

THE CHURCHES OF DELAWARE

by

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*A history, in brief, of the nearly 900 churches
and former churches in Delaware as
located by the Author.*

1947

St. Jones' Methodist Church (M.E.) located two miles south of Little Creek was founded in 1802, when a frame church was built. A Sunday School was organized in 1845. A new building was erected and it was dedicated on Jan. 29, 1871.

The services were in charge of the Rev. E. Stubbs, assisted by the Rev. J. Owen Sypherd, the pastor. Because of inclement weather, only a small congregation was present, yet they cleared the church of debt and also raised money to insure the building. It was decided to plant a tree in front of the church to be known as the "Postles' Tree." This was in honor of Thomas Postles, chairman of the building committee.

The 100th Anniversary was celebrated on Oct. 12, 1902, with the Rev. L. W. Layfield in charge.

The church was closed in July, 1944, and by the end of 1945 only a shell remained. On two occasions during its last 20 years this church was ravished by thieves. The last time, after the 1944 closing, the thieves took everything that was not nailed down including the three pulpit chairs and the pulpit Bible. In the adjoining graveyard there are only a few inscribed tombstones. The oldest is that of Parigan Mansfield, who died on Dec. 18, 1814.

John Wesley Church, colored, is located two miles south of St. Jones' Church. There is a small graveyard.

Bethel Christian Church, at Kitt's Hummock, was organized by Dr. R. S. Stephens. The church site was donated, on July 23, 1915, by Timothy E. Townsend and a galvanized iron building was erected. A larger frame church was built sometime later. It became defunct in 1935. The building was sold, removed to the north shore and remodeled for a cottage.

Banning's M. E. Chapel was located four miles below Cooper's Corner where cement steps lead up to the old graveyard. This chapel was the result of preaching by Freeborn Garrettson at the home of Caleb Boyer's father in 1778. Francis Asbury preached at Boyer's on Nov. 24, 1780. On Sept. 20, 1842, Richard A. Cooper donated an additional acre of land upon which to build a new church. This building was erected, with the Rev. Wm. Connelly doing most of the work. In the 1850's, it was decided to build two churches closer to the homes of the congregation. One group built Beth Berei Church at Magnolia in 1856 and another group built Lebanon Church in 1858. Banning's Chapel was then abandoned. The large graveyard contains graves dating back to 1846. No burials have been made in recent times and the graveyard receives but little attention.

Motherkill Friend's Meeting-House and burying-ground were located on the northern edge of Magnolia beside Beaver Dam Branch. On May 12, 1760, Wm. Jackson donated one acre of land for the above purpose. The meeting-house was burned shortly after being built and a new building was erected. In 1790, Motherkill and Duck Creek were united with Eastern Shore Meetings to form the Southern Quarterly Meeting. In 1805, Motherkill Meeting fathered the Camden Meeting. In 1828, they united with Duck Creek as a Monthly Meeting. In 1830, Motherkill and Duck Creek united with Camden Preparative Meeting. The brick meeting-house was used for occasional meetings until 1844 when it was sold to Henry McIlvain.

The old burying-ground is still there and is known locally as the "Quaker graveyard." Small care is given to this plot in recent times and as a result trees and brush have taken almost complete possession of the site. There are