

NEW HOPE

by

MAYMIE WEIR STEVENSON

NEW HOPE is in the northern section of Fairfield County. It is a very old neighborhood and is steeped in history and tradition. The people are predominantly of Scotch-Irish and English extraction, most of them strong adherents of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

A few families lived in the community before the Revolutionary War and had established substantial homesteads. Among these were the Simontons, Roseboroughs, Taylors, McLurkins, and Weirs. Jeanne McLurkin, a pretty daughter of the section, was one of Fairfield's Revolutionary heroines.

When the war ended several families of newcomers from Ireland settled here. They landed in Charleston and secured their grants at the seat of the government before actually coming to Fairfield. Among these families were the Dunbars, Thompsons, Brices, Douglasses, Douglasses, and Stevensons.

These people were hard-working, honest, thrifty, and fairly well educated. They were poor but proud and they took great pride in the fact that they had paid their passage from the old country, bought their lands, and still had means to tide them over until they could become established in their new surroundings. They were charitable in their speech and were always friendly to the poor and needy.

In NEW HOPE the observance of the Sabbath was the strict law of the land. Guests, either expected or unexpected, never interfered with the church-going or family worship. Those of them who later owned Negroes treated and cared for them in a kindly manner and attended to their religious as well as they physical needs.

The people of NEW HOPE prospered through their industry but held fast to the old religious beliefs and customs. They built homes in accordance with their prosperity. Some of these were spacious and dignified but none were ornate nor pretentious. During the Ante-Bellum period NEW HOPE became one of the most prosperous communities in the county.

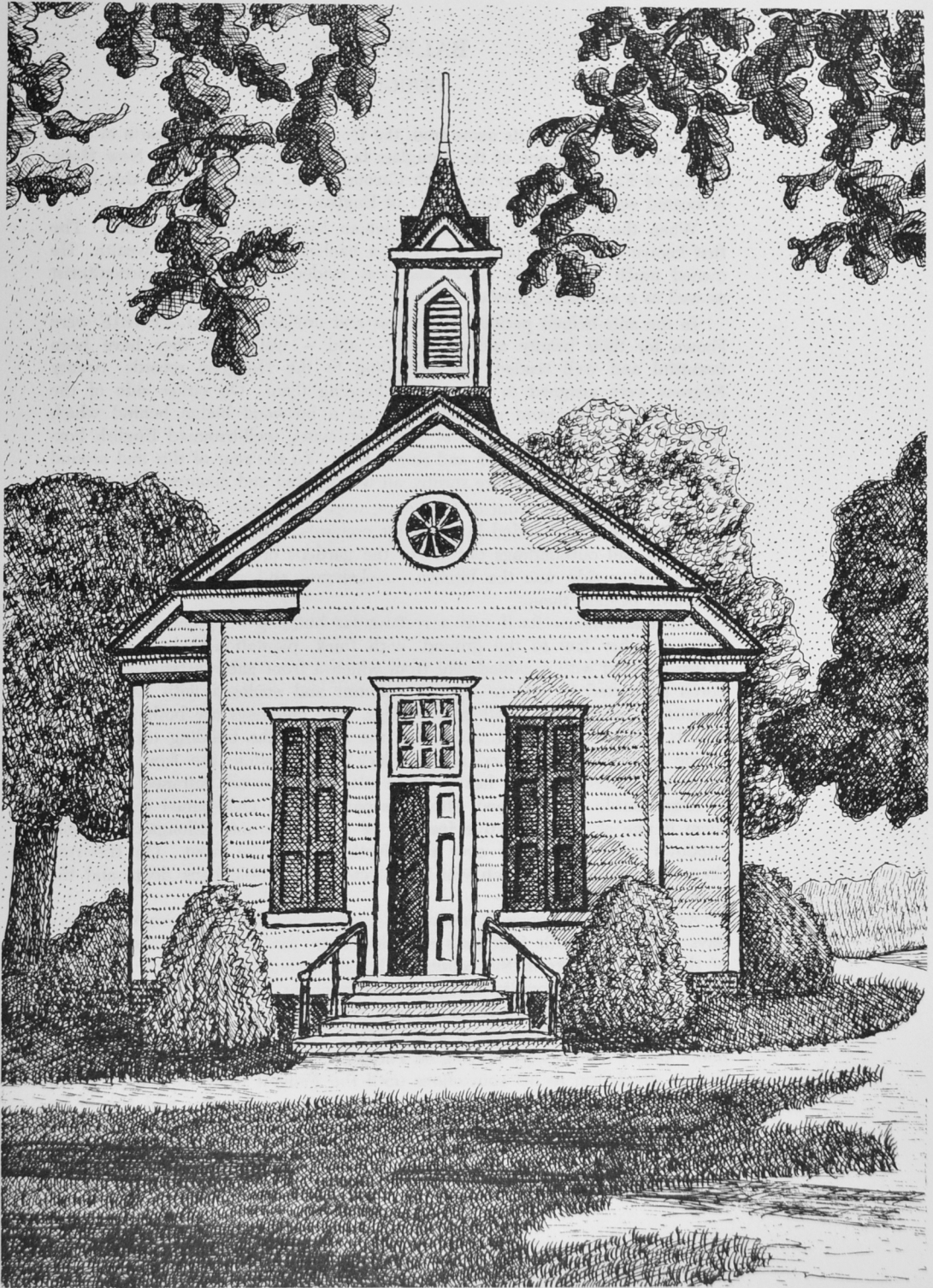
During the War Between the States the NEW HOPE plantations were looted but not many of the homes were burned. The stamina and fortitude of the women and the loyalty of most of the Negroes were responsible for this.

After the war several families moved away and times were harder but this community still held to its old standards and put its emphasis on religion and education. Many prominent men and women came from this neighborhood. The ministers were numerous; among them were, the Reverends R. W. Brice, J. R. Castles, E. E. McDonald, R. M. Stevenson, D.D., J. C. Douglas, J. W.

Douglas, R. B. Miller, and one student, J. B. Chisolm, who died while attending the seminary.

Among the lawyers were: Charles S. Brice, A. S. Douglas, Scott Douglas, W. B. Douglas, C. A. Douglas, J. E. McDonald, and John Means Simonton. The physicians from NEW HOPE were: Walter Brice, W. S. B. McLurkin, Henry Castles, Jr., J. Micheal Brice, J. L. Thompson, J. C. S. Brice, W. F. Mitchell, J. E. Douglas, Sr., J. E. Douglas, Jr., John W. Douglas, and Eugene Brice. The dentists were: R. T. Douglas and C. M. Douglas.

W. Banks Dove, one time Secretary of State for South Carolina, was from NEW HOPE. Miss Macie (Mary P.) Stevenson served her church as a missionary to Mexico for fifty years and during that time was instrumental in the establishment of a girls' school in Tampico. Her brother, Doctor R. M. Stevenson, was a publisher and for many years was a professor at Erskine College in Due West, South Carolina.



NEW HOPE CHURCH