney-----	Oct. 25, 1891
32. James I. Hardin-----	Nov. 10, 1912
33. John L. Harris-----	May, 1859
34. William Dixon Henry-----	May 4, 1850

- |                                 |           |      |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------|
| 35. Israel McD. Hood, Jr.       | March 21, | 1875 |
| 36. John A. Hood                | Oct. 25,  | 1891 |
| 37. John A. Kee                 | Oct. 25,  | 1891 |
| 38. A. W. Kluttz                | July 30,  | 1899 |
| 39. M. Sumter Lewis             | July 30,  | 1899 |
| 40. A. H. Macaulay              | May 24,   | 1931 |
| 41. Harvey E. McConnell, M.D.   | June 22,  | 1902 |
| 42. Wm. H. McConnell            | March 21, | 1875 |
| 43. John B. McFadden            | March 24, | 1872 |
| 44. Joseph C. McLure            | Oct. 18,  | 1896 |
| 45. James K. Marshall           | March 24, | 1872 |
| 46. David M. Peden              | Dec. 18,  | 1921 |
| 47. W. S. Robinson              | March 29, | 1936 |
| 48. Robert E. Sims              | Nov. 10,  | 1912 |
| 49. James A. Stricker           | Jan. 26,  | 1879 |
| 50. John J. Stringfellow        | March 24, | 1872 |
| 51. Atticus Grandville Thornton | Dec. 18,  | 1921 |
| 52. W. R. Wallace, M.D.         | March 23, | 1919 |
| 53. A. H. Wherry                | May 24,   | 1931 |
| 54. H. M. Williams              | Oct. 24,  | 1926 |
| 55. John L. Williams            | March 23, | 1919 |
| 56. Harper R. Woods             | March 23, | 1919 |
| 57. Thomas N. Youngblood        | Jan. 26,  | 1879 |

## VII

### PURITY'S PROPERTIES

THE MATERIAL possessions of Purity Church have been a means of help and grace in the kingdom of God and, yet sometimes the occasion, if not the cause, of bitter conflict among officers and members. But we may remember that this was also true of the New Testament and Apostolic Church.

There were several kinds of property, besides the ordinary collections and regular pecuniary support, that have engaged the church's business.

#### 1. CHURCH GROUNDS

The church has owned three parcels of land upon which the houses of worship have stood.

The title to the first acreage was not obtained till nearly forty years after it was first occupied. Rev. John Douglas gives an amusing account of the way in which the church secured formal possession. The congregation had agreed to use Psalms in part of the Sabbath service and hymns in another part. Some minister, thoughtlessly or purposely, ignored this compromise of an old dispute. The strife broke out again between the two parties for and against complete psalmody in church worship. "This state of things," says Douglas, "made the malcontents consider what right, what titles they had for the land on which the church stood. Each party seemed to think that the possession of the property would defend them against future annoyances of the other party. James Kennedy, an Elder, as representative of one group had the land surveyed, after applying to the Judge of the County Court, and sent John Wilson post haste to Columbia to have the deed registered in the land office. In the meantime, Robert Boyd, who afterwards became an Elder, had the plat surveyed by

torch-light and sent James Burns hurriedly to Columbia for the same purpose. But as Burns was entering Columbia, he met Wilson coming out with all the papers in his pocket. Thus the legal titles to this piece of land were by this casualty or clerical imprudence secured to the church."

Long before this episode the settlers had erected their first log temple and had used the grounds without having followed the custom and law of having the property registered. Some time before 1770 occupancy had begun. It is stated by Douglas that there were eleven acres. Research does not reveal precise information but this writer finds in the office of the Secretary of the State of South Carolina at Columbia a plat of seven acres of land taken up by James Kennedy. The entry and plat are found in Grant Book, volume 52, page 552, and is dated January 5, 1807. It is located on Sandy River adjoining the lands of Matthew Rainey, Henry Carter and Robert Gowls. This is almost certainly the land taken up for Purity by James Kennedy as described by Douglas, as no public land at that late date would have remained unoccupied. As the headwaters of Rocky Creek and Sandy River are so close together the designation of either as the location would have been relatively correct.

The land occupied before 1770 is still the property of Purity Presbyterian Church. From 1839 to 1855, the congregation considered the place and surroundings as Purity church, as the lecture hall was for the convenience of members in town. After 1855, the country property gradually became known as "Old Purity."

For more than a hundred years, Purity's records show unflinching care for the burial place of so many connected with the families of the congregation. John Walker, known as early as 1820 as Major John Walker, paid out of church funds or from his uncle James Kennedy's bequest sums for the up-keep of the cemetery. These payments are mentioned down to 1863. The Douglas Fund, which came into possession of the Elders of Purity in 1889, pro-

vided a specific sum for the care of the cemetery. The Session for more than fifty years has maintained a committee to care for and supervise the grounds. The grave-yard is enclosed with a stone wall. Such a wall was in existence after 1813, as we have the following subscription agreement with ninety-one names attached:

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed do promise to pay unto Capt. Jno Kennedy, Hugh Ross, John Douglas, John Walker and George Kennedy, or their successors in office. Being an appointed committee to have a stone wall one hundred feet square and four feet high to be built around the present burying ground at Purity Meeting House. Each Subscriber to pay the sum ascribed to his or her name when the work is finished or sooner if required by the Committee given under our hands or by consent this 12th day of January, 1813.

#### SUBSCRIBERS NAMES

Jas. Kennedy Sen'r.; John Harden; Geo. Kennedy; Alex Cabeen; Robt. Walker; John Walker; John Douglas; Capt. John Kennedy; Wm. White; Capt. John Reedy; John White; Abram Ross; Math McClintock; Jas. McClintock; Moses Service; Hugh Ross; Jas. Kennedy, Jr.; Andrew Morrison; Henry Mitchell; Thomas Kennedy; W. Walker; Rhoda Walker; Amos Tims; Charles Walker; James Walker; Philip Walker; A. Walker; Ellen Walker; Thos. Walker; Robt. Gill; Johathan Jones; Charles Walker; Henry Marion; John Daugherty, Jr.; Paul Ferguson; Joseph Wham; Wm. Comberts; James Robinson; Wm. Millen, Jr.; John Murphy; George Clark; John Hunter; Andrew Quinton; Charles Boyd; James Gill, Jr.; John Boyd; Samuel Boyd; Wm. Boyd; James Wilson, Sr.; Andrew Orr; Hugh White; Wm. White; Mary Donly; Alen Boyd, Sr.; Robert Hamilton; Alen Boyd, Jr.; E. C. Wilson; Wm. Walker; Sam'l S. Wilson; Wm. Miller; Jas. McAliley; Robt. Miller; Elizabeth Miller; John M. A. Wilson; Grant Wilson; Agnes Kennedy; Wm. Ross; Hugh Read; Hugh

McKown; Wm. Orr; John McClintock; Samuel Miller; John Miller; Alex Walker; Charles Miller, Sr.; John Service; Wm. Hicklen; Sam'l McKown; James Carroll; Jacob Smith; J. Roseborough; Jno. McKee; Joseph McCash; John Kennedy; Henry Bradley; Dan English; Alex Quay; D. McNeel; John McNinch; Margaret Patterson; Wm. Wilson.

Outside of the grave-yard and enclosing the entire area is a heavy chain-wire fence. There are gates on two sides. Some of the old trees are still standing and younger growth skirts and crowns the knoll that is topped by a sloping plateau occupied by the walled burial ground and the building that is kept as a funeral pavillion. In 1926, the Session took notice of indiscriminate interments and instructed its committee to guard against promiscuous use. The sacred place is at present, 1937, well preserved and is still revered as a hallowed spot to lay away the mortal remains of some one whose name of family or relationship entitles him to a resting place that was first used by Purity's people a hundred and three score and ten years ago.

In 1877 twenty-nine persons asked Bethel Presbytery to turn over to them this property. Presbytery declined and asserted that Purity Church was the owner.

## 2. *The First Property in Chester*

In 1839, that sagacious and also most gracious minister of the church, Rev. John Douglas, purchased a lot in Chester and erected on it a brick structure for worship. This was held until sold to the Roman Catholic Diocese of South Carolina. The transfer of this property by Purity after fifteen years of ownership, is set forth in a deed recorded in Book II, P. 104. As the place has some import as to local and community history, it may be wise to give the location and description of the property. A lot or parcel of land in the town of Chester whereon a building called the lecture room now stands, containing seventy-five poles or perches

and having the following courses, distances and boundaries, viz., beginning on the corner of Hiram Shannon's lot on Saluda Road, and runs S. 43.W. 1.40 with said Road to a stake on G. F. Kennedy's lot now belonging to one Samuel McAliley, thence  $35\frac{1}{2}$  E. 3.43 to a stake, thence N. 45 1.40 to a stake on Hiram Shannon's Line, bounded from said road on Samuel McAliley's lot N.  $35\frac{1}{2}$  W. 3.51 to the beginning. This lot with building was sold to Bishop I. A. Reynolds of the Diocese of Charleston and has been used as a place of worship by the Catholics since 1855. The instrument of transfer was signed by John Walker, Charles Walker, Adam Walker, Robert Wylie, who were Elders in Purity. It was delivered March 28, 1854, and witnessed by David K. Wilson and J. Newton Lewis. Eleven hundred dollars was the price received.

### 3. *Purity's Present Church Grounds*

The lot on which Purity's house of worship now stands was acquired as stated in deed dated Jan. 11, 1854 (Clk of Court Record. Bk. II, pp. 52-53). Before quoting this paper, we may recall that Dr. A. P. Wylie kept a drug store in Chester. His wife Juliet gave the lot for the second home for the pastors of Purity. Dr. W. Gill Wylie, mentioned later, was his son and E. P. Moore named in these papers married his daughter Annie. It is evident that the lands of the church on Wylie Street and the former manse property on Pine Street were once held by Dr. A. P. Wylie. Changes in property lines were made at later times. A. P. Wylie agrees to sell to the said John Walker, Adam Walker, Charles Walker and Robert Walker, Elders of said Purity Church and their successors, a lot or parcel of land situate in the town of Chester whereon to build a house for the purpose of public worship to be called a branch of said Purity Church, for the use and behoofe of said Purity Church, containing one hundred and thirty three poles and having the following courses, distances and

boundaries, Beginning at a stake on the east side of Wylie Street, N. 48. E. 3.66 to the corner of R. E. Kennedy's lot; thence with his lot S. 46 E. 2.50 to a stake, thence S. 48 W. 3.50 to a stake on the East side of said street, thence with said street N. 48. 2.50 to the beginning. Signed A. P. Wylie.

In the presence of James McDaniel, Giles J. Patterson. The paper is sworn to before Magistrate J. Roseborough.

On May 3, 1884, p. 169, the Minutes of Session show that a small alteration was made in the shape of the grounds. The Building Committee was authorized by the Session to sell twenty-five feet on Wylie Street and backward to Joseph Wiley's lot. The sale was made to W. H. Harden. It seems that an exchange was made on the other side of the lot by which the property line should be parallel with the church building.

#### 4. *Houses of Worship*

Setting aside for the moment accounts of other houses of worship and property owned by Purity but used for outside mission services, we may give a brief account of the structures occupied by the congregation for nearly, if not quite, for one hundred and seventy years.

No one knows when the settlers erected the first rude temple in the wilderness. Doubtless, the first incomers were in all respects like their fellow immigrants. If so, they built a place for divine services almost as soon as their hands fashioned their own log houses and they, as in case of their homes, laid their hands to a temporary abode while their hearts waited for the day of better things. The beautiful and comfortable house of the Lord of Purity today is quite the fulfillment of the faith and expectation of the forefathers when they hurriedly put together the rough house on the hill top where time, sentiment, history, worship and the burial of the dead have sanctified the place.

There is no date given for the first house which was certainly in use as early as 1770 nor is there a description of it. The picture now in the vestibule of the Sunday School

building is fanciful yet authentic, for we have enough information of the pioneer architecture to justify the artist's conception. Among his many excellent traits, Rev. John Douglas had a sense of humor. From his little sketch of Purity, most of which is reproduced in this history, we quote his description of the second house of worship.

"It was during Mr. McCulloch's ministry at Purity the second house of worship was built. This stood directly in front of the present church. It was no doubt the design of its framers that 'the glory of this latter house should be greater than the former.' Unlike Solomon's chariot, it was not made of the wood of Lebanon, nor were its pillars of silver, nor its covering of purple, nor was it always paved with love. It was a log house, though its timbers were hewed; had a shingled roof; but, like Noah's ark, it had only one window, and not many more doors. Accurately to describe its form or dimensions, by cubits or rules, would require much greater architectural skill than the writer professes to possess, although he still has its ineffaceable picture distinctly daguerreotyped in his mind. As for its form, there could have been no idolatrous design to violate the Second Commandment, for 'it was not made in the likeness of anything that was made'; neither was it 'made according to the pattern God gave Moses in the Mount.' It was intended more for 'the useful than ornamental.' One of the most memorable reminiscences connected with this venerable house of God (especially with the juveniles) was its so-called 'seats' or benches. These were made of split timbers, hastily hewed and not carefully planed, with high, straight backs—so high from the floor the young could not touch it with their toes. Consequently they had no means of shifting position, or relieving the tedium so peculiar to them in 'this prison of boyhood.' Even to those of riper years and more devout feelings, they were so unpliant and uncomfortable that they must have felt more like being seated on the 'stool of repentance' than engaged in the pleasant devotions of the sanctuary. Though unique and

rustic in its exterior, this house served its day, and was pulled down to give place to one more becoming the service of the living God."

The third house of worship was finished in 1832 but plans and subscription for it were begun in 1829. This writer must differ from pastor and historian Douglas when he says: "It was during these days of strife, these troublous times that the new church was built." The political turmoil came just after the division spoken of. The building, considered a fine house for the times, was already complete. The fact that the people had such an attractive church did as much as anything else to save the congregation from disintegrating during the violent partisanship of the Nullification over which the people were so sharply divided.

