

HISTORY
Of
ARMUCHEE CHARGE

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THE HISTORY OF MOUNTAIN SPRINGS CHURCH
ARMUCHEE CIRCUIT---ROME DISTRICT

The records of a church are too often neglected during the formative years, and when a history is begun, grave discrepancies and omissions occur. Thus it is with Mountain Springs Episcopal Church, South.

According to the deed of property, the present site was donated September 23, 1889 by John L. Cook to James Sidney Griffin, John Cordle, W. M. Beard, J. B. Duncan, and J. T. Riley, Sr. as trustees. The above mentioned John L. Cook gave the timber to build the first structure.

Prior to this, Mrs. Elizabeth Stowe Cook, Wife of Jerry Cook, had chosen a site atop the hill rising west of the present building as the place she wished to be buried. From this spot one could see the water tower and town clock of Rome. Mrs. Cook died early and was buried at the chosen spot.

Evidence that the cemetery is several years older than the present building is shown by the following inscriptions copied from the stones in the cemetery:

John Duncan
Feb. 18, 1805
Feb. 12, 1883

Elizabeth A Duncan
Died
March 14, 1880
Age 61

Jerry M. Cook
Born
1853
Died
1882

Mrs. Elizabeth Cook
Born Aug. 16th, 1856
Died May 20th, 1878
Blessed are the dead who
die in the Lord.

The following is on a stone in the cemetery:

This stone is placed here in remembrance of John L. Cook who on the 23rd day of Sept. 1889 deeded these two acres of land to the trustees of Mountain Springs M.E. Church in fee simple for church and burial purposes. On the reverse side appears:

John L. Cook
Born
October 4, 1821
Died
February 18, 1912
Aged
90 Yrs. 4Mo. and 14 days.

The graves of J. M. Cordle and J. B. Duncan, two of the original trustees, are marked. The others, unfortunately, are unmarked.

The first permanent structure at Mountains Springs was a log building, built about 1874 to 1876, and the remains are now on Berry School property, at the former site of W. E. Beard's residence. The logs are well preserved, having been hand hewn from heart pine and measure approximately 14" to 18" in width with a length of 30 feet. For a number of years the structure was used for church and school, after removal to its present location it was used as a stable.

The present building at Mountain Springs is the former Shiloh Church building which was formerly several miles east of Mountain Springs. No definite facts could be ascertained relative to Shiloh Church, nor the cause of its abandonment.

Prior to a permanent structure at Mountain Springs, there are local stories of bush arbors and tent meetings. No verifiable facts were found for this period.

A record of the pastors of the church is sketchy with the names of the early pastors lost in the pages of the past and the latter ones are not in chronological order. N. E. McBrayer is remembered as pastor in 1907 - 08. He was placed on the superannuated list in 1909 or 1910.

Then a Rev. J. T. Pendley, L. E. Wright, A. M. Cook, Pendley again, R. C. Hale, Siegars Tatum, Harvey Wood, Frank Green, and Freeman are named without accuracy of precedence and absence of initials.

In 1914, Central Grove Church was founded approximately two miles east of Mountain Springs and a number of members of Mountain Springs affiliated here. This new church a member of the Rome circuit and the pastor served both Mountain Springs and Central Grove. This church ceased active work about 1930 and the property was purchased by the Berry Schools.

The decline of Mountains Spring as an active church can be attributed to several causes. One, the type of soil. This made farm yields small. Two, the growth of industry in Rome. Many residents of the Community moved to the City because of economic necessity. Three, the rapid growth and expansion of Berry Schools. This purchase of land for forest purpose exerted a steady pressure of isolation on the remainder who finally succumbed and moved nearer the City.

This church is still active and is part of the Armuchee Circuit.

The Rev. R. N. Padgett, Jr. is the present pastor.

Information obtained and compiled by:

Mrs. Myrtle Brown Eberhart