SOUTH CAROLINA'S BLACKS AND NATIVE AMERICANS

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From the history of hundreds of churches merge three brief sketches that serve as examples of pioneering efforts of a religious people.

Shady Grove A.M.E. Church began 1823 in a secret meeting place near Winnsboro. Located on Camack Hill, the brush harbor served as a sacred ground for John Sawyer, Jordon Craig, Morris Weiver, William Moore, Charlie Armstrong, Frank Belton, Jim White, Ike Frazier, and Bill James. Located on Highway 34, six miles west of Winnsboro, the first church was built on land given by Tom Jordon. Later, the members paid $500.00 for land and property and the third and present building now stands as testament to those nine slaves who were often punished by their masters for praying on Camack Hill.

The first black church believed to be established in Jenkinsville is White Hall A.M.E. Church, founded in 1866. The members met under a harbor, then later in an old government building known as The Origer. Jerry Martin was one of the founders, and his son, John Bunyon Martin, served as secretary from 1880 to 1935. The Martin Brothers: Manton Latta, Jerry, and John were co-founders. The land was given by Moses Martin and Manton Latta Martin became the first pastor.[65]

The history of Bethel A.M.E. Church is in itself a story of faith and determination. A band of Blacks, recently out of slavery, organized the church in Georgetown in 1865, with Agustus T. Carr as leader and its first pastor. Other charter members were John F. Davis, John A. Shackleford, H. McD. Dale, James Murrell, Adam Dunmore, James Davis, T. G. Rutledge, John Foresight, and Henry Lessene. With thirty-three ministers at its helm since 1865, in the last decade, only four have served: H. B. Butler, Benjamin J. Hutchinson, A. T. Fisher, and A. W. Holman, the present minister.[66]

[65]Zenobia M. Dixon, "White Hall A.M.E. Church," An Essay. Jenkinsville, South Carolina, March 17, 1976.

[66]Josephine Caldwell Howard, "Our Heritage: Eleven Decades of Service to God and Humanity," An Essay. Georgetown, South Carolina, March 2, 1976, p. 1–3.

The 1906 Census shows that in South Carolina, the A.M.E.'s had "635 churches and 79,220 communicants (members)."[67]

During the 1900's, eleven outstanding men from South Carolina were elected Bishop of the national A.M.E. Church: William David Chappelle of Fairfield County, Joshua H. Jones of Lexington County, Wesley W. Beckett of Edisto Island, Monroe H. Davis of Marion, Decatur Ward Nichols of Charleston, George E. Curry of Edgefield County, Lawrence H. Hemmingway of Conway, Samuel Richard Higgins of Laurens, William F. Ball of Mount Pleasant, Harrison J. Bryant of Georgetown,[68] Richard Allen Hildebrand of Orangeburg, Frederick C. James of Sumter and John Adams, Jr. of Columbia. Thus, a total of sixteen (16) black South Carolina natives have been ordained as Bishops in the African Methodist Episcopal Church from 1828 to May, 1976.

The A.M.E. Church in South Carolina has had and continues to have pioneer ministers. To cite a few is to skim the surface of a strong, viable, and fertile current in the history of the state. Nevertheless, a few personalities can not be bypassed.

Morris Brown, born January 8, 1770 in Charleston, led the A.M.E. movement in his home town, beginning in 1817 with 1,000 organizers. In 1822 the number rose to 3,000. Because of the hostility attended Blacks in Charleston following the Denmark Vesey uprising, Morris Brown moved through the underground railroad to the North.[69] There, "he very soon reached a position of prominence, even that of Bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church."[70] "Ordained in 1828, he became the sole bishop and continued so until 1836 when Edward Waters was ordained as his assistant."[71] Following an

[67]Bureau of the Census, *Religious Bodies*: 1906, I, 558,
[68]Witherspoon, p. 15.
[69]Smith, p. 14.
[70]Woodson, p. 67.
[71]*Ibid.*, p. 88.