We have in the papers of Elder John Walker memoranda relating to the subscriptions for the building. The old subscription list with names, amounts and dates of payment still exists. The signatures of 1829 carry the names of the ancestors of many who are members of Purity today. Besides payment for lumber, painting and other parts of the erection we have the memorandum: "1832, June 19th paid A. Bollinger seven hundred & twenty five dollars for building Purity Church." The pulpit and sounding board in this third house of worship were from the second building. These bore the initials 'J.D.' of the maker, John Douglas, father of the minister of that name, who fabricated this church furniture that was used for a hundred years. Until 1839—Judge Joshua Hudson says in his autobiographical "Sketches and Reminiscences" that it was 1840 — worship was held regularly and exclusively in this building. During the following years services were held here at regular stated times to accommodate the country members while in town the alternate services were gradually getting the congregation used to the preference and need for a town church which, after 1855, became the center of congregational life. About 1880 a committee of Session was appointed to ask the country members to consent to worship in town ex-

clusively and such agreement was recorded. Nevertheless, the country church witnessed baptisms, public worship, meeting of Session and reception of members down to the time when accidental fire destroyed the building in 1904. It is a recollection of Mrs. James P. Walker that in fall of 1879, Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm held the last baptism and sacramental service at old Purity Church. Mary, Sarah, R. George and Charles C., children of Capt. William and his wife, Mary S. McAliley, were baptised. Charles C. McAliley, then two years old, now an Elder in Purity, was one of these. There are references to services at a later time. In July 1889, in relation to the Douglas Fund that had recently been received by bequest and in preparation of plans for the enlargement of the church in town, the Session made the record: "It was thought desirable that the Pastor (Dr. George Summey) should preach at the old church building once a month in the afternoon and that they keep up a closer connexion (sic) with the old church building and its interests." At another meeting the same determination is expressed except that the word "occasionally" was used instead of "once a month." On February 9, 1891: "On motion the use of the old church building was granted to Mr. Andrew White for the purpose of keeping a day school in it to be taught by his daughter he to put the window blinds that are now off on (sic), and to keep the building in good repair." The building was destroyed by accidental fire in 1904. The sounding board and pulpit, precious relics of the early days, perished. By the older generation this loss was lamented as shown by frequent regretful allusions.

In July 1906 there appeared a printed notice in "The Chester Lantern" by thirteen persons showing intention to apply to the Secretary of State for incorporation as "The Old Purity Society." The Session asked Attorneys R. B. Caldwell and A. L. Gaston to take care of the interests of Purity Church and to notify the Secretary of State. In September following, this item occurs in the minutes of

Session: "The Old Purity Society given permission to erect a building for religious and school purposes only, all subservient to and under the control of Session of Purity Church." References to the meetings of this organization occasionally appear. The clerk of Session pasted a clipping from "The State" newspaper of Columbia, S. C., in connection with his minutes of July 3, 1910. A summary of this news item is that "The Old Purity Church Society held its fifth annual meeting, states the objects of the society, the names of officers and says: "Educational advancement is likewise one of the objects of the society and its friends, a new and improved school building having been erected near the site of the old burned church. The next scholastic session will open tomorrow with T. J. Irwin of Erskine College as principal."

To this clipping is added the comment written in ink across its face: "And the stone steps the property of Purity Church are used in this building without the consent of Purity Church." The building here referred to, however, was not the property of Purity Church nor was it on the Old Purity Church grounds, but on adjoining parcel of land donated for the purpose by M. E. White. Here was the meeting place of the old Purity Society for a number of years. A Sunday School was for a while conducted at the place in the afternoons. The building was also used as a public school house by the local School Board. It was destroyed by fire some years ago. This account is here given to distinguish this property from that of the original and Old Purity near by. Also it should be held in mind that Old Purity Society was in no way connected with Purity Presbyterian Church.

However the structure, built of concrete, now standing on the site of the original Purity Church was erected in 1929 jointly by The Old Purity Society and the trustees of the Douglas Fund. The trustees of the Douglas Fund have been appointed by the Session of Purity Church for nearly fifty years and have carefully and zealously preserved the

grounds and burial place. The small concrete structure erected in 1929 stands at the place where was the third house of worship destroyed by fire in 1904. This is unused except for occasional purposes as a funeral pavilion or some special exercises. Near by is the grave yard surrounded by the stone wall erected in 1813. Outside of this stone wall are other burial plots and graves and tombstones as well as within the smaller stone enclosed area. Here are names beloved by Purity. They cover more than six successive generations. Some of the inscriptions carry names that have been otherwise forgotten and unrecorded. Others announce the honors and services that are lasting and illustrious. The funeral pavilion, the fourth and last building, is for the service and convenience of those who may attend a burial or visit the graves of kin and friends. Around the whole area and enclosing the entire property is a protecting metal fence. The care and preservation and neatness of this ancient and sacred place is a credit to those who administer the Douglas Fund and to the Session of Purity.

The first place of worship in town was in a rectangular brick building that was used by Purity's congregation for the fifteen years from 1840 to 1855. At the time of change, 1839, Rev. John Douglas had just begun his pastorate and was living in Chesterville.

The first house of worship of Purity Congregation in the town of Chester was erected in 1839. Rev. John Douglas, the young minister most deftly and diplomatically succeeded in having a place of worship and religious exercises set up in town without friction and without misunderstanding. He himself said of the enterprise: "At this time there were not more than three or four persons living in the village who were attached to Purity Church. All of its members resided in the adjacent country, and the most of them were opposed to having such a building erected in the village, for fear it might further divide and weaken Purity. The most potent argument of all against it was, that their

burying ground was there, and the hallowed associations of many years clustered around the sacred spot where they went to weep as well as to worship, and they were not willing to forsake the dead for the convenience of the living." Yet the transfer of interest to the town was accomplished without friction, and a new day, indeed, a new order was begun. The property was acquired and the "lecture room" was built largely out of the purse of John Douglas himself, but he was soon reimbursed by subscription. The cost was fifteen hundred dollars. The house was used by Purity for fifteen years and the congregation grew more accustomed to worship in town. The village at this time grew rapidly. The unpretentious rectangular brick building was an increasing cause of interest as the community enlarged. The congregation decided in 1854 to build a house of worship on Wylie Street. The lecture room property was sold to the Roman Catholic Church who altered it and have used it till this day.

The present church building of Purity embraces the auditorium that was erected in 1854-1855. Many changes and repairs and alterations have taken place but the main auditorium today was the house of worship dedicated Jan. 21, 1855. It was the second house of worship of Purity Church in Chester and was a beautiful and substantial structure. When Rev. J. E. White became the pastor in 1852, the order of services was to divide his time equally between the church in the country and the "lecture room" in town. Soon after the new edifice was occupied, that is May 1855, this arrangement was altered so as to give one third of the pastor's time at the place in the country. Part time in each place was continued till some time after Dr. George Summey came to Chester. This new church was finished and dedicated early in 1855. The sermon on the occasion was by Rev. John Douglas who preached from Haggai 2:9: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." This sermon was published by request of the congregation and may be found in a bundle of

pamphlets referred to elsewhere and owned by Elder J. H. McLure. In this connection we may quote the following contemporary comment, here preserved for many reasons. It is an editorial by Samuel Melton appearing in "The Chester Standard," Thursday March 20, 1854:

*"The New Presbyterian Church"*

"We have been for some time promising ourself the pleasure of an editorial jaunt through our city, and a puff extraordinary upon the great and manifold improvements which would thereupon present themselves, but circumstances 'over which we have no control' have hitherto delayed the accomplishment of this pleasing duty. These opposing forces are still in active operation, so that we are not yet prepared for the performance of the task, and we can only indite at present a single paragraph, which, however, might answer for all, since it not only indicates our prosperity in a worldly point of view, but also the more important and substantial progress of our people in morals and religion.

We allude to the new Presbyterian Church, the erection of which commenced last week under the most favorable auspices, and judging from the hitherto unwearied exertions of the committee, will be carried to completion at an early day.

The lot is beautifully located in a quiet and retired portion of the town, nearly opposite the Female academy, on the street recently opened below the new Court House. The edifice will be built of brick, 58 feet long and 44 feet wide, and be capable of containing over five hundred people. It will be furnished with galleries on each side and in front, and a spire 76 feet in height. The cost of the building when completed is estimated at about five thousand dollars.

We learn that the Lecture-Room formerly occupied by this denomination has been sold at eleven hundred dollars to the Roman Catholic Church, and will be entirely remodeled and furnished anew in the peculiar style suitable to

their worship. They have already obtained subscriptions to a considerable amount, which, with contributions from foreign sources, will enable them to complete a neat and handsome edifice."

From time to time instructions to the deacons involving even specific details were given by the Session. In 1884 extensive repairs and improvements were made. It was the three thousand dollars for such purposes in the Douglas bequest of 1889 that enabled the officers to alter and very largely remodel the building. A pipe organ was provided for on the installment plan of payment in 1890. On March 27, 1891, a report signed by George Summey, J. J. Stringfellow and J. K. Marshall, building committee, was made to the Session. This showed what extensive repairs were made, that the circular window (still standing in the front end of the building) and stained glass windows were placed, new pews were installed and Sunday School rooms were added. It is clear that the work was closely supervised by the Pastor, Dr. Summey. He designed the ornamental, circular windows by his own skillful mathematical and artistic devices. The cost of all was \$3,017.79. The building stood thus with occasional repairs for a quarter of a century. At one time the church-yard was enclosed for, on July 12, 1880, it is written: "the fact that board of Deacons contemplated repairing the fences of the church lot."

At a joint meeting on June 6, 1912, held in the Exchange Bank Hall the Elders and Deacons began "to take preliminary steps" toward putting up an addition to the church building. On January 3, 1913, at the Commercial Bank the joint meeting of officers unanimously agreed to call a meeting of the congregation and recommend the erection of an addition to the church building to cost \$15,000. R. B. Caldwell, chairman of Board of Deacons, was named to present the matter to the congregation, as he had been made chairman of the committee to investigate and correspond with C. W. Robinson, an architect, of Richmond, Va. The meeting in January, 1913, was of the same

mind as in June 1912. At the congregational meeting on January 5, 1913, when the matter was presented by the officers through R. B. Caldwell. The following action was taken:

*Resolved First:* That we the members of Purity Presbyterian Church in congregational meeting assembled do hereby agree to erect, when, and if the way be clear, an addition to our present church building, or an entirely new building for the purpose of providing us with a modern S. S. plant and also for the purpose of enlarging the seating capacity of our present church building.

*Resolved Second:* That we hereby elect a *Building Committee* composed of a Chairman and eight additional members, whose duty it shall be to study all questions involved and submit plans and specifications to the congregation for their approval or rejection.

*Resolved Third:* That we hereby appoint a *Finance Committee* composed of a *Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer* and nineteen (19) additional members, whose duty it shall be to devise ways and means of securing, if possible, the necessary funds for the undertaking.

The following named persons were nominated and elected to serve on the Building and Finance Committee:

*Building Committee:* S. M. Jones, Chairman, R. B. Caldwell, A. L. Gaston, B. M. Spratt, James Hamilton, Dr. J. J. Stringfellow, J. R. Alexander, William McKinnell.

*Finance Committee:* R. R. Hafner, Chairman, G. Carl Latimer, Secretary-Treasurer, W. J. Simpson, J. Stanley Lewis, Jno. A. Hafner, A. M. Aiken, W. G. Johnson, J. K. Johnston, R. E. Sims, Jas. I. Hardin, N. A. Peay, R. M. Strange, R. L. Douglas, J. C. McLure, Dr. J. Lyle Hamilton, C. C. McAliley, E. P. Calhoun, Dr. H. E. McConnell, J. M. Coleman, Dr. W. R. Wallace, Dr. Wm. M. Love.

Mr. S. M. Jones suggested constructing, not only a Sunday School building, but a new Church building as well, and offered to contribute one-fourth of the entire cost of the new plant if the congregation would agree to his suggestion.

On motion of Jno. A. Hafner a rising vote of thanks was given to Mr. S. M. Jones for his generous offer."

A full and comprehensive report of the Building Committee formulated on March 6 was presented through A. L. Gaston. It was agreed to preserve and add to the present church building at a cost of \$20,000. The terms of carrying on the work were stated as follows: "The committee further recommends that the Finance Committee be authorized and empowered to solicit subscriptions at once for the total sum of \$20,000—payable in installments due Oct. 15, 1913, April 15, 1914 and October 15, 1914.—the contract to be let as soon as the full amount is subscribed and one third paid.—no debt to be incurred until sufficient funds are available in full for all obligations." Mr. S. M. Jones stated to the congregation at this meeting that he would give \$5,000 of the amount. The corner stone of the new building was laid July 19, 1916. On May 6, 1917, "the Sunday School Building of granite was dedicated by Rev. A. D. P. Gilmour of Spartanburg," former pastor.

The growth of the Sunday School and the desire to have a more commodious and beautiful edifice again called for additional building in 1925. A letter signed by Superintendent A. M. Aiken and Treasurer of the Sunday School A. H. Alexander, was received by the Session on May 25. At a congregational meeting on June 7 a strong appeal was made by A. M. Aiken, Mrs. H. R. Woods and Miss Mary Johnson. A committee was appointed and instructed to proceed with the work as soon as the necessary funds were in hand. It was in December 1926 before any further indication is made of what was done. "The Committee on remodeling the Sunday School made its report and presented a blue print by Mr. (A.D.) Gilchrist, architect. On motion of Dr. J. L. Abell, (the clerk should have written it R. E. Abell) subscriptions were asked for on the first of March, May and October 1927. This was at a joint meeting of officers. On January 14, at another joint meeting of the officers, the old committee tendered its resig-

nation and a new one appointed consisting of A. M. Aiken, S. M. Jones, R. R. Hafner, R. E. Abell and J. R. Hamrick. It was resolved that "We go forward." It was determined to limit the cost suggested by the architect; namely, twenty thousand dollars. While a meeting of the congregation was called for, its transactions are not found recorded. From August 21, 1927 to October 30, 1927 the Minutes of Session show meetings at the Columbia Street High School or the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, which indicates that Purity's building was in process of remodeling. The caption for November 20 says, "Session Room New S. S. Building, Purity Ch. Chester, S. C." Thus, it was ten years since the former reconstruction had taken place.

In addition to the annex erected at this time the main auditorium was renovated as may be seen from the Minutes of Oct. 30, 1927. "On motion of John D. Bankhead the Session by unanimous vote extended to Elder S. M. Jones its deep appreciation for his generous gift which made it possible to re-decorate the church auditorium install an elaborate lighting system, a new carpet and make numerous other improvements at a cost approximate \$6,000."

Purity church has at this time, 1937, a beautiful substantial structure that provides for the comfort and assembly of many groups of active workers in a live and interested congregation. The main auditorium of the original building of 1855 is preserved and well furnished and with its improvements is the plan of worship of a large and devout congregation. The rest of the church building represents the additions made in 1917 and 1927.

##### 5. *Homes for the Ministers*

During the pastorate of Rev. Donald J. Auld Purity began to provide a home for its resident ministers. The Clerk of Session called the home "parsonage" in the earlier years but the word "manse" appears in more recent times.

The deed for the ground on which the first parsonage

stood is dated March 14, 1849, and is recorded in the Clerk of Court's office, Chester County, in Bks. G. G. pp. 377 and 378 and 379. We quote so much of it as may describe and identify the lot:

All that lot of land situate in the District and State aforesaid, containing four acres and fifteen poles, bounded on the East by the Ashford Road, on the Northwest by lands of Nathaniel R. Eaves, on the South by lands of the estate of G. B. Colvin, on the West by lands of John Hunter, according to a plat thereof by Adam Walker. The deed was witnessed by C. D. Melton and Robert Walker and made to Major John Walker, Charles Walker, Capt. John Reedy and Robert Wylie. This was given by Samuel McAliley "Lawyer and planter" as he styled himself in the paper. The property was held till 1890 and was a matter of dispute by Rev. J. E. White, Alexander Walker and Robert Wylie.

The home built may have been occupied by Rev. D. J. Auld for a short while. Otherwise Rev. J. E. White was the only minister that ever lived in it. He retained the place against the wishes of the officers and congregation after his resignation in 1873 and continued to hold it, although threatened by a suit of eviction. During the pastorate of Rev. A. Flynn Dickson, the church rented a home for the minister. In this interval, Rev. J. E. White and his two friends, Robert Wylie and Alexander Walker, called in question the title to the property on the grounds that the church held it only so long as it was used as the home of the minister. Samuel McAliley consented in face of this and at the request of Session to give a quit claim deed. On December 8, 1884 J. L. Harris was appointed a committee to negotiate the sale of the old parsonage property for not less than \$400. In January and February 1886 Miss Mary McAliley offered fifty dollars for the lot but wished the money to be used in repair of the old Purity building. A quit claim deed was agreed to at that price. In the meantime, the house on the grounds was burned. A curious

statement is made in the minutes of January 21, 1886. The draft for the insurance on the dwelling that had been destroyed by fire was called to the attention of the Session. The Session disclaimed any right to the insurance money as the person (not named) "had kept up the premium for years."

Although the quit claim deed was agreed to and sale of the lot was confirmed Feb. 8, 1886, the record of the transaction was not made till Nov. 10, 1890. The record occurs in Bk. 71, pp. 264-266 of the Clerk of Court and indicated that the sale was to Mrs. Mary M. White (Miss Mary McAliley?) for the sum of sixty dollars and forty cents. The deed was probated by Sumter Lewis, who with George Summey witnessed the execution of the deed before B. M. Spratt. In this connection, it arrests attention that the dissident Elder, who had not attended the Session for years, affixed his signature as one of the eight who signed the deed.

The possession of the old parsonage on the Ashford Ferry road over-lapped by ten years the ownership of another lot for the same purposes on Pine Street. For some time after Rev. Geo. A. Trenholm came, the church furnished a home by rental but in 1880 the manse on Pine Street was erected and was used by the ministers until Rev. Flournoy Shepperson moved into the beautiful manse on York Street in 1922.

The Pastor of the church, Rev. George A. Trenholm, was active in many things, and especially in the effort to build a parsonage. On October 20, 1879, he was given permission by the Session to "convene" the ladies of the church and "with their consent to organize them into committees to solicit subscriptions to build a parsonage." He was successful. On December the 9th following, it was reported in the Minutes of Session that he "had succeeded in securing near (sic) enough money with which to build that a lot had been selected." By January the house had been finished. Part of the cost was paid from a legacy

that had been bequeathed by Phillip Walker to the Elders of Purity who had been empowered to change the investment at their discretion. This legacy consisted of nine shares of capital stock of the Airline Railway dated January 1, 1875. This was sold at forty dollars a share and the proceeds placed to the credit of the building committee of conveyance to the effect that it was purchased "for a specific purpose and is no longer needed but the money derived therefrom is need by the church." The lot was bounded on the northern side by a new street called Peyton. The price received was one hundred and six dollars. Ten deacons signed the transfer.

Again in 1903 a change was made in the manse property on Pine Street. Three tenths of an acre was sold by the Deacons to James Hamilton for four hundred dollars. This was part of the tract of land conveyed to the Church by Mrs. Juliet A. Wylie in 1880. The town was growing and the wide grounds upon which the parsonage stood was probably not needed.

The parsonage built for Rev. George A. Trenholm in 1880, the second home of Purity's ministers, was repaired from time to time—and apparently to some extent was altered. It was used from 1880 to 1922.

The last and finest home for Purity's ministers was first occupied by Rev. Flournoy Shepperson in 1912. It was planned for, however, before he was called to the church. On November 1, 1920 a joint meeting of Elders and Deacons discussed whether to repair or build a manse, whether to move the manse and build on the site then occupied. A committee, R. E. Sims and R. R. Hafner and J. E. Dunbar, was appointed to examine into the matter and report at a future meeting. On October 3 A. L. Gaston was directed to draw up a deed for property on York Street. Still further directions and preparations were made on October 16 at a congregational meeting. The cost of the lot was to be provided for by the sale of Bethany property at \$1,200 and matured building & loan stock. Part of the cost also was

to be paid from the sale of the manse on Pine Street and such balance as necessary was to be provided through shares to be taken in a building and loan association. A committee of five was appointed, R. E. Sims, J. E. Dunbar, S. M. Jones, J. R. Hamrick and R. B. Caldwell. When the transfer of property was complete and the work on the new manse was finished by the committee as shown in their report November 28, 1922, the total expenditure amounted to \$16,454.50. Of this ten thousand dollars had been borrowed through the building and loan as originally planned. Some changes had been made in the process of construction but the congregation approved. By a rising vote R. E. Sims, chairman of the committee, was offered "a debt of gratitude and thanks" and an expression of thanks was voted also to the contractor "for the excellent job."

While the church minutes show the steps taken for building, the records of the Clerk of Court indicate the property transference.

A deed from the eighteen Deacons to J. E. Hamilton is recorded September 21, 1922. (Vol. 191. p. 318). The courses and distances are not stated, but it was the original lot on Pine Street that had been given by Juliet A. Wylie in 1880. It seems that the house and lot brought the church \$4,500.00.

Two deeds were necessary to secure the lot on York Street upon which the manse was erected. The heirs and executors of Judge W. H. Brawley transferred to the Deacons of Purity Church the property in the deed recorded January 20, 1922 (Vol. 191 p. 246 Clk. of Court Records). The relevant portion runs as follows: "In consideration of the sum of \$3,600.00, conveyed to said Deacons the following property:

ALL that vacant lot of land, situated in the City of Chester, said County and State, fronting on York Street, being 72 feet wide on the front, 332 feet deep on the side next to Mrs. C. L. Key, 314 feet deep on the opposite side and 72 feet deep on the rear, as shown by plat of James

McLarnon, C. E., dated October 3rd, 1921, and bounded by York Street and lands of Mrs. C. L. Key, Simrill, Moffat, and other lands of Est. of Wm. H. Brawley, deceased." It was considered necessary or wise to secure a quit claim deed from Mrs. Mary Harris Brawley. Mrs. Brawley was a daughter of J. Leonard Harris, so long an officer of Purity. She, in consideration of one dollar, gave the desired instrument which was recorded January 20, 1922. The document was probated in Maryland and witnessed by one of her daughters, Mrs. G. A. Renshaw. Mrs. Mary Harris Brawley was a sister-in-law of Judge W. H. Brawley. It was for some technical or legal formality that her assent was desired.

The minister's home, elegant, convenient and equipped in modern style is creditable to the people as it has been a delight for the ministers' families who have lived in it. At Thanksgiving time in November, 1933, the Session entered a notation of thanks that the mortgage on the manse had been paid off.

#### 6. *The Kennedy Bequest*

James Kennedy, one of the first three Elders ordained when Purity was enrolled in 1787, was Purity's first large benefactor. His purpose to aid the church in a liberal way is expressed in a will dated November 26, 1804. His wife, Margaret, according to this paper was sole beneficiary. Upon her death, his entire estate was to go to Purity Church. This will was attested by James Allen, Charles Walker and Agnes Kennedy. Both James Kennedy and Agnes Kennedy signed with their "mark." "I ordain and appoint my beloved wife Margaret and my knafur (sic) John Walker Executors" etc.

This same James Kennedy made another will dated one day before his death September 5, 1820. This instrument is here copied from the records of the Probate Court of Chester County (File No. 33, package 505).

"In the name of God Amen. I, James Kennedy, Senr.,

of the District of Chester & State of South Carolina, being weak of body but of disposing mind & memory, thanks be to God for his mercies, do make this my last Will & Testament in manner & form following, viz., In the first place I resign my soul to God who gave it, my body to be decently interred. In the next place I devise & bequeath unto the Rev. John B. Davis (Davies) of the said district & State, or to such minister of the Gospel in connection with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, that may be most adjacent to Purity Congregation, in trust, the sum of Two Hundred Dollars, to be disposed of for charitable purposes in manner following, viz., one-third to be paid into funds of such Bible Society as he (by the advice & concurrence of such ministers of the Gospel in the districts of Chester & York, as he may be appointed with in Presbytery) may judge to be at the time, most productive of usefulness. One other third to be paid into the funds of such Missionary Society, and the remaining third to be paid into the funds of such adjacent Society organized for the purpose of aiding poor & pious young men for the ministry of the Gospel, as may be designated in the aforesaid manner. I leave and bequeath to my negro boy Prince the sum of Fifty Dollars, and the whole remaining part of my estate after payment of my just debts, I will & bequeath unto Purity Congregation to be disposed of by the Elders of that congregation, either for the purpose of building a house for the worship of God or to any other purpose that may be by them thought best for the support of the Gospel in said Congregation. And I do hereby retain and appoint & constitute Major John Walker & William White, Junr., my Executors, to execute this my last will and testament.

IN WITNESS OF WHICH I the said James Kennedy, Senr., have hereunto set my hand & seal this 4th day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred & twenty.

Signed, Sealed, declared, published by the above named

James Kennedy, Senr., as and for his last Will & Testament in the presence of us, who at his request & in his presence have subscribed our names as witnesses thereto.

his  
JAMES x KENNEDY.  
mark

*Witnesses:*

CHARLES BOYD  
GEORGE HARDEN

his  
MATTHEW x McCLINTOCK  
mark

Recorded Will Book H. pages 48 and 49. Probated by Matthew McClintock on September 8, 1820. Major John Walker and William White, Junior, qualified September 8, 1820. Appraisers were John Douglas, William White, Sr., John Reedy, Matthew McClintock, Wm. Walker."

John B. Davies, mentioned in the paper, was preaching occasionally for the church at the time. The will was likely penned by him, as we may surmise from a memorandum with the initials "J.B.D." There is a paper before us with the caption "Vandue Bill of James Kennedy Sen. August 25, 1820." There were several James Kennedys but Purity's benefactor had no children. It is not clear why there was a vendue before he died. The appraisers' sheets for items and estimates of value is dated Sept. 20, 1820 and the sale list, with purchases and amounts, is dated the following day.

John Walker's reports to the County Ordinary for many years are still preserved as well as the transactions in handling the estate for more than forty years. In 1863 the sum of sixty three dollars was "paid for preaching." Such items had been paid many times before that. The negro Prince mentioned seems to have been highly regarded, if we may judge from John Walker's scanty references and

one wonders if he were manumitted. The variety of household goods and the very extensive list of books purchased at the sale in 1820 are described in another connection in this history.

The account book of John Walker shows that he paid the doctors' bills . . . Kennedy had three of them at the end. The cost of the tombstone is noted. It was not a large sum. The expenses of the vendue are entered including "Sept. 21 Expencc at Vandue. H. White, viz. calling 2\$ spirits, 5.12½."

The money value of this estate accruing to Purity Church is not clear. It seems to have been between one and two thousand dollars. Its helpfulness to Purity was incalculable. With the amount in hand, John Walker and others like him, were able to steady and keep in existence Purity as an organization during the troublesome and uncertain years between 1832 and the arrival of John Douglas, the great and wise young man who began his ministry for his own people in 1836. The income of this bequest was applied to all sorts of needs at Purity. What became of the principal is not known, but it probably disappeared during the Confederate War.

### 7. *The Douglas Fund*

On July 28, 1881, the Session was called together in special meeting to consider the following letter that is interesting as to its contents but still more arresting for its expression and sentiment: "Yorkville, S. C., July 28, 1881. Rev. and dear Bro. Trenholm I write concerning Purity Church. Mr. Robert Douglass wishes to add five or six acres to the original plat, i.e. purchase the strip of land lying between the old plat and the road—ornamenting it by planting elms, etc., cutting down the dead timber around the church and planting others. Remoddel (sic) the church by changing the pulpit to the eastern end paint, put up blinds, in a word' remodding the old house and making a beautiful chapel for the Master's use.

He will do this at his own expense, as a memorial to our sainted dead. We have the kindred dust of several generations asleep there, awaiting the voice of the Arch Angel and the Trump of God. 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again even, so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him'—For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the Arch Angel and with the Trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first.'

And it seems fitting to have such a memento preserving the house and grounds for the very purpose to which they dedicated by so many who sleep there, keep vigils with the departed till Jesus comes. Our purpose is to get the approbation of yourself and Session. We wait an early answer, say next Monday. We expect a cheerful response, and encouraging word to proceed at once. Yours in Christ, W. G. White."

The Session cheerfully and instantly agreed and expressed appreciation for the liberality of Robert Douglas. There is nothing to show that this purpose of Robert Douglas was ever carried out, nor does it appear who W. G. White was.

Ten years later under a will made by Robert Douglas of Chester, April 12, 1886, Purity's Elders were paid, according to the return of John J. Hemphill, made July 16, 1889, the sum of \$5090.40. This was in settlement of the legacy and interest under two clauses of the will which may be quoted:

"I, Robert Douglas, of the County and State aforesaid, planter, do hereby make, publish and declare the following to be my last will and testament:

7. I give and bequeath to the Elders of Purity Presbyterian Church the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000) to be used by them in keeping in repair the old Purity Church and grave yard, and the graves of myself and family; the said sum to be under the control of the said elders and their future associates and successors in office.

8. I give and bequeath to the Elders of Purity Presbyterian Church, and to their future associates and successors in office, the sum of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000) to be used by them for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church in the town of Chester in such way as they may deem advisable."

There were two sums involved. Three thousand dollars was used in remodeling the house of worship soon after the money was paid over. The two thousand dollars has been kept intact and has been increased by careful and judicious management. It now amounts to some four thousand dollars. This is known as The Douglas Fund and has been used in connection with the property at Old Purity since 1889.

The Session of Purity, as the minutes repeatedly show, has kept a standing committee on this fund from the beginning. In response to an order of Session a special report was made in 1894 of this fund. This report shows, among other things, that "we also find that there has been expended on Old Purity Church and cemetery including repairs of the Douglas Tombs the sum of \$410.89." Before this, on December 8, 1890, the Session had directed that fifteen dollars be paid Matthew White for a Chester County Bond of \$100, "Eighty five dollars of this bond having been paid by sundry persons interested in the old cemetery." The record of 1894 shows that sixteen dollars was paid. In short eighty five dollars given by others was incorporated into the Douglas Fund. From the time of special report of 1894 down to the present, the records reveal that almost annual accounting of the fund has been made. In recent years, the brief clear reports of R. B. Caldwell its custodian, occur regularly in the minutes of Session, for the Elders of the Purity church were made the recipients under the terms of the will. Frequent notations occur giving directions for the care of the grounds at old Purity.

It is likely that it was in connection with this fund that

the following record occurs February 4, 1895: "The committee of Old Purity Cemetery made a report that it had employed M. White to make a survey of the church lot and Jas. G. L. White to clear off the cemetery." In March following it is stated that the plat had been made and in November following James Hamilton reported that he had taken out \$500.00 in insurance on the church building. The August 18, 1929 minutes say: "The Old Purity Committee was authorized to expend any funds in excess of the original \$2,000.00 of the Douglas Fund in any way the Committee deemed wise in the up-keep or improvements of Old Purity graveyard, and to work in harmony with the Old Purity Society in erecting a building on Old Purity lands." This action should be remembered in connection with comments made earlier in this chapter.

## VIII.

### PURITY'S MISSIONS

#### 1. *Bethany*

THE picture in the vestibule of Purity's Sunday School building labeled "Bethel" should have been properly written Bethany. Near the "County Poor Farm," three miles north of Chester has been a graveyard and at times a house of worship for quite a hundred years. Purity conducted preaching services through its pastors and maintained a Sunday School at the place from 1890 till 1899. At a meeting of Session on March 19, 1899 there was discussion as to the discontinuance of services at "Bethany Chapel." This is the name by which this place was known to Purity's Session during the years of its occupancy.

Two transfers of the grounds, with a notation in the minutes of Session, tell how the grounds came into possession of Purity Church. The first of these is a copy of a paper that has some historical value outside of this church's connection with it. It was the pastor of Purity, as has been stated elsewhere in this history, that was the commissioner from the General Assembly in 1863 to negotiate with the Independent Presbyterian Convention. The Independent Church came into the Synod of South Carolina at that time. Evidently, the four Presbyterian Elders mentioned as trustees of Bethel Presbytery in the following paper were named to hold the Bethany property. Major Jas. G. Lowry was from Zion Church. Robert S. Hope was an Elder at Bethesda. James Hemphill and John Reedy were Elders in Purity. They transferred the grounds to a new organized congregation of colored people.

The trustees, James Hemphill, J. A. Reedy, R. S. Hope, and James G. Lowry granted the property to George Gilmore, Henry Gilmore and Charles Young on November 15, 1869. The paper was witnessed by John C. McLure

and E. C. McLure in the presence of W. M. Chambers Clerk of Court. There were some eight acres of ground but the grave-yard was excepted in the title. (Vol. Q.Q. p. 316).

The statement in the minutes that the Board of Church Erection in New York had the thanks of Purity's Session raised a question in the mind of the writer and aroused the surmise that the church at Bethany from 1869 to 1890 was a congregation of colored Presbyterians. Inquiry and such research as has been possible discloses that Bethany was on the roll of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A. during that period. It was for a while a member of the South Carolina Presbytery (Northern Church) and later in the Fairfield Presbytery, Synod of Atlantic. Supply ministers were furnished through these Presbyteries. One of these was a white minister, the only minister named in the statistical reports. He was Rev. Samuel Loomis, who was principal of the Brainerd School for negroes in Chester for a quarter of a century. Rev. Samuel Loomis, besides being a teacher and missionary of the Northern Presbyterian Church for the colored people, was interested in nature study. His small monographs on birds are part of the all too few papers on that subject that have been issued concerning birds in South Carolina. His work is recorded in Wayne's "Birds of South Carolina." The Bethany property came into the hands of Purity from the colored people. After another twenty years it went back into the hands of colored people as private property by sale from the Elders of Purity.

Purity came into possession of the place as may be seen from the record of deed, March 16, 1891 (Vol. 71 pp. 455-456). This paper shows that Henry Gilmore, probably the only surviving Elder, sold to the Elders of Purity Church the Bethany property which the colored people had held from 1869 to 1891. The Purity Congregation retained the premises till about 1920 or 1922. Under the leadership of Dr. Summey a suitable building was put in order for

religious services under the direction of the Session of Purity.

On October 13, 1890 the Session's records show that Dr. George Summey was allowed to borrow from the Douglas Fund for immediate needs at Bethany "as the congregation is pressed at this time" . . . "with the understanding that he is to be relieved of this burden later." No amount is named, but in a special report on the Douglas Fund May 5, 1894, after Dr. Summey had left, it is stated that he had borrowed \$404. No information was given at a later time concerning this transaction. On November 10, 1890, soon after this amount was borrowed, the Session passed a resolution thanking the Board of Church Erection in New York for the generous offer to release the property at Bethany in fee simple to Purity. At the same time a contract for the building at Bethany was authorized.

For nearly ten years Purity held services, administered the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, maintained a Sunday School and received members. In the volume of Session's Records from 1897 to 1916 is a list of thirty-four members received at Bethany.

In 1899 services were discontinued at Bethany. At one time the Session is informed that the Baptists around Lowryville contemplated buying the place. On March 28, 1910 "Mrs. E. L. Guy and Mrs. S. H. Harden are given permission to use Bethany Chapel for S. S. until further ordered." At another time the Session appropriated fifteen dollars for repair of the building when other persons (not named) provided \$30 additional. In connection with plans to build the new manse on York Street, sale of the Bethany property was authorized. It is said that this sale was effected by R. E. Sims to some colored residents near the place on behalf of Purity. The last minute in relation to the matter is that of Oct. 16, 1921. The Session in referring to the manse property on York Street: "The lot is to be paid for in cash from the proceeds of the sale of the Bethany property and accrued interest of \$1200—" etc.

The graveyard at Bethany is enclosed and in view of the highway from Chester to York near "the county poor farm."

## 2. *East Side*

About the time that Purity's interest in the Bethany Chapel in the country ceased, attention was aroused on behalf of the textile population in the town of Chester. In March 1899 a committee was appointed to confer with Col. Leroy Springs of the Springstein Manufacturing Company in regard to a lot on which to erect a chapel. Until 1920 references exhibit a great concern for this missionary enterprise. During the twenty years the Session maintained a committee of officers to supervise and support both preaching services and a Sabbath School. It was a mission upheld jointly by Purity and Bethel Presbytery for ten years, Purity gradually increasing its help in finances and workers to the extent of its entire support. William McKinnell was the last appointment by Session as the work began to die out. The first ten years' efforts resulted in the organization of a Church by Presbytery that flourished for some years and then was dissolved by order of Bethel Presbytery at its spring meeting 1920. In the minutes of Session the group at Springstein is called by different names—"The Chapel on Gadsden St.," "Springstein Mission", "The Second Church" but the name on Presbytery's roll was "East Side." From 1906 to 1915 Rev. James Russell, Rev. Jabez Galloway and Rev. F. C. Robinson were pastors. Rev. James Russell's competent and satisfactory leadership, his acquaintance with Purity's Session and membership, his moderatorship of the Session and his supply for Purity's pulpit during the pastoral vacancy at Purity greatly endeared him to the officers of Purity. After an absence of some years he returned to Chester, where in his extreme illness, he was treated with great kindness by Mr. Rohr of the Carolina Inn for which the Session sent a note of tender appreciation. It was due

to his efforts and the zealous, constant care of Purity's Session that the East Side Mission was sustained. At one time the Session considered joining in a union missionary enterprise at the Baldwin Cotton Mill upon invitation of L. D. Childs, a Methodist, but the East Side Mission Sunday School constantly appears in Purity's annual narrative to the Presbytery. At some time Rev. Roy Brown held services at East Side. Before the dissolution of East Side as a church for some years Purity kept up mission and social services. The names of Miss Brinklehurst and Miss Belle Thompson are mentioned. The minutes of Session are not clear as to the length and kind of services that were engaged in. From 1914 to 1916 Miss Belle Thompson resided among the people as a worker among them. A letter to Mr. Leroy Springs of Lancaster suggesting his employment of Miss Thompson, as Purity felt unable to carry the entire support of Miss Thompson as a welfare worker was found in the minute book. Mr. Springs replied in a kind and candid letter but did not agree to the request of the Session of Purity. This correspondence took place in 1916. It may be inferred that Miss Thompson soon removed to Abbeville where she had been offered a better salary than at Chester. Purity, as part of her compensation, had increased her salary from \$600 to \$800 a year. The managers of the cotton mill had given her a home.

A resolution appears on May 14, 1905. "We hereby extend to Bro. William G. Nichols our heartfelt gratitude for his untiring interest in our Purity Chapel work. We desire to extend to him and his family our thanks for the elegant sweet-toned bell just placed in the tower of the chapel—also to his brother-in-law, H. G. Wright of Lowell, Mass.—for the tower put up at his own expense from which peals forth the sweet music "Come, Come, Let Him That Heareth say, Come." The Lord reward these good folks for all their tokens of kindness and for their gifts to the house of the Lord."

The first building was burned soon after erection and a

committee from the Session seemed to have no trouble in rebuilding, a sign of great interest at the time.

The lot was obtained by the Deacons of Purity from Mary E. McCoy by deed recorded in the Clerk of Court's office January 22, 1902, (Bk. 92 pp. 208-210).

After an unsuccessful effort to revive the mission in 1924 by trying to secure "Mr. Tolbert of the General Assembly's Committee of Home Missions," it was finally decided in 1925 to sell the property. Mr. Leroy Springs offered \$1,500 for the place, as the Session was informed, but it was decided to offer it at public auction. The sale was made by the Deacons to David Hamilton according to a deed recorded February 8, 1926. (Bk. 202, pp. 465-466) for which the church received \$1,650.50.

At the request of Mrs. Jane Hardin Murray the bell was donated to the St. Matthews Presbyterian Church and the organ to Green Mt. Sunday School, North Carolina. A note of thanks appears in the minutes from the newly organized Presbyterian Church at Cornwell near Chester for other contents of the building, pews, hymn books, etc. Thus a special phase of Purity's benevolent enterprise terminated after more than a quarter of a century's more or less successful accomplishment.

## IX.

### THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

THE Sunday School has had the unfailing support of the church. There are two evident reasons. One is that the Session of the church has always zealously maintained a careful oversight. The other is that the Superintendent has always been an able and consecrated leader who knew how to invoke the liveliest and most approved methods of instruction and to secure a staff of able teachers. The most intelligent men and women of the community have taken pride in placing their endeavors for the Sunday School on an even higher level than their secular interests.

We do not know when the Sunday School began. It is not likely that it played a large part in the early life of the church as no special provision for class rooms or facilities for meeting were furnished till after the Confederate War. We do not know what interest was exhibited and have no way of judging for lack of information.

It is said that David Leckie, whose descendants are residents of Chester, was Superintendent of the Sunday School during the Confederate War. He was a native of Perth, Scotland, and came to Charleston, S. C., as a young man. He was an only child and was reared by an uncle, James Leckie. It is also said that he was the Superintendent of the Scotch (First) Presbyterian Church in Charleston. As did so many Charlestonians, he "refugeed" to the up country during the war with his family.

After the records on hand open up for us the full knowledge of the church's affairs we come into as clear acquaintance with the Sunday School as with every department of Purity Church. We may trace the history of the Sunday School in an orderly fashion by sketching the tenure of each Superintendent. The first is that of

## W. H. WITHEROW

With the mention of this name we may say that Chester was attentive to general education a hundred years ago. In 1846 there was a school for young ladies. Synod's Minutes for that year show a gift to Foreign Missions from that source. The school taught by Mr. McWhorter stood on a site opposite that of the Presbyterian Church. "The Chester Standard" on April 6, 1854, carried this news item, "Bethel Presbytery takes action at Beersheba in relation to the Presbyterian College. Trustees were authorized to purchase a lot and proceed immediately to the erection of a building. Congratulations offered to D. Harrison by the editor for beginning such work as head of the School." Bethel Presbytery decided to open a college for women. Chester made an effort to secure its location but it was placed in Yorkville where the building is still standing. A brief account of this is given by this writer in "The Presbyterian Church in South Carolina Since 1850."

It was in connection with the public school that Prof. W. H. Witherow spent more than ten years in Chester, from 1874 to 1886 as superintendent. He was followed by James Henry Rice, Jr., and later by John L. Douglas.

In the sessional report to Presbytery in the spring of 1876 where the column calls for "the number of children in the Sabbath School," the number is omitted but in 1874 it was 98 and in 1875 it was 80. Quite significant is the Minute of April 4, 1876: "Elder Witherow brought to the notice of the Session the interest of the Sabbath School, when it was resolved that the Session do now recognize the Sabbath School as under the full care and contrroll (sic) of the Session and that the Session recommend to the congregation to take immediate steps to secure the necessary funds for increasing the library." Onward through more than fifteen hundred pages of minutes we trace the growth of this much beloved work of Purity. The narrative to Presbytery during these earlier years indicates that a

weekly teachers' meeting was held and that the Sunday School topic was used in connection with Sabbath evening services.

It was a far cry from the attitude of the people in 1878 to that of 1921. Giles J. Patterson, Esq. in the first instance was informed by a committee of Session that they must decline the use of the church building for the Sunday School convention "fearing that it would be considered as an encroachment." In 1922 the Pastor, Rev. Flournoy Shepperson, was granted leave to attend the World's Christian Endeavor Convention in N. Y. in 1921. Also, in 1912, William McKinnell was authorized to subscribe ten dollars to State Sunday School Convention. Thirty-five dollars for the same was donated in 1914.

During the ten years when W. H. Witherow was Superintendent of the Sunday School, the statistics show development of interest rather than great increase in numbers. There were fewer than a hundred at the beginning and 123 in 1886. However, there was as large proportionate attendance as the number of communicants was 135. This was the period when a library was accumulating, although it is implied that there was a Sunday School library in the first mention of such matters as soon as the record book opens. Dr. Robinson's hymn book was adopted. There was an appropriation for the "Earnest Worker" and other periodicals. Giving by the young people was taught by practice. More than fifty dollars was contributed for Foreign Missions annually.

#### J. J. STRINGFELLOW

Six months after Prof. Witherow left, J. J. Stringfellow was chosen Superintendent, and W. Banks Thompson selected as assistant. In 1890, J. J. Stringfellow was elected again, but the practice of annual re-election was not then nor later observed regularly. The afternoon was the time for Sunday School until 1896 when the morning hour was chosen. At the same time W. D. Knox became assistant

superintendent. There was frequent and close attention by the Session itself, as illustrated in the Minutes of 1889 when it is noted that a conference of the Elders then sitting was considering the school and a committee was appointed to prepare a roll of all young people of the congregation. J. J. Stringfellow was superintendent till 1904. The Minutes say: "Elder J. J. Stringfellow who had been superintendent for many years tendered his resignation which was reluctantly accepted." A committee was directed to formulate suitable resolutions of appreciation. John A. Hafner was chosen to succeed him with William McKinnell assistant; Chas. McAliley, Secretary and Treasurer; Harry Withers, assistant Secretary; Miss Helen Walker, Librarian; and William James, assistant Librarian. The school had grown under the care of J. J. Stringfellow from 123 to 234, more than double, but communicants had increased from 135 to 405. The ratio of attendance of Sunday School was less.

#### JOHN A. HAFNER

This superintendent began his work in March, 1904 and continued till 1906. No special reference to the Sunday School is made except in statistical reports to Presbytery. In March 1905, the hour of Sunday School was fixed at 12:15 immediately following the morning service. The records are not clear at this period as to how the Sunday School was conducted. Upon the resignation of J. A. Hafner in September 1906, M. S. Lewis was elected but evidently served only a short while, if at all, as he removed his residence from Chester. It was noted in the report to Presbytery the following spring that attendance on Sunday School was good.

#### WILLIAM MCKINNELL

The meetings of Session of September 9 and October 25, 1911 were most significant. This was due not only

to the coming of the new Pastor, A. D. P. Gilmour, but to changes that were taking place in the whole church. From this time dated the greatly altered attitude and vastly enlarged interest in the religious education of young people. We may summarize the tremendously important decisions which were made at two meetings of the Elders. The systematic beneficence plan and every member canvass were recommended to the Deacons. The grading of the Sunday School was determined. A motion was adopted asking Miss Janie Stringfellow to organize and take charge of the "Miriams," (a girls' organization) and Mrs. S. G. Miller was asked to organize a Covenanter League. The young people were called on to organize a Christian Endeavor Society in connection with the National Association. A complete setup of the Sunday School was given: Superintendent, William McKinnell; Assistant Superintendent, M. S. Lewis; Secretary and Treasurer, Edgar Alexander; Assistant Secretary, Charlie Brice; Librarian, James Stringfellow; Superintendent of Home Dept., Mrs. W. J. Simpson; Asst. Supt. Home Dept., Miss Maude Sledge; Supt. Missionary Dept., Mrs. S. G. Miller; Teacher first Bible Class, W. D. Knox; Teacher Second Bible Class, M. S. Lewis; Cradle Roll, Miss Janie Stringfellow; Beginners, Mrs. A. L. Gaston; Primary, Miss Rebecca Cunningham, Miss Nannie Boulware, Mrs. Jas. P. Walker. Other teachers were: Mrs. S. G. Miller, Miss Maggie Marshall, J. L. Williams, Miss Mary Sledge, W. G. Johnston, John D. Bankhead, Mrs. Julia Sloan, Mrs. Claudia Kee, Sam Klutz, Miss Cora Hardin, Mrs. G. C. Latimer, Miss Henie Leckie, Mrs. J. J. Stringfellow, R. L. Douglas, R. B. Caldwell, C. C. McAliley. These names, with other members of the church, filled out a full complement of workers that was even larger in the next twenty five years. This record is here written in full because it marks the beginning of a great work of Purity in the following years on behalf of the young people. The Sunday School enrollment at the end of this church year, 1913, was 419, with a church

membership of 474. Interest was so great that plans for an adequate church plant were agitated. The first mention of this came in 1913 but it was not till April 1917 that the building was dedicated and again enlarged in 1927.

### J. H. McLURE

On April 16, 1918, J. H. McLure was made Superintendent. This was a most difficult time, as practically all of the young men of the congregation were away in the army. It is a matter of record that on one Sunday Mr. McLure acted as Superintendent and Secretary and taught three classes. Mr. McLure served until the late spring of 1919 when he resigned, as he was living in the country and found it impossible to get to Sunday School in time for the opening exercises in bad weather.

### A. M. AIKEN

The Session at the election of A. M. Aiken, gave him authority to select a cabinet to help him in his care of the work. He was a capable, enthusiastic and devoted leader for twelve years. There were introduced adaptations of methods to secure adherence, attendance and vitalized instruction. There is the single mention of a Sunday School picnic in 1920 arranged for by the cabinet. The increase of gifts by the congregation was shared by the young people who in 1921 contributed \$1790. Chester Alexander was made assistant superintendent at that time. In 1922 Dr. R. A. Lapsley of the Assembly's Sabbath School Committee visited the congregation. In 1924 A. M. Aiken resigned but the Session postponed action. The superintendent aided by others urged the Session and Congregation to add to the rooms and equipment of the Sunday School building for the greater convenience of some departments, and already a library room had been planned. There was a building committee appointed to begin as soon as funds

were in sight. This was in 1925. On January 14, 1927, building committee for the Sunday School annex was appointed and instructed to proceed at a cost of twenty thousand dollars. In October of the same year a thank offering was directed to make up the deficit on the building and complete it.

"Sunday, May 6, 1917, will ever be a memorable day in the annuals of Purity Presbyterian Church, as yesterday witnessed the dedication of the handsome new Sunday School Building that has been in process of erection for the past eight months as part of the church equipment. The building was erected at an approximate cost of \$22,000.00, and is of singularly beautiful design. Mr. C. A. Robinson, of Richmond, Va., furnished the plans from which the edifice was constructed, and the Taylor-Waters Construction Company, of Columbia, were the contractors. On account of the illness of Dr. J. O. Reavis, of Columbia, who was to have presided, Dr. A. D. P. Gilmour, of Spartanburg, who preached the dedicatory sermon, took charge and directed the whole of the lengthy, but interesting, ceremonies. Headed by Dr. Gilmour and Elder J. J. Stringfellow the official board of the church, the building committee filed out of one of the rear rooms, and took seats that had been assigned them. A chorus by the boys and girls of the Sunday School and an offertory by the choir were delightful features of the program at this time."

At the close of the year 1928, the annual report of the Sunday School showed 530 enrolled and gifts totaling \$2198. There were 619 church members. In 1928 is the first appearance of a daily vacation Bible School that was continued in successive summers after the close of the public schools. Long before this, representatives from the Sunday School were sent to the Synod's Young People's Conference at Clinton in which the Purity people always exhibited zealous interest. The Session expressed great appreciation for the long and efficient service of A. M. Aiken upon his resignation in 1931.

It is within the superintendency of Mr. Aiken that fell the development of an excellent and fruitful work accomplished by a group in the Sunday School headed by A. L. Gaston.

#### J. B. BANKHEAD

He was elected in November, 1931, and Miss Agnes Douglas was made Assistant Superintendent. At a later time, September 23, 1932, at the annual Rally Day observance held throughout the Presbyterian Church, formal installation of officers was noted and formal exercises were held. This may have been customary but it was not mentioned at any other time. At the end of the year 1935 there were in the Sunday School 583 while the church membership was 609. Such items have been occasionally repeated in this narrative to show that the enrollment of the Sunday School for more than fifty years approximated the total number of the church roll.

The work among the young people for them and by them has probably been the chief and most creditable work of Purity's congregation. Its variety, its long continuance under good leadership and its constant enrichment and enlargement of the church appeared in every decade since the Confederate War.

## X.

### *The* WOMEN *of* PURITY

IN beginning the story of the women it is necessary to recall that the remotest participation of women in public organizational activity began at a very recent date. Southern Presbyterians were most reluctant to abandon the literalistic notion that women should keep silent in churches. The erection, the recognition and encouragement of the Women's Auxiliary was the result of years of effort by consecrated women and foresighted ministers. Under the inspiration and guidance of Mrs. Hallie Winnsborough of St. Louis, that society in a few short years completely changed the sentiments and opinions of the whole church. Mrs. Winnsborough was a remarkable woman and had qualities of statesmanship amounting almost to genius. The Woman's Auxiliary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, which is only twenty-five years old, is the most efficient organization that has ever been erected in American ecclesiastical circles. The women of Purity's congregation have showed its life and have wonderfully reflected its zealous Christian spirit as well as its efficient practicality.

However, there were leading women in Purity long ago. From family memoirs transmitted to us and from scanty intimations, we may sketch dim, consecrated figures, female figures, moving here and there amidst the scenes that first form the clearer beginnings of vigorous and pious labors of recent times.

The whole Presbyterian Church was aroused over Foreign Missions about 1840. The Synod of South Carolina became most concerned, as long reports and detailed statements of gifts along with similar exhibits of Columbia Theological Seminary, embrace almost the entire printed minutes. This was when the great missionaries went out

from South Carolina, J. Leighton Wilson to Africa and J. B. Adger to Syria. An interesting aspect of this record for Purity was the statement of gifts through their pastor John Douglas. Among the "female missionary societies," as they were called, does not appear a report from Purity but a group of young ladies from the Young Ladies' School of Chesterville made a contribution. We have no reference to any such group of Presbyterian women prior to 1870, but the women of Chester during the Confederate War were engaged in merciful ministrations to sick soldiers. This was a community and not a church enterprise and may be taken down here to keep it in remembrance lest it be lost. We may quote from an article in the "Proceedings of South Carolina Historical Association" of which the writer is President. In the report for 1937 from a paper on Soldiers Aid Societies in South Carolina during the Confederate War, we take the words of Prof. J. H. Patton of Converse College: "The women of Chester were described in May 1863 as having now in full operation a comfortable Wayside Hospital for sick and wounded soldiers which would offer to any such a quiet rest and refreshments where they may be either going or coming from the wearisome toils of the battlefield." That is quoted from the newspaper, *The South Carolinian*.

Miss Brawley is the first of the great company of women who is authentically named among Purity's organized church women. She became the wife of Rev. George A. Trenholm. In 1870, on behalf of a group called "The Earnest Workers," she presented a dressing gown and slippers to the departing minister, so it is said. The name of Miss Brawley is correct and the "Earnest Workers" may be, in the source that comes to us. However, Rev. James White did not depart at all. He left Chester some time after 1880. The name of "The Evelyn Houston Missionary Society" was the outcome of a visit in 1873 of Dr. M. H. Houston of China to the home of J. J. McLure and his wife, Bettie McIntosh. This society held its meetings in the home of

Mrs. James Hemphill for twenty-five years. The minister came to open with prayer. It is said that Miss Mary Gaston, who lived for some years in the community, at last was bold enough to think the women could open their own meetings with their own prayers. She made them with firm voice though with trembling hand, for she wrote them out and they still may be read as they are still in the care of the family. The same lady afterwards gave help in forming the first group of women in Bethel Presbytery. Mrs. Lizzie McFadden is named in this group along with Mrs. Adelaide Lee Gaston and Mrs. J. J. Stringfellow. Miss Mary Brawley was the Secretary of the "Evelyn Houston Missionary Society." Misses Hennie and Janie Leckie were always workers in Purity and it is likely that they were members of this early organization. Mrs. James Hemphill and Mrs. Mary Melton were members of it. The latter was the mother of W. D. Melton, once President of the University of South Carolina. It is a tradition that spirits of ammonia was sometimes carried to the meetings to sustain some timid lady who took part on the programs, as they were not always equal to speaking openly before the Lord, however devout in private. Such is the report of their chronicler, one of their own daughters.

Many ladies were attached to the Sunday School as well as being active in the women's organizations, Miss Janie Stringfellow organized "The Seven Stars" and engaged in nearly every sort of work for Purity for more than thirty years. Mrs. Alexa Macaulay and Mrs. A. W. Klutz consecrated their talents to good works for the church. Mrs. Julia Killian Campbell was a devout and useful private member all her long life and also was often called into prominent leadership. These were the names of the earlier years. "The Ladies Aid Society" dates back to about 1882 and was engaged in money raising as well as in devotional study until replaced along with other women's groups by the Auxiliary. During its day and time Miss Lena Mills

and Miss Mamie Elliott were leaders along with their Sunday School work.

The women initiated some of the actions and larger work of the church for which the men and officers received credit. The Minutes of Session show this. In 1879, when Rev. G. A. Trenholm undertook to build a manse, the women were divided into groups and funds solicited. When the enterprise was well started, the practical business conduct was assumed by the officers. More than once the women of the church called for the repair and the freshening up of the appearance of the church or the manse.

Before the Presbyterial of the Auxiliary came into existence there was a period from 1899 to 1915 in which the ladies of Purity were active in the Missionary Union of Bethel Presbytery. In 1892 Miss Mattie White of Zion Church in spite of the objections of her brother, Rev. W. G. White, the pastor, secured the co-operation of some societies in asking the Presbytery to permit a presbyterial organization. It was not till seven years later that such agreement came. In 1899 Purity had representatives at the formation of "The Foreign Missionary Union of Bethel Presbytery." This initial society with slight change of name continued till 1915. At the first meeting in Yorkville, Mrs. Julia Campbell was made second vice-president and Mrs. J. J. Stringfellow recording secretary. Two presidents later were Mrs. S. G. Miller and Mrs. A. D. P. Gilmour. When the Women's Foreign Missionary Union was proposed originally, the Session of Purity approved of it in the meeting Oct. 1, 1893, and continued its support at every period afterwards.

After the Woman's Auxiliary displaced all other societies and embraced the entire adult female membership of the church, Purity's interest was greatly enlarged. One of the presidents of the Presbyterial Auxiliary has been Mrs. H. R. Woods. Of the local Auxiliary Mrs. M. S. Lewis was first president. Other women who have filled

this office since have been: Mrs. John Hamilton, Mrs. Vance Davidson, Mrs. Erwin Dunbar, Mrs. W. L. Davidson, Mrs. J. H. McLure, Mrs. Morris Enrich, Mrs. J. R. Carson, Mrs. W. R. Wallace, Mrs. J. E. Stuckey. The Church Bulletins show the names of many women as chairmen of circles, committees and other engagements. To name them all would be to call the roll of a large section of Purity's membership. It is not possible to give a statement of the gifts of the women of Purity as no separate account of this is noted in the minutes till lately.

Of a great company of women only a few are herein recorded. Such biographical materials as were available have been introduced in these sketches.

#### MARGARET KENNEDY

Margaret Adair Kennedy, daughter of James Adair, was born in Chester District, South Carolina, in 1780. In 1801 she was married to George Kennedy, of Chester, formerly of County Antrim, Ireland. She reared a family of seven children, of whom only four survived their mother.

Margaret Kennedy became a member of Purity Presbyterian Church near Chester in 1808, and was for sixty-four years a member of this church.

Margaret Kennedy died at the home of her daughter, Adelaide (Sledge) Erwin, wife of William L. Erwin, at Ranaldsburg (Reynoldsburg), Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, on the 22nd day of November, 1872, "at the age of 92 years, 10 months, and 22 days." Her body was brought to Chester and, in accordance with her request, was buried in the same grave with her husband, George Kennedy, in Old Purity Cemetery.

#### MARY BERNIE WALKER MARSHALL

Mrs. Mary Bernie Walker Marshall was born in Chester village on July 22, 1852, the daughter of John W. Walker and his wife, Mary Mills Walker. John W. Walker was

the son of William Walker, who in turn was the son of Alexander Walker, one of the first Elders of Purity Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Marshall's father, John W. Walker, was also for many years an Elder of Purity Church.

On January 18, 1877, Mary Bernie Walker was married to James Kitchen Marshall, who was also for a number of years an Elder of Purity Church.

In early girlhood Mary Bernie Walker became a member of Purity Church, and was a loyal and consistent member of this church during her entire life. She was one of those who helped to organize East Side Chapel, and taught in this mission Sunday School so long as the work was carried on. She also was a member of the Missionary Society and of the old "Aid Society."

Mrs. Marshall reared a family of six children, all brought up in the Presbyterian Church, and all members of Purity Church in early womanhood and manhood. Her eldest son, Robert Gill Marshall, lives in Indiana and Frank L. Marshall served as a Deacon in the Presbyterian Church at Monroe, N. C.

Of the six children of Mrs. Marshall, two are now members of Purity Church, Mrs. Bernie Marshall Dawson (Mrs. Burk M. Dawson), and Frank L. Marshall. Three daughters are members of the Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, S. C. Mrs. Helen M. Markwell, and Misses Margaret Chickering Marshall and Kate Marshall.

Three grand-daughters are now members of Purity Presbyterian Church, Misses Mary Helen Dawson and Nancy Marshall Dawson, the daughters of Mrs. Bernie M. Dawson, and Miss Mary Alice Marshall, the daughter of Frank L. Marshall. These are the sixth generation of the Walker family who have been members of Purity Church.

Mrs. Mary Bernie Walker Marshall died at Chester on the 1st day of February, 1918, and is buried at Old Purity Cemetery, where many of her ancestors and kinsmen are buried, and in the same grave with her husband.

## ELIZABETH HEATHLEY McINTOSH McLURE

Elizabeth Heathley McIntosh came to Chester from Sumter County in December, 1855, as the bride of J. J. McLure. She had been a member of Salem Black River Church in Sumter County, and immediately identified herself with Purity Church. She combined an alert intellect and great suavity with deep consecration, and was active in the work of the Church until her death in December, 1911.

She was a pioneer member of the Missionary Society and taught in the Sunday School for years. One of her pupils was Miss Minnie Mills (later Mrs. A. W. Love), who caught from Mrs. McLure the inspiration that made her so successful as a teacher herself. She was a valuable member of the committee in charge of remodeling the church in 1900.

But it was in her own home that Mrs. McLure's influence was most potent. Her husband, in his prime, was one of the most liberal contributors to Purity Church. One of her sons, J. H. McLure was made an Elder in the Presbyterian Church in Thurber, Texas, March 10, 1895, was an Elder in the Presbyterian Church U. S. in Strawn, Texas in 1910, was an Elder in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. in Strawn, Texas in 1916, and is now a member of the Session of Purity Church. Another son, J. C. McLure was for many years a Deacon of Purity Church, and served as Treasurer of the Church and of Bethel Presbytery. Her grandchildren are members of Presbyterian Churches in widely scattered states, and six of her great grandchildren, Robert W. Hemphill, Jno. McL. Hemphill, Jr., Helen Adair Hemphill, Harriett Hemphill, W. Cornwell Stone, Jr., and Halsted McLure Stone are now members of Purity Church. The last two are great-great-great-great grandchildren of Alexander Walker, one of the first bench of Elders of Purity Church.

## ALEXA MACDONALD MACAULAY

1854 - 1929

Mrs. Alexa Macdonald Macaulay, a native of Baleshare, Scotland, having resided in Charlotte, N. C., since thirteen years of age with her uncle, Allan Macaulay, came to Chester the bride of Donald Macaulay in 1876. She and her husband brought their church letters with them from the First Presbyterian Church in Charlotte to Purity Presbyterian Church. From 1876 to her death, December 17, 1929, she was active and interested in all the organizations of her church, which was near and dear to her. She was a regular attendant upon all its services, was an officer and worker in the Woman's Missionary Society and taught a Sunday School class of boys for a number of years; and when the Auxiliary was organized became one of its ardent members.

As a woman of a high order of mentality, of a charming graciousness, and of striking nobility of character, she filled no small place as a member of Purity Church and as a witness for her Master.

Mrs. Macaulay had two sons, both of whom are members of Purity Church, and have been since childhood, John M. Macaulay, of Atlanta, Ga., and Angus H. Macaulay, Chester. Angus H. Macaulay is a member of the Board of Deacons and at present Chairman of the Board.

## MRS. JULIA KILLIAN CAMPBELL

This lady was one of four noble and lovely sisters. When Mrs. Julia K. Campbell passed away on August 5, 1936, at eighty-three years of age, the older members of Purity Church felt that they had lost a great friend. Mrs. Campbell was the daughter of Francis Marion Killian and Sarah Woods Killian of Chester. For nearly fifty years she kept a boarding house at Chester and a hotel at Saluda, North Carolina. She was a charter member of the Palmetto Lit-

erary Club of Chester. She was vice-president of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Union of Bethel Presbytery when it was inaugurated in 1899 and was constantly interested in the activities of the church. As a member of Purity she was devoted not a passive recipient of its advantages but as an earnest participant in its work. Her death followed that of her sister, Mrs. F. K. Spratt. She left behind the two sisters, Mrs. M. A. Leckie and Miss Bettie Killian.

#### MRS. HATTIE HAFNER MILLER

There remains in the life of Purity Church the effect and outcome of a special work performed by Mrs. S. G. Miller. She it was who organized a boys' missionary society. The circumstances that suggested and sustained this group was largely personal with Mrs. Miller. She became interested in the home for orphaned children that had been opened near Asheville, N. C. by a former pastor of hers, Rev. R. P. Smith. The boys' group was organized expressly for the purpose of aiding this orphanage at its beginning. During the life of this little society there were sent nineteen pairs of blankets, sixty pairs of towels and about fifty dollars in cash. In connection with this aid for home and school the young boys were trained to read of its affairs and to pray for the children gathered together from the mountain homes. There were some twenty in this society of boys in Purity. No records have been kept but recollections afford the names of some of those who composed it during the pastorate of Rev. S. J. Cartledge: Albert Brice, Boyce Bankhead, Paul Hemphill and James Hemphill. The last was killed at nineteen years of age as a soldier in France. For him is named the local American Legion Post, "The James Hemphill Post."

During the pastorate of Rev. A. D. P. Gilmore, Mrs. Miller continued her interest in the boys but with other agencies and actors on the scene, a new form of organization for boys sprang up called, "The Covenanters." There

were two groups of older and younger boys. Mrs. Miller made for them a blue silk flag. "The Blue Flag of the Covenant."

Some of those who were in Mrs. Miller's first society and also in "the Covenanters" were: Chester Alexander, Harold Alexander, Boyce Bankhead, James Hemphill, Louis Fischel, James Key, Frank Key, Russell McConnell, John McKinnell, Wilbur Means, Brownlee Lowry, N. P. Alexander, Melton Woods, John Woods, Sam Alexander, John Edgar ("Blue") Brice, J. Means McFadden and others.

The work of the boys was suited both to Sabbath worship and devotional Bible study and to activities during the week days that were recreational. The supply ministers, young men from the Theological Seminaries, Rev. John Hay and J. Lacey McLean, were devoted to these young boys when the summer vacation afforded special opportunities. Mrs. Miller's original plans and her continued interests were greatly helpful to these youths, many of whom are now serving the church of God as ministers or officers.

#### MRS. A. W. KLUTZ

Mrs. Alice Jane Walkup Klutz takes rank and remains in the lasting memory of Purity not only for the gift of her family to God's service but for her own lovely character and abundance of good works. She was the daughter of Col. Sammel H. Walkup of North Carolina. Her kindred were of the old Waxhaw community. Many of them have served honorably in the Presbyterian Church in many connections. She was educated at Queens College in Charlotte. She found her life's religious interests fulfilled in the congregation at Purity in Chester where she spent so many fruitful years.

Her faithfulness to the services of God's house was notable. She was unbrokenly regular in attendance with her children. In private or officially within the church organi-

zations, she labored gladly with others and it was a pleasure for others to join with her on any committee. Her companionship helped to gladden every task. Besides laboring as an officer in the Church Societies, she taught a class in the Sabbath School. Her gifts and attractive personality led her into many kinds of community organizations and civic societies—United Daughters of the Confederacy, Federation of Women's Club, Music and Book Clubs. She sought out the poor and knew their needs. She was unwaveringly loyal to her religious duties but the crown of her life was the care of her home and the spiritual nurture of her children whom she dedicated to God. She was born October 21, 1863 and passed away August 3, 1915.

#### MISS JANIE STRINGFELLOW

This chapter must remain uncompleted for many names should be included that are not herein written. There are many beloved women who have been lovely in their lives and abundant in their love and labors for the church but we have not found the biographical materials nor sufficient facts out of which to weave the garment of their praise. This section, however, would be still more incomplete if we did not tell of a fine gracious and saintly lady whose presence and influence still abide as an inspiration and delight to her whole community as well as to her church.

Miss Janie Stringfellow all her life has been a part of Chester and a part of Purity Church. She was a close kins-woman of the Hemphills, a sister of Elder John J. Stringfellow but she is a personality of beautiful significance in her own right because of her loving allegiance and her sedulous, yet gentle ministrations in the church. While so much of the sensible world has been shut out from her life in her latter days, her memory is bright and full of the sounding music of those whom she trained first to walk in the path of peace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Perhaps, the remembrance of Purity, out of the many kinds of work she did in the church, will treasure her direction

of a group of young girls known as "The Seven Stars." In 1909 this band came together under her guidance. Elizabeth McLure, Mary Boulware, Louise McFadden, Virginia Lewis, Hattie Bankhead, Grace James and Elizabeth Walker. When Grace James removed elsewhere, Mary Caldwell became a member. The organization of seven members had seven offices—none was missing in equality of importance and dignity. Their meetings were held on Sunday afternoons but they maintained week-day, money-making activities. They with their housewifery arts and articles made enough money to furnish a room at Durant College, an institution of the Assembly's Home Mission work in Oklahoma. They helped to raise money for seats in the new Sunday School auditorium of Purity. Miss Stringfellow herself was for a long while director of Thornwell League among the ladies. She also inaugurated the first cradle roll in her Presbytery and maintained interest in the youngest children of the church through her band of "Seven Stars." One of these little "Seven Stars" was so zealous in her solicitude and promptitude that she sat twinkling on a neighbor's door step where the stork's visit was expected so that the freshly arrived baby might be immediately placed on Purity's cradle roll.

A matter of special interest appears in the following paper that explains itself:

*"Those Who Cared For the Communion Service*

By

*Mrs. Nannie McAliley Walker (Mrs. J. P.)*

"It was customary in the long ago for the wife of the senior elder of the church session to care for the communion service and prepare the sacramental elements to be used at the communion season. This was the custom in Purity Presbyterian Church, Chester.

"Mrs. Elizabeth Douglas Walker, wife of Elder John

Walker, and a sister of the Rev. John Douglas, held this position for thirty or more years in the early part of the eighteen hundreds. At her death Mrs. Lucinda Walker Wylie, wife of Elder Robert Wylie, took charge of the communion service and the preparing of the sacramental elements. Mrs. Walker in turn gave it over to Mrs. Rachel Brawley Hemphill, the wife of Mr. James Hemphill, who held it for twenty-five years, until her death. Thereafter Mrs. Isabella Hemphill Stringfellow, the wife of Elder J. J. Stringfellow (and a daughter of Mrs. James Hemphill), assumed control, and continued in charge of the communion service until ill health prevented. In this work she was ably assisted by her sister-in-law, Miss Janie Stringfellow."

"An individual communion service was provided for the church by the Woman's Auxiliary during the ministry of the Rev. A. D. P. Gilmour, D.D. The care of this new communion service was given over to Mrs. John L. Williams, wife of the Chairman of the Board of Deacons, who now has it in her care."

## XI.

### MEN *of the* CHURCH

**T**HIS title gives the current and contemporary title of the organization existing generally throughout the denomination. As the Sunday School has been altered into "Bible School;" as the Ladies Aid Societies and Missionary Societies have been consolidated into the Women's Auxiliary; and, as the Miriams, Covenanters, Westminster League and other groups among the Young People have been given different titles at different times; likewise have the names of the men's organizations assumed various designations. These names sometimes have been applied to some particular division of the men's group or to their entire organized work of the church. Under the caption of this chapter we may assemble the chief facts and the details of the more important activities of the men of Purity.

Like most of the organizations of the congregation, we have no certain information until the Minutes of Session afford us such beginnings about 1874. From that time until Dr. Summey's pastorate was inaugurated in 1884, there were a few casual references to a young men's prayer meeting. This was a meeting for devotion, worship and Bible study that took place on Sunday afternoon at the church building. Doubtless, this expression of spiritual and pious life on the part of a small group of young men was a great source of satisfaction to the pastors. The Session was pleased, as we may infer from the clerk's references and from the fact that the reports on the state of religion in the church made to Presbytery, carried references to this weekly prayer meeting of young men as one of the signs of spiritual progress. In the old days, fifty and sixty years ago, "worldly conformity," profaning of the Sabbath Day and the neglect of the Bible and study of the Catechisms in the home was a lugubrious wail re-

ported annually as the Session told the Presbytery what in the opinion of the Session the warmth or coldness of the religious life of the people might be. The young men, though few in numbers, by their devotions and loyalty to the church kindled comfort and delight in the Elders as they commented warmly on such evidence of spiritual vitality.

Perhaps at no time was Purity without some such manifestation of piety and fruitful performances of good among the younger men, although the records are not explicit. It may be understood that nearly always there was a small body of these with separate worship and distinctive interests. In addition, there was for a long time a number of classes of young men connected with the Sunday School. A short account of these may supplement the accounts of other departments of the church. They extended from the pastorates of Dr. Summey to that of Dr. Cartledge when a separate and articulate organization appeared.

Among the signs of devotion and faithfulness that characterized the life of J. Leonard Harris in Purity was his service as teacher of the Men's Bible Class. Until 1891, he led this group in good works and ably taught them the word. In July 1891 he suffered his last illness and, while lingering in much pain for his remaining days, he made a request that his boys act as his pall-bearers. On July 4 the members of the class accompanied his body to its last resting place. These class members were: J. E. Hood, Charles Youngblood, J. Wilbur Means, S. E. True, H. P. Hunter, W. S. Dunbar, S. W. Harry, John Key, John A. Hafner, Samuel Hood, W. T. Woods, Thomas Lowry, W. A. Barber, and A. M. Aiken. One of these, John Key, became a minister. He graduated at the Southwestern Presbyterian University and served in the Home Mission work of the Presbyterian Church in Texas.

There remains no written record of the activities of this class, yet its lively religious interest and its good works are remembered by some down to this present day. It is

likely that some names are omitted from this list above. Under the direction of the first fine old teacher the work was carried on by his successor, W. D. Knox, for a long number of years until he transferred his active endeavors to the superintendency of the East Side Mission where was built up an enrollment of two hundred and fifty and where was maintained a Presbyterian Church for more than ten years.

Mrs. Adelaide Lee Gaston also taught a class of young men that may be described now-a-days as a "late adolescent group." The greatest value they derived, doubtless, was personal contact with her, as they visited her home actuated by their common concern as a Sunday School class. They were blessed and elevated by the charm and piety felt in this less formal but intimate association in a home marked by culture and spirituality. Miss Minnie Mills also had such a class. The names may be listed here as they will bring glad reminiscence to some of the older generation and because some of the youths grew to be either useful in the church and eminent in the world or both. This was about 1890. They were: Dellie Drennan, J. Fred McLure, John Hamilton, W. T. Woods, A. L. Gaston, J. E. Dunbar, Watt Brice, Herman Hunter, Robert Mills, L. H. Melton and Eudy. There was a class of young men that sat in the body of the church and were without a special place of meeting and another that had somewhat more honor who had the privilege of meeting up in the tower room that was called "the loft." The lack of four enclosing walls and the exuberance of boyhood caused rather a "hub-bub" than orderly dignity, even though Dr. D. N. McLaughlin, Pastor himself for a time taught this aggregation of very buoyant boys just budding into manhood.

Rev. D. N. McLaughlin's concern for the younger people resulted in the Young Men's Society of Home workers which he organized October 3, 1893. There were present at the initial meeting: Samuel A. Hood, L. H. Melton, John Hafner, S. E. True, James Hamilton, J. C. McLure,

A. M. Aiken, W. T. Woods, J. E. Hood, S. M. Flenniken, W. S. Dunbar, R. R. Hafner. The young men insisted that the pastor should be president and chose him unanimously before any other name was put in nomination. Some forty men became members of this club which rendered excellent service under Dr. McLaughlin's leadership.

When Rev. C. R. Hyde became the minister, he took notice of the need for a suitable and special class-room for these youths. With his characteristic decisiveness and action, he secured the addition to the church of a small annex at the rear of the auditorium. This accommodation for the young men had far-reaching consequences for the church. It not only provided, though inadequately, for the growing class of young men, but in several ways prophesied and called for the creation of a plant adequate for the entire Sunday School. The enlargements of the building made in 1917 and in 1927, were the outgrowth of the obvious necessity of providing for the increasing attendance of men at the same time their attendance and enthusiasm made the enlargements possible.

This was seen in part when the class of Mr. A. L. Gaston needed accommodations to meet its numbers and activities. This group in Purity has had such an impressive history as to justify a particular account and a special measure of praise.

Rev. J. E. Purcell, who has a wide reputation for achievement in the leadership of men which developed while he was doing his work at Purity, had the direction of the class till about 1920. Upon Dr. Purcell's resignation, Col. A. L. Gaston, a lawyer, a son of a former solicitor of the Sixth Circuit of South Carolina Courts, a dignified gentleman and a lover of the church, was prevailed upon to accept the leadership of the class. While Bible instruction and regular worship have been standard practice, the members of the class have engaged in many kinds of activity and benevolence.

An older group of men had grown up. These had been

taught by W. D. Knox and others. Such men as J. I. Harden, John Hamilton, John H. Crawford and Arthur L. Gaston. It was to one of these youths of former days, now an experienced and ripened man, to whom the class was entrusted following Dr. Purcell in 1920. Reluctantly Mr. A. L. Gaston undertook the responsibility. He was the teacher, inspiration, guide and exemplar of the class for nearly fifteen years. His work was so successful and impressive as to leave this group called by his name, "The Gaston Bible Class." The names of its first members should be preserved but the list is not available. Some of them were: Banks Robbins, L. E. Beard, S. M. Jones, J. W. Poteat and H. L. Patrick. The Minutes of Session occasionally show that the Elders met in "The Gaston Room."

The explanation of this is history itself. A member of this class was so greatly impressed by the unfitness of the old Hyde Room as frequently to call attention to the desirability for better quarters. The Hyde Room was, as it still is, a vestibule between the main building and the Sunday School Building. The offer of Mr. S. M. Jones with other influences, but particularly the superb and insistent leadership of A. M. Aiken in the Sunday School, finally resulted in a large Bible School building in which a room was set apart for the class taught by A. L. Gaston. The room and the class, so long associated with his direction and personal help, are monumental of the values in the class and in the men. Besides helpful concern for all sorts of connections within Purity and within the town of Chester, the class has aided college students, has supported children at Thornwell Orphanage, has engaged in many kinds of good works for the whole church. Col. Gaston had taught a class of women at a former time and was devoted to Purity as Deacon and Elder, but his relation to this class and the mutual attachment between himself and its members was a fine exhibition of service for God. The course of instruction and liberality of the class have not been interrupted by

the election of their friend and guide to the position of Circuit Judge in the State of South Carolina.

A combination of this group and one formerly taught by J. H. McLure and R. B. Caldwell took place soon after Dr. John McSween came to the church. Under other leaders and with changing membership the spirit, activity and generosity still are outpoured as they go forward in the worship of God and in attachment to the church.

While the Bible classes were a part of the Sunday School, from 1885 to 1935, a period of fifty years, there was another kind of development and different form of organization that characterized the men of Purity. For thirty years there has been some sort of separate organization of the men. The records do not enter into details always but we have enough data to furnish an authentic narrative.

In 1909, June 13, when Dr. Cartledge was pastor, a committee was appointed by the Session "to canvass the church in the interest of the Laymen's Foreign Mission Movement." This is but a casual and mild reflection of one of the greatest movements that has influenced the life of the Southern Presbyterian Church. The Laymen's movement originated outside of our denomination but it blessed the church as nothing has done in its history. This movement and the Women's Auxiliary have lifted the floor level of the general church to a higher plane of service, efficiency, spirituality and liberality. It must be said in all truth that, until the advent of the Laymen's Movement in 1908, the Presbyterian Church in U. S. was a preacher organization. Since that time it has been largely a lay influenced, a lay guided and certainly a lay financed denomination. Until that time ministerial garb was distinctive. Since that time the Presbyterian minister has donned the clothes and assumed the speech of the layman. The minister has been reduced to the level or elevated to the layman's level in his outlook in church life. This transformation, in its superficialities, marks quite a new order in the history and in the whole tenor of Purity's organized experience. The way was

made ready by such ministers as Summey and McLaughlin but it was settled into a stable matter by the laymen themselves. Purity's experience is in harmony with the entire denomination in this connection. However, the details in the Sessional record are only sufficient to give an outline of the history, but these tell a story that makes the men of the church reputable for high endeavor and for wealth of religious devotion. The Laymen's Missionary Movement inaugurated definite and systematic planning.

From 1909 to 1911, there was a large increase of gifts and the church at the same time was distinguished by something that should here be noted. Until this time there was a marked worldly social air in the community. The Session had been frequently troubled by exigencies of discipline and the intrusions of a distinctly worldly spirit as shown in the life of the young men and spiritual indifference of the older men. It was not without some pain at this time that a degree of transformation took place. Within the ten years from 1908 to 1918, a large body of younger men found outlet and expression for their social inclinations and nature in harmony with the church. The activities of the kingdom of God displaced the secularities, the questionably worldly and even unquestionably irreligious amusements and indulgences. The present middle-aged masculine membership of Purity will testify to the changes that were unequivocally evident at the time of and as a result of the rise of the men's organized work. In 1911, December 17, when the Session asked for an active enlargement of "The Men and Religion Movement" in the congregation, there was found a group ready, enthusiastic and prayerful. The pastors, Gilmour, Purcell and Shepperson testify to the success of their pastorates in this connection. There was room made for the men in the church because the men were present for prayer, Bible study, Sunday School Services, social gatherings. The older call of the Session to the Deacons to come forward with the pastor's salary and the anxious urging to secure a fulfillment of the

Presbytery's "apportionments" which so frequently appear in the record from 1875 to 1905 entirely disappear after the latter date. The business as well as the actual responsibility for the church was not a grievously burdensome thing to Pastor and Session as in older days but a joyously living interest of the average member who was given a share and a place. The spirit moved forward for another alteration late in 1911.

Organization of the Men's Brotherhood took place in October 1911, within six months after Rev. A. D. P. Gilmour became Purity's Pastor. Perhaps few incidents, events, or organizations have given such abundant worth and pleasure as has Purity's Brotherhood. Dr. Gilmour's influence brought the organization into formal being but the zealous, zestful and enthusiastic activity of this society of the men of the church has been steadily maintained by the men themselves for more than twenty-five years.

The first meeting was held at a sort of community house called The Pavilion. Dr. Neal Anderson was the speaker for the occasion and there were two hundred Presbyterian men present and fifty invited guests. John A. Hafner was the first President followed by J. W. Simpson and then E. P. Calhoun. The Brotherhood had a Bible Class that met with the Sunday School. M. S. Lewis was teacher of this class and James Hamilton its President. A. M. Aiken was among the most active and devoted members of this group. His fitness was seized upon to make him the superintendent of the Sunday School. The Brotherhood and the Bible Class made clear the need of an adequate Sunday School building. It was one of the large factors in that accomplishment.

A program and a description of the annual banquet meeting from "The Chester Lantern" of October 30, 1913, may be abbreviated. The annual meetings of the Brotherhood were held at different places as was convenient. That of 1913 found no part of the church plant large enough to accommodate the guests and the one hundred and seventy-

five members present. The meeting was at the Commercial Club Room. The mayor of the city, William J. Simpson, was president of the Brotherhood, Dr. A. D. P. Gilmour was pastor at the time. Rev. Alexander Martin was the special speaker of the evening. "For nearly forty-five minutes he held the large crowd of banqueters under the sway of his flights of oratory, while he discussed 'The Value of the Christian Religion.' This speaker was followed by S. M. Jones, A. L. Gaston, R. L. Douglas and S. E. McFadden. This seems a familiar scene after twenty-five years. Such was not usual then. There was a kindled and realistic attachment for the work of the church. Banquets of the brotherhood, meetings from time to time each year, extensive and quite various sorts of work appearing in occasional accounts reveal a zealous and earnest spirit far beyond the festive meetings at the banquet. We select from this report of 1913 a skeleton sketch of the organization that is not unlike that of any year from 1909 to 1936. It may be well to give the long list of names so as to signalize these as part and specimen of a great number that appear during thirty years: President, E. P. Calhoun; Vice-President, Dr. J. L. Hamilton; Secretary, J. M. Coleman; Treasurer, A. G. Thornton; Chairman of Committees: Bible Study, R. L. Cunningham; Prayer, C. C. McAliley; Christian Culture, R. L. Douglas; Missions, N. A. Peay; Stewardship, J. K. Johnston; Local Extension, J. L. Davidson; Social, A. M. Aiken; Personal Work, Auburn Woods; Work for Boys, Prof. J. Lacy McLean; Associated Charities, J. C. Cureton; Church and Church Property, J. E. Dunbar; Church Attendance and Courtesy, J. T. McCrorey, Jr.; Music, J. M. Bankhead; East Side Church, W. J. Simpson; County Extension, John A. Hafner. Here is a list of nineteen names, chairmen of as many different committees. This suggests a great organization with widely extended endeavors. The life of the church shows that this is not a picture on paper. As late as June 9, 1935, the minutes showed that the earnestness and interest of the

men still abides. "The Men of Purity" was a title following "Brotherhood" and "Men of the Church" seems to be preferred now. The church holds her men because the men love the church.

## XII.

### FULL TIME SERVICE

THE expression, "full time service," has come into usage in recent years. It designates those who have given themselves to the church and kingdom for all of their time. It has replaced the older term of entering the ministry because both men and women have gone into religious work without being ordained to the ministry. Altogether Purity has furnished thirteen such persons who during their youth consecrated themselves especially to the service of God. Other members of Purity Church besides these consecrated themselves likewise, but only those who were members of this congregation at the time of their entrance upon such a decision have been listed here. A biographical sketch of such as could be obtained has been written out below:

#### JOHN DOUGLAS

The story of this man is largely the account of Purity itself during a long period and is contained in the chapter on Pastoral Succession. Those that follow are arranged in alphabetical order.

These biographical sketches are determined and limited by sources of information.

#### WILLIAM CLAWSON ALEXANDER

William Clawson Alexander was born May 16, 1864, the son of Sample Alexander and Lucy Clawson Alexander of Chester. His father was an Elder in Purity Church. For fifty years Dr. Alexander has served the Southern Presbyterian Church. He is the pastor emeritus of the Glenn Leven Church at Nashville, Tennessee. He is Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Nashville and of the Synod of Tennessee. During Dr. Alexander's active pastorate for

26 years, from 1910 to 1936, the Glen Leven Church became well established, increasing in membership from 75 to 350.

Dr. Alexander graduated from Union Theological Seminary in May 1888. In the same year he was licensed and ordained by Memphis Presbytery. He received the Doctor of Divinity degree from the Southwestern Presbyterian University, Clarksville, Tennessee. Until he went to Nashville he had held five pastorates: Bolivar, Tennessee, 1888-1892; Mount Airy and Surry County, North Carolina, 1892-1894; stated supply at Madison, North Carolina, 1893; First Presbyterian Church, Concord, North Carolina, 1894-1899; Maryland Avenue Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, Maryland, 1899-1903; Idlewild Presbyterian Church, Memphis, Tennessee, 1903-1910.

#### CHESTER ALEXANDER

Chester Alexander, son of Newton Palmer Alexander and Della McCosh Alexander, was born in Chester, September 27, 1898. His father was one of Purity's Ruling Elders. He was received into membership of the church under Dr. Gilmour. He served the church as a deacon and as assistant superintendent of the Sunday School. He graduated from the Citadel in 1919. Under the care of Bethel Presbytery he became a candidate for the ministry and received theological training at Union Seminary, Richmond, Va., graduating in 1925. He was sent to Palestine and the Near East as a delegate by the Near East Relief organization. In June 1925 Mr. Alexander was ordained in the First Presbyterian Church of Raleigh, North Carolina and installed as pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Smithfield, North Carolina. He was called to Howard Memorial Church, Tarboro, North Carolina, where he has been serving as pastor since 1930.

#### ROBERT FRANKLIN DAVIDSON

Robert Franklin Davidson, the elder son of Z. V. and

Kate Gaston Davidson, was born in Chester on April 27, 1902. He was received into the church under Dr. Gilmour. He graduated from Davidson College in 1923. After teaching two years at McCallie's School, Chattanooga, he entered Louisville Seminary. Elected as a Rhodes scholar to Oxford, he graduated from Christ Church College in 1928 with B.A. and M.A. degrees in theology. After returning to America in 1928, he re-entered Louisville Seminary and graduated the following year as Master of Theology. He began study toward his Ph.D. at Yale Divinity School. Later he became associated with Hiram College in Ohio and Southwestern College at Memphis as a teacher of Philosophy and Religion. While at Southwestern he was ordained to the ministry. In 1937 Dr. Davidson received his Ph.D. He is head of the department of Philosophy at Hiram College and supply minister in one of the Cleveland pulpits.

#### CHARLES ROBERT HEMPHILL

Charles Robert Hemphill, son of James Hemphill and Rachel Brawley Hemphill, was born in Chester, April 18, 1852. He entered the ministry in 1874 after graduating from Columbia Theological Seminary. For fifty-eight years, until the time of his death, Dr. Hemphill served the church as an outstanding teacher. His first professorship was at Columbia Seminary as instructor in Hebrew. After a year of study at Johns Hopkins he was elected in 1879 to the chair of Greek and Latin in the Southwestern Presbyterian University of Clarksville, Tennessee. He served there until 1882 when he became professor of Interpretation of the Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek in Columbia Seminary. He resigned his professorship in 1885 and became pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church at Louisville, Kentucky, where he continued to preach for fourteen years. In 1893 he united with others in establishing the Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and took the chair of New Testament Interpretation. When

this seminary became the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of Kentucky, after its consolidation with the seminary at Danville, in 1901, Dr. Hemphill continued as professor of New Testament Interpretation and of Homiletics. He was the first president of the Seminary, and he held this office from 1910 to 1920. In 1923 the chair of Greek was established in his honor by the Second Presbyterian Church of Louisville. From 1920 until his death, March 9, 1932, he was professor and Dean of the Seminary.

Dr. Hemphill received recognition by the Presbyterian Church in various ways. He was made a D.D. by Davidson College in 1884 and by the Central University the same year. A degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him by Hanover College in 1895 and by Westminster College in 1898. In 1895 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly. He was a member of the Pan-Presbyterian Council, Glasgow, 1896, and from 1902 to 1914 he was a member of the International Sunday School Lesson Committee.

#### T. M. HUNTER

Rev. T. M. Hunter, D.D., was born in Chester, April 7, 1870. His father was Miles H. Hunter and his mother, Sallie Marshall Hunter. He graduated from the South Carolina Military Academy in 1890. He took his theological course at Southwestern Presbyterian University, Clarksville, Tennessee. After graduation in 1894 he was licensed to preach by Nashville Presbytery in November 1894 and ordained by Savannah Presbytery in the same year. He has held pastorates at Darien, Georgia, 1894-1897; Trenton, Tennessee, 1897-1904; First Presbyterian Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1904-1921. Since 1921 he has been pastor of the Westminster Presbyterian Church, Beaumont, Texas, where he has been for the past sixteen years. Rev. T. M. Hunter passed away October 1937 and was buried at Beaumont, Texas.

### JOHN KNOX JOHNSTON

John Knox Johnston was born on October 2, 1900, in Chester. He is the son of John Knox Johnston and Annie Clowney Johnston. At the age of nineteen he was received into the church on profession of faith. Following his academic training at Presbyterian College, he entered Columbia Theological Seminary in 1924 and graduated in 1928. After spending one full year as pastor of the Bethesda Church, he was ordained by the Pee Dee Presbytery and installed as pastor in Chesterfield, S. C., June 1928. He completed seven years of service in the West Brazil Mission. He returned to America and was called to the Marion Presbyterian Church, where he has served as pastor since February 1937.

### LESLIE R. McCORMICK

Leslie R. McCormick was born March 15, 1848. As a young man he entered the ministry and preached at Beersheba, Allison Creek, and Zion. He died on August 25, 1885. He was an excellent pastor and a studious preacher. His wife, Mrs. Minnie McCormick, after serving as Matron at Columbia Seminary, went to China as a missionary from the Southern Presbyterian Church. Leslie R. McCormick died at Lowryville and was buried in the Chester City cemetery.

### RICHARD ELLIS SHERRILL

Richard Ellis Sherrill was born in 1816. He attended Davidson College, graduating in 1841 with the B.A. degree. In 1847 he received the M.A. degree. He studied theology at Columbia Theological Seminary. He held the following pastorates: Providence and Sharon, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Pontotoc, Mississippi; Somerville and Dancyville, Tennessee; Harrodsburg, Kentucky; Carthage and Forest Grove, Mississippi. In 1870 he went to Texas and preached at Sherman and Seguin. He organized fif-

teen churches. The *Semi-Centennial Catalogue of Davidson College 1837 to 1887*, printed in 1891, gave his last address at Graham, Texas.

### MRS. J. LEE WILLIAMSON

The marriage of M. S. Lewis and Miss Elizabeth Hall was a union that resulted in a succession of blessings for Purity. Mr. Lewis was a member of the Methodist denomination. After his marriage with Miss Hall he became a member of Purity Church with his wife. Mr. Lewis has the remarkable experience of having been elected and installed four times as an officer by his own congregation. Mrs. Lewis was a daughter of Rev. John G. and Mrs. Hall, missionaries of the Southern Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Lee Williamson is the daughter of Mr. M. Sumter Lewis and Mrs. Lewis. Her place in the foreign mission field and her honor among her own people and amidst those who have known her entire life is a sign of her worthiness. Purity has been attached to her and supported her endeavors unflinchingly.

She was born in Chester, S. C., June 18, 1899. While a student at Winthrop College, where she graduated in 1922, she volunteered for the foreign field. A line of commendation here may not be amiss. At the time of Miss Lewis' impressionable years at Winthrop, she fell under the religious and spiritual influences that have so often characterized that institution. Winthrop College at the time was especially notable for the number of teachers and students that were invigorated by a devoted enthusiasm for things of the church and ideal of consecration to Christian service. After leaving college Miss Lewis still pursued in maturity the resolution and self-dedication of her student days.

She taught for one year, spent several summers in attendance on different religious forums, was pastor's assistant at Bradentown, Fla., and after study at the Assembly's Training School in Richmond, Va., she was ready for

appointment by the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions. A fine man of like minded consecration and intention to embark on foreign mission work became her husband Sept. 9, 1925. After a year spent in home mission duties in North Carolina, the two began their first term of labor for the Southern Presbyterian Church as Evangelistic Missionaries in 1927. Her husband, Rev. J. Lee Williamson, was of the Steele Creek Congregation in North Carolina. He had been an excellent student and star football player at the Presbyterian College of which he is an alumnus. The two entered their second term of service in 1937 and with their two children, both born in Brazil, have their home at Araguary, Ede Minos, Brazil. Mrs. Williamson and her husband have been the recipients of attentions from Purity on different occasions and have steadily received warm admiring and loving appreciation of the people who have known her since infancy.

#### MISS CLARABEL WILLIAMS

Miss Clarabel Williams is widely known in the Southern Presbyterian Church. She first had a useful and successful career as a teacher in the public schools of South Carolina but she is now known far and wide especially among the young people of her own denomination as a writer and editor.

Miss Williams was born in York County in South Carolina. Her parents were members of the great congregation Bethesda, that has enriched from its wide embracing membership for a hundred years many other congregations far and near. Her father was Frank D. Williams and her mother Julia Love Williams. Their membership has long been with Purity in Chester. Their daughter, Clarabel, was born April 9, 1888. After her graduation at Winthrop in 1909, she spent nine years in teaching. She took her special training for religious leadership at the Assembly Training School at Richmond, where she took her degree in 1922. She also pursued post-graduate studies at the University

of Tennessee. For some time she was Director of Religious Education of the St. Andrews Presbyterian Church at Wilmington, N. C.

She was quite wonderfully outfitted by her personality, her scholarship, her practised experience, her taste and her assiduous attentiveness to her tasks for the appointment that came to her in 1925. Since that time she has been a writer and editor of the contents of "The Program Builder," and of lesson helps in the "Intermediate" and "Senior Quarterly." Since 1930, she has been editor of the Young people's paper "Onward." She has thus become an important and most helpful leader of the Southern Presbyterian Church in connection with the Committee of Publication and Religious Education. Again, Purity Church finds credit and gladness in sharing leadership and ability that sprang in part from the life and spirit of the Purity people.

#### LEX W. KLUTTZ

For more than forty years every one that has known Purity has known Lex Kluttz. From the time that his mother led him down the aisle at almost every hour of worship till the present he has been a well-known and greatly liked person. His father was for a long while a merchant of the town and was also a Deacon of Purity. His mother still abides in the memory of the people who revered her for her high intelligence and piety.

Lex Kluttz was born October 23, 1894 at Chester, South Carolina. After finishing at the local high school in 1910 he continued his education at Davidson College where he received an A.B. degree. While still a youth he was a leader in young people's religious work, having a Sunday School Class in his own church and one also in the East Side congregation. He helped organize the first Christian Endeavor Society in Purity and was a committeeman of the State Convention, also a representative to the Layman's Con-

vention at Charlotte. There he was profoundly impressed by an address by John R. Mott. He had a private conference at that Convention with Dr. Mott and determined to devote his life to his fellow men in the name of the Lord. His channel of service, he thought, would be well chosen if an active worker of the Young Men's Christian Association. To that organization he has held allegiance many years and through it has found opportunity to accomplish his life's chief aim.

Even while at college, as he had done in his boyhood school days, he was busy about the Master's service. He was a member of the Y. M. C. A. cabinet, aided in Bible extension work in Sunday School and churches, as well as being an accomplished athlete. When the American Expeditionary forces went to France, he was a volunteer and remained abroad two and a half years. He, with rank of sergeant, like other soldiers was given opportunity for study before returning home. He chose the University of Edinburgh Graduate School. He was also in attendance at New College Theological Seminary. While assistant to the Senior Chaplain among the American soldiers on the Rhine, he was engaged in organizing Bible classes and other religious work. His athletic fitness at this time won for him as a track man a place in the Olympic team final track try-outs in 1920. For three years he taught and coached athletics in the boys' preparatory school of the American University, of Beirut, Syria. He was field secretary of the Christian Endeavor Society, at which time he reorganized societies in Nazareth and Jerusalem and he also was a member of a special commission that made a study of the orphanages that had the care of 100,000 Armenian children. He was interested in Bible geography and archeology. For research in these fields he received his Master of Arts degree. He traveled not only in Europe, but in India and the Far East in 1923. He came near losing his life in the Yokohama earthquake.

After returning to his home in Chester, he began his

labors on behalf of the Near East Relief organization. This society undertook to provide for the homeless children of the persecuted and expatriated Armenians. From 1923-1929 he was director of this work in South Carolina, and for the last three years both Carolinas, fostering the spirit of liberality that sustained this enterprise.

In 1929 he became general Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. at Raleigh, N. C., and continued there till 1936. Since that time he has held the same position at Charlotte, N. C. While he was previously engaged in this kind of service and while he is a member of civic and fraternal groups, his allegiance to the church and his devotion are alive and helpful.

The genial likableness, the happy, gladsome personality of this man, as a man of God and servant of Jesus Christ, are the source and cause of Purity's regard and love for him.

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It has not been possible to obtain materials for a sketch of John A. Kee.

### XIII.

#### *The* CHOIR

IF Purity has not always been peaceful at least it has striven to furnish musical harmony and has sometimes spent a good deal of money in the effort. The Session was not insensitive, for on April 20, 1914 this minute is inscribed: "W. D. Knox was appointed a committee to see the organist and request her to 'mellow down' the music played at the close of the church service. The music is fine but anything bordering on the 'opera' was not in place." At another time a similar critical comment is conveyed to the organist. The music must have been fine, indeed, for signs of attention and appreciation are sounded in the minutes occasionally, for instance, on December 1923, a vote of thanks was given for the cantatas and the pageant by the members.

From one who knew them well we have an account of the choir and organist of an earlier time. When Purity put in the first pipe organ ever used in Chester in 1890 James Pagan Brawley became the organist. He had been given musical training by his cousin, Mrs. J. J. Stringfellow. After attendance upon the Boston Conservatory of Music and a period of study abroad, he gave lessons to Mrs. Stringfellow on the pipe organ. When he left Chester to become director of music at Peace Institute at Raleigh, Mrs. Stringfellow became organist. It is told that, while James Brawley was organist, he played one of Sousa's marches as a Recessional. So compelling was the music that Elders Hamilton, Hemphill, Moore and Stringfellow pranced to its rhythm. Wylie and Baxter Moore, two irrepressible youths, are responsible for the story but the account is rendered contradictory and shown to be apocryphal by the statement that the Session had had the young organist appear. But the Session was composed of the four

sedate gentlemen mentioned. As a matter of fact the Session did convey a mild and effective intimation that altered the tempo of the instrumental music if not the title of the composition. The minutes of Sept. 11, 1892, refer to this. When James P. Brawley was employed the amount of one hundred dollars was named as compensation "if the funds permit"—one hundred dollars a year.

Mrs. John J. Stringfellow was organist and apparently also choir director for Purity for forty years. A silver piece given to her as a token of appreciation commemorates her long devotion. It was her tact as well as her musical gifts and love for the worship of God that enabled her to maintain peace and harmony for such a long while.

A notation in the records by the Elders in 1913 shows that Miss Adalyne Hood was given a leave of absence. She was organist at the time. Again it is noted soon after the arrival of Rev. Flournoy Shepperson, that Mr. Henry Sanderson of Monticello, Arkansas, was asked to become organist and choir director. On July 31, 1921 Mrs. McKnight is thanked for her services and Mr. Sanderson began his stay of two years at a salary of \$1,200 per annum. In 1923 Miss Margaret Brannon was offered the place at the organ at fifty dollars a month. Miss Elizabeth Hardin and Mrs. W. R. Wallace have also served. Mrs. J. E. Brice it at present Purity's organist.

There are memories for the older people of Purity of the Alexander sisters in the choir. Mrs. George Melton (Margaret Alexander) had such a pleasing voice that a phonograph record was made of it. Mrs. Lewis Alexander Youngblood, Mrs. Emma Alexander Woods, Mrs. Annie Wylie Moore, Miss Fannie Walker were leaders of the worship. Mrs. Emmie Lewis Hafner and Mrs. May Davidson Marion belong to a group a little later. The choir donned vestments in 1931 by consent of Session. The choir at present is composed of: Mrs. H. R. Woods, Director; Mrs. R. E. Abell, Mrs. Alex Oliphant, Miss Hattie Bankhead, Miss Mabel Johnson, Mrs. Reid McCoy, E. McF.

White, J. Spratt Moore, Mrs. D. T. Welborn, Mrs. John McSween.

The grave Elders who were noted above as taking notice of the liveliness of the organ on several occasions were attentively interested in this aspect of divine services. As far back as 1879 they directed that one hundred copies of "The Psalms and Hymns" should be purchased and the name of the church imprinted on the books distributed through the congregation. As musical taste altered and popular hymnology was expected, the Session from time to time directed that suitable kinds of hymnals should be provided for the people and especially for the Sunday School.

It is fitting that this history should close with the statement that Purity not only strove to worship God by giving substance liberally, by effective and often eloquent preaching, but also by songs of praise filled with beauty and reverence. May the life of this church ever be in all the future years one true *laus deo*, Praise God!

